

**Uttlesford Vision, Strategic Partnerships and the Essex Local Area Agreement
Council, item 4**

Committee: Strategic Development Advisory Group **Agenda Item**
Date: 10 February 2006 **4**
Title: Uttlesford Vision, Strategic Partnerships
and the Essex Local Area Agreement
Author: Tracy Turner, Executive Manager Item for
(Strategy & Performance), 01799 510402 decision

Summary

The Strategic Development Advisory Group (SDAG) has completed its work to produce a strategic vision for Uttlesford. This document proposes that implementation of the SDAG work rolls forwards into a Strategic Partnerships Engagement Group (SPEG) which also forms the Council’s principal interface with Uttlesford Futures and the Essex Local Area Agreement.

Recommendations

- That Council agree to:
- a) wind up the Strategic Development Advisory Group
 - b) create a Strategic Partnerships Engagement Group
 - c) sign up to the Essex Local Area Agreement on behalf of Uttlesford District Council.

Background Papers

- SDAG papers and minutes
- Essex Local Area Agreement

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Extensive consultation has been undertaken with Members and Officers as part of the SDAG visioning process, with the LSP and strategic partners on the strategic vision and also on the implementation of the Local Area Agreement
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Community Safety	The main impact on community safety is the proposed pooling of Safer and Stronger Communities Funding under the LAA, which will result in a proportion (currently proposed at 25%) of funding being withheld and retained centrally in Essex
Equalities	There is no direct impact on equalities
Finance	Further analysis is required on the impact of the LAA, both positive and negative on the funding streams currently received by UDC
Human Rights	There are no direct human rights implications
Legal implications	There are no direct legal implications
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	There may be additional work requirements placed on UDC as a result of LAA projects and priorities. There will also be additional performance monitoring of targets and indicators

Situation

- 1 The Strategic Development Advisory Group has now completed its work to produce a strategic vision for Uttlesford that encompasses social, economic and environmental objectives.
- 2 23 indicators have been identified and are set out in the table below, and in more depth in the Appendix.

SDAG Indicators
Stabilise the average household income: mean house price ratio
Ensure housing supply in the development plan is delivered
Secure mixed and balanced communities including good affordable housing that meets the needs of the local community
Ensure rural communities remain sustainable places to live and work
Ensure a balanced range of job opportunities in the district
Ensure that the resident workforce does not become overly dependent on the airport for employment
Address the shortage of labour in the district for manual and service jobs
Enhance accessibility to major employment locations
Tackle traffic congestion

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Improve the street scene and highway environment
Promote better air quality
Contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by reducing per capita gas and electricity consumption and increasing the proportion of energy from renewable sources
Reduce per capita consumption of domestic water and conserve ground water resources in Uttlesford use for potable supply
Improve river water quality
Reduce the volume of household waste collected and increase the proportion recycled
Enhance biodiversity
Meet the needs of households accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need
Reduce the number of households in housing need
Keep the community a safe place
Engage with migrant workers as a hard to reach group and ensure that their needs are met
Support the development of sustainable rural communities
Increase level of satisfaction with public leisure facilities and museum service
Improvment the provision of health facilities in the community

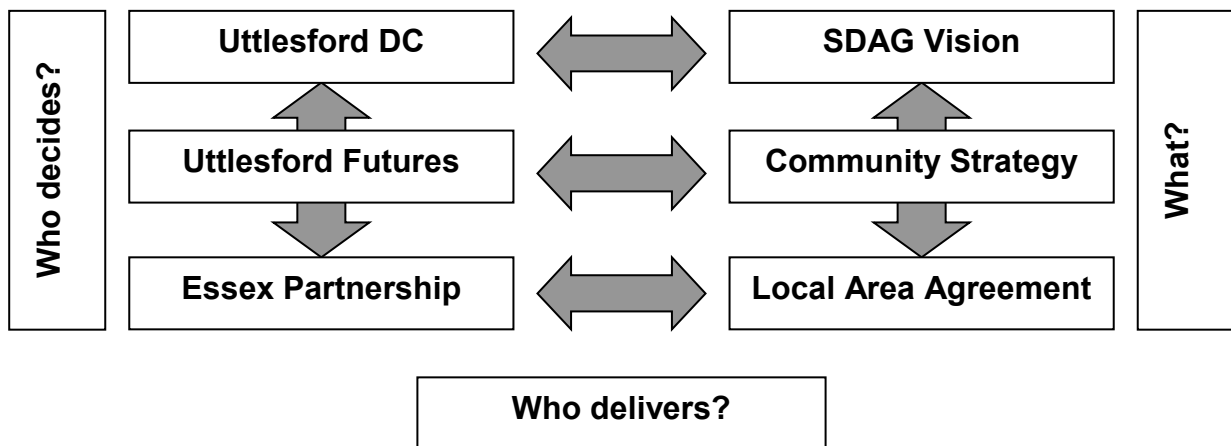
- 3 Although the visioning work of SDAG is now complete, there is a separate, and more pressing need to provide a forum and interface for strategic partnership development, specifically between the Local Strategic Partnership and the Essex Local Area Agreement work.
- 4 The degree of synergy between the Local Area Agreement, Community Strategy, Quality of Life, and SDAG themes is illustrated below.

	LAA	Futures	Quality of Life	SDAG
Economy	Economic development and enterprise	Economic well being Education and the economy	Encouraging appropriate economic development Promoting tourism, culture and leisure opportunities	Economic well being

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Social	Safer and stronger communities Healthier communities and older people Children and young people	Safety of the community Health	Improving the supply of affordable housing Supporting lifelong learning and developing better opportunities for young people Improving community safety and the health of the community	Social well being
Environment		Environment	Protecting and enhancing the character of the district	Environmental well being
Transport		Transport	Improving rural transport	
Better council			Provide strong community leadership and openness Improving access to value for money services	

5 The relationship between these strands is illustrated in the diagram below.



6 The Strategic Partnerships Engagement Group should be a small group, reporting directly to Council. The group should be reviewed in May 2007 and annually thereafter.

7 The outline terms of reference for SPEG are proposed as:

- To maintain an overview of Uttlesford District Council's strategic partnership work with Uttlesford Futures and the Essex Local Area Agreement

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- To review opportunities for shared services and partnership working with other public and private sector bodies, organisations and companies in pursuit of UDC's strategic vision and objectives.
 - To ensure that there is an opportunity for elected members to bring their influence to bear on the overall activities of the various partnerships – whether established by local choice or government requirement – in which the council is engaged.
- 8 A process of community engagement and consultation will be required on the SDAG vision, led by Strategy & Performance staff. It is suggested that this could be most effectively achieved via the Area Panels, and in conjunction with engagement and consultation on the Uttlesford Futures Community Strategy.

Essex Local Area Agreement

- 9 The purpose of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) is to prioritise and focus on the needs of identified groups of service users and residents in a way that will lead to a step change in the collective effectiveness of the whole of the public sector in Essex.
- 10 This will be achieved by more joint working between agencies and through the agreed re-alignment of public sector funds and pooling of budgets so that money can be directly targeted at achieving those outcomes that are agreed as priorities in the LAA, both at a District and County level.
- 11 The Essex LAA is a joint project between the county's thirteen Local Strategic Partnerships, which bring the democratically-mandated councils of the county together with the community and voluntary sector and local arms of national public sector organisations. The Essex Partnership (the County Local Strategic Partnership) is leading on behalf of the partners.
- 12 The Partnership's Steering Group is the sponsor of the project, and asked the Chief Executive of the County Council to establish an Executive Group to lead on the negotiations and manage the LAA project.
- 13 The Executive Group brings together representatives of Essex's District Councils, Police Constabulary, voluntary sector, and National Health Service, together with four block leads who are managing the work on the individual Local Area Agreement blocks and will be accountable for performance over the lifetime of the agreement. Alasdair Bovaird represents West Essex districts on the Executive Group.
- 14 The Essex Partnership has developed the work on the four LAA Blocks through existing partnerships wherever possible.

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The Development of the LAA and the Role of Uttlesford Futures (LSP)

- 15 Uttlesford Futures has been involved in developing the priorities and targets of the Essex LAA through UDC officers, and other partner organisations' attendance at block meetings or other events. Throughout this process the Uttlesford Futures Management Team has kept the Executive Board informed of progress. UDC is represented on the Executive Board by Councillors C M Dean, B M Hughes, J E Menell, and J E Murphy.

Progress on the LAA to Date

- 16 The latest iteration of the Essex Local Area Agreement has been published following comments from Go-East and Government departments and is attached.
- 17 At their meeting on 17 January 2006, the Uttlesford Futures Executive Board agreed to sign up to the LAA. The Futures Management Team will be carrying out further work to identify projects that partners may carry out to deliver individual priorities and targets in the LAA.

Implications for Uttlesford District Council

- 18 Uttlesford District Council will be contributing to the priorities and targets either directly or through joint working with partners, through the lead of Uttlesford Futures.
- 19 Work to develop local targets and indicators is commencing. Individual projects will need to be established and project plans developed. These will feed into the council's corporate planning and performance management systems. Further reports will need to be made to the Strategic Partnerships Steering Group as the LAA progresses.

Funding Issues

- 20 Work is underway at county level and through the Essex Finance Officers Group to identify the extent of funding which will be available for re-alignment or pooling across the public sector in Essex in order to deliver on the LAA priorities.
- 21 Under the framework for developing LAA's there are three types of funding streams that can be used:
- Area specific funding allocated and distributed to the area by a Government Department – this funding can be pooled centrally and paid to the Accountable Body for the LAA as a single payment.

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- Mainstream funding e.g. revenue support grant, Police, NHS, PCT, and Schools funding – this funding can be “aligned” i.e. made available to fund LAA initiatives, but not formally pooled into a collective fund.
 - Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) funding (e.g. Regional Development Agency, Big Lottery, Sport England, and Learning and Skills Council) cannot be centrally pooled, however, in some instances it may be possible for it to be pooled locally or alternatively, as with mainstream funding, it can aligned to the LAA.
- 22 From the above a list of funding streams that may or may not be pooled to achieve LAA outcomes has been incorporated into the LAA guidance. Other funding streams may be included subject to agreement and/or specific criteria being met.
- 23 To date the following public sector funds have been identified county-wide:
- £12.7 million potential pooled funding from 10 funding streams
 - £282.3 million potential aligned funding from 22 funding streams.
- 24 As part of the preparation for the Essex LAA, a preliminary assessment of potential funding streams currently received in Essex relevant to the LAA was carried out. Further refinement will now be necessary to link the identified available funding streams with the priorities and outcomes agreed for the Essex LAA for the 4 different service blocks. There is a presumption that the Safer, Stronger Communities funding will be part of the LAA, whereas other funding streams are subject to the negotiations over the final agreement.
- 25 Other financial incentives under the LAA include the potential to receive reward grant for the achievement of agreed stretch targets, along with any related pump-priming grant.
- 26 A sub-group of the Essex Finance Officers Group has been established to take forward discussions on funding issues.
- 27 An examination of UDC budgets that could potentially support the LAA process, or be affected by funding issues, has yet to be undertaken in depth. Relevant Committees will be informed of any financial or other implications for the authority arising from the LAA on an ongoing basis.

Project and Performance Management

- 28 Overall performance management and monitoring arrangements for the LAA are still being developed at County level. District LSPs will however play a key role in co-ordinating performance information for those targets set at a local level.

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29 The UDC Performance Improvement Team will incorporate those targets for which UDC is the lead agency into the corporate planning and performance management systems and report to Uttlesford Futures and the Essex Partnership on UDC's behalf.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Strategic vision is beyond our ability to resource	Low	High	Resist the temptation to capture everything and performance manage the indicators
Limited ownership of SDAG indicators by Members, LSP and local community	Medium	Medium	Ensure flexibility to capture local concerns and consult widely
LAA has significant impact on funding or workforce issues	Medium	High	Maintain close involvement with LAA process and Uttlesford Futures to ensure 'best' outcome for local interests Uttlesford Futures