



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Community Safety Committee

LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT/ COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item No: **5**

Date: 15 April 2008

Purpose of Report:

To seek the support of the Community Safety Committee to the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's current approach to the development of City and County Local Area Agreements.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Government's performance assessment process for the delivery of a broad range of services in communities is undergoing radical change. Services affected include Fire and Rescue Authorities, Police, Education, Health, Housing and the Local Authority itself. Although the development of the new regime has been underway for some months, the finished process is still some way off, and many questions surrounding the detail of the process are as yet unresolved.
- 1.2 In the Nottinghamshire and the City of Nottingham authorities, the development of the Local Area Agreements (LAAs) is on schedule. The development is being carried out with the support of the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM), who report that they are pleased with the progress our authorities have made.
- 1.3 This report is intended to brief Members on the current situation in relation to the development of LAAs, outlining the Service's involvement and approach.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 This report will outline the Service's involvement with the LAA process in the City and County so far. A PowerPoint presentation provided by the County LAA team will also be made to the Committee.
- 2.2 Although both the City and County are developing LAAs, they are not being developed in exactly the same way. Some similarities exist, but they are not 'mirror images' of each other. They are being developed to reflect local needs, as intended by central government.
- 2.3 As a Service, this has given some challenges in the sense that the Service is effectively involved in two different LAAs, whereas the City and County both see the Fire and Rescue Authority as involved primarily with their own LAA. This 'dual' demand on or resources represents a significant investment of staff time. This situation is also reflected in the experience of other agencies with a responsibility in both Authority areas, such as the Police.
- 2.4 Currently the Assistant Chief Fire Officer Risk Reduction sits on the main management boards of both LAA development groups. These LAA Management Boards cover various aspects of activity. These include project management, governance, resources, and finance. Staff from various Fire and Rescue Service departments also participate on these boards. In addition, the Chair of the Authority is the Chair of the County LAA Strategic Board.
- 2.5 A positive aspect of this activity is that the Service is clearly actively involved, and welcomed, in both LAA arenas.

Fire Service Profile in the LAAs

- 2.6 A significant aspect of the LAA process is that partner agencies have to agree which of the almost 200 'targets' will form the core 40 or so against which the area is predominantly judged. As mentioned earlier, clarity is

lacking in some respects. For instance, it may well be that other targets than the chosen ones will still ultimately be examined as part of the process.

- 2.7 It soon became clear in both Authorities that the Fire and Rescue Service related targets would not form part of the core targets. The predominant reason being that they are seen to be too specific to effectively contribute to a broad picture of progress across the area, even when considered with the other agreed targets. It is of note that although Derbyshire initially agreed to include the fire targets, they were subsequently removed, with the agreement of GOEM, representing Central Government.
- 2.8 In many respects, the decision not to include the fire targets should not be seen in negative light. The Service itself will still be examined under the Comprehensive Area Assessment, and performance in those specific targets, and others, will still be assessed. Exactly how that assessment will be conducted is still under development. In parallel with this, the Service is currently developing a response to the closing down of the best value performance indicator targets and replacement with 'Local Performance Indicators'.
- 2.9 As fire targets were not included, it was decided by the Strategic Management Team to raise the Service's profile within the wider LAA arena. This was done to ensure the Service contribution to the whole arena was recognised positively by partners and GOEM.
- 2.10 Given the Service's expertise in risk management it has offered to assist the respective LAA management groups with the development of an LAA risk management process. This has been done in consultation with GOEM, who have been highly supportive of the approach.
- 2.11 As a result, the County LAA group have become actively engaged, and the Service is currently in discussions with the City LAA group. It is recognised that Service involvement in this way is a clear example of exactly the kind of co-operation and collaboration to promote best practice that the LAA process is intended to promote.
- 2.12 Overall, despite fire specific targets not being included, the Service is in a positive position in the LAA arena. Its contribution is recognised at local and regional level, and the positive approach in assisting partners has been valued.
- 2.13 The next stage in the development of the Service's profile within the LAA is also underway. The Service is currently mapping the whole range of Service activities across into the targets that have been chosen. This will then be distributed to the respective target owners in the partner agencies. They will include the Service's activities in the descriptions of how those targets are being addressed. This will ensure that the Service's contribution is evidenced across the LAA.
- 2.14 In summary, the Service is well positioned in the LAA environment. Its strategy of engagement appears to be working effectively, and its profile, particularly in the influential GOEM arena, has been successfully raised. It is clear that the timetable set by Government is highly challenging, and that much development work remains to be completed. However, with continued

focus, the Service should remain in a positive position, which should prove beneficial in the overall assessment process.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Activity in this area is currently within existing budgets. Reward funding from central government for successful attainment of targets within the LAA has not yet been agreed. Indicative figures discussed so far suggest £2m within the County and £8m within the City.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no human resources or learning and development implications arising from this report.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The initial equality impact assessment is attached at Appendix A.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Failure to evidence contribution to the LAA arena could reflect poorly on the Service in future assessments. Indications so far appear to show that the Service's contribution is recognised, not least within the area of risk management itself.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Community Safety Committee support the current approach to the development of the County and City LAAs.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

- Comprehensive Area Assessment - The Implications for Fire and Rescue Services;
- The New Performance Framework for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Single Set of National Indicators;
- Nottingham City Council Local Area Agreement Target Diagram.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

INITIAL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<i>Section</i>	<i>Manager</i>	<i>Date of Assessment</i>	<i>New or Existing</i>
RISK REDUCTION	ACFO Whelan	MARCH 2008	N/A
Name of Report to be assessed		LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT/ COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT UPDATE	
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the report.		To inform Members of involvement in the LAA and CAA arena.	
2. Who is intended to benefit from this report and what are the outcomes?		Reporting of Service performance to Community Safety Committee.	
3. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the report?		Fire and Rescue Authority.	
4. Who implements and who is responsible for the report?		Risk Reduction ACFO.	

5. Please identify the differential impact in the terms of the six strands below. Please tick yes if you have identified any differential impacts. Please state evidence of negative or positive impacts below.

<i>STRAND</i>	Y	N	<i>NEGATIVE IMPACT</i>	<i>POSITIVE IMPACT</i>
Race		X		
Gender		X		
Disability		X		
Religion or Belief		X		
Sexuality		X		
Age		X		

6. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group?	Y	N	7. Should the policy/service proceed to a full impact assessment?	Y	N
					x

I am satisfied that this policy has been successfully impact assessed. I understand the impact assessment of this policy is a statutory obligation and that, as owners of this policy, we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this process.

Signed (completing person) ACFO Whelan.....

Date ...March 2008.....