



Wirral's Local Area Agreement Bulletin

December 2007 – Issue 1

Welcome to the first edition of Wirral's local area agreement bulletin.

The aim of this newsletter is to provide information to partners on Wirral's local area agreement (LAA) including latest guidance, developments, key dates, events and highlight some of the positive outcomes emerging from our LAA and partnership working.

It will also be an ideal opportunity to share information with partners across the LAA and ensure that we are communicating key messages of Wirral's LAA to a wide audience. We are currently developing a website which will improve communications for Wirral's LAA and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

Introduction to LAA's

What is a local area agreement?

A local area agreement (LAA) is a three-year agreement between a local area and central government which sets out the priorities for that local area. The local area and other key partnerships are represented through the LSP which includes representatives from the local authority, police, primary care trust, voluntary and community sector amongst others.

Wirral's LAA is negotiated between the local area and the regional government office on behalf of central government.

As of March 2007, 150 LAA's have been signed and cover all of England.

Wirral's LAA

Wirral's LAA was formally signed off at the end of March 2005 and implementation began on the 1st of April 2006. Its main objective is to deliver better outcomes for local people. Secondary objectives include:

- Delivering key priorities for Wirral more effectively
- Tackling barriers to progress and reduce bureaucracy
- Using resources more effectively
- Helping partners join up at a local level

The Government announced some important changes to LAA in the Local Government White Paper of October 2006. The white paper set out proposals to integrate the consultation requirements of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the Local Development Framework (LDF) and put the LAA at the heart of a new performance framework.

Wirral is currently in the process of producing a draft list of priority areas for improvement from which 35 improvement targets will be determined for the 2008/09 LAA. There are currently four blocks within the LAA as follows:

Safer and Stronger Communities
Healthier Communities and Older People
Children and Young People
Economic Development and Enterprise

Cross cutting themes have been identified in 2007/08 to enhance joint working across the four blocks, they are:

Alcohol harm
Child Poverty
Worklessness

For more information about Wirral's LAA please contact Lucy Beed on 0151 691 8006 or email lucybeed@wirral.gov.uk

Recent guidance / links

Negotiating new local area agreements: This document gives a brief description of the new LAA's, what can be gained from them and what benefits they will bring. Also included are real-life perspectives on negotiating LAA's through stakeholder narratives.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/negotiatingnewlaas>

LAA Dry Run negotiations: This report outlines the headline findings of the LAA dry run negotiation process undertaken between April and July 2007. Including critical success factors for negotiating priorities and targets for new LAA, and producing a clear and workable framework for local authorities, their partners, GO and Central Government Departments to use.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/laadryrunreport>

Development of the new LAA framework - Operational Guidance 2007: This is the second part of two-stage guidance on the negotiation process for negotiating a new Local Area Agreement (LAA). This stage clarifies the operational process for negotiating LAAs that flow from the Comprehensive Spending Review.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/laaoperationalguidance>

Comprehensive Area Assessment – joint inspectorate consultation: This joint inspectorate consultation invites views on proposals for the overall shape and scope of CAA. <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caa/consultation.asp>

The New Performance Framework for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Single Set of National Indicators: The new national indicators will be the only means of measuring national priorities that have been agreed by Government. The Local Government White Paper *Strong and Prosperous Communities* committed to a smaller more focussed set of priorities as well as radically reduce the number of national indicators.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/nationalindicator>

National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships:

Handbook of definitions - Draft for Consultation: As part of the Comprehensive Spending Review announcement, the Government recently published the single set of 198 national indicators that will underpin the new performance framework.

The Government is now consulting on the detailed definitions of the set to ensure that the methodology for measuring individual national indicators at a local level is sound. The consultation seeks views on the methodology, frequency of reporting and data source of each individual indicator. The closing date for responses is 21st December 2007.

Final guidance is expected in February 2008.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/indicatorsdefinitions>

Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities Statutory Guidance: Draft for Consultation: The draft document, which is subject to consultation, provides guidance to local authorities and their partners on creating strong safe and prosperous communities, specifically relating to new legislation introduced in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

The guidance covers Local Strategic Partnerships, Sustainable Community Strategies, the new duty to involve, Local Area Agreements, the revised best value regime and commissioning. The closing date for responses is 12th February 2008.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/statutoryguidance>

The Local Government White Paper Implementation Plan: One Year On: This updated implementation plan details the progress made on how the Government is playing its part in implementing key proposals in *Strong and Prosperous Communities - the Local Government White Paper*.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/implementationplanprogress>

An Introduction to the Local Performance Framework - Delivering Better Outcomes for Local People: An Introduction to the Local Performance Framework:

Delivering Better Outcomes for Local People has been jointly produced by the Department and the Local Government Association (LGA). It provides a clear overview for all those helping to implement the new performance framework, including local area agreements (LAAs). A detailed timetable is also included.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/localperformanceframework>

Towards Lifetime Neighbourhoods: Designing sustainable communities for all:

Communities and Local Government has published 'Towards Lifetime Neighbourhoods: Designing sustainable communities for all' as part of the development work behind the forthcoming National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society. This briefing summarises the document and highlights its main implications for local authorities. More of this briefing at:

<http://www.lgiu.gov.uk/briefing-detail.jsp?&id=1664&md=0§ion=briefing>

Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities: consultation on draft statutory guidance - This briefing summarises and comments upon draft statutory guidance on LSPs, LAAs, sustainable community strategies, best value, and the duty to involve which has now been issued for consultation.

<http://www.lgiu.gov.uk/briefing-detail.jsp?&id=1667&md=0§ion=briefing>

Ward councillors and community leadership - A new report has been published on Ward Councillors and Community Leadership - A future perspective by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Written by Ed Cox of the LGIU and Saffron James of the Young Foundation, the report examines how the role of ward councillors in England is likely to develop over the next five years.

<http://www.lgiu.gov.uk/briefing-detail.jsp?&id=1665&md=0§ion=briefing>

Children and Young Persons Bill - The Children and Young Persons Bill began its Parliamentary progress in the House of Lords on 14th November and largely enacts proposals detailed in the White Paper Care matters: time for change which was published in June 2007. It is designed to reform the statutory framework around the care system to enable children and young people to receive high quality care and support.

<http://www.csn.info/briefing-detail.jsp?&id=1668&md=0§ion=briefing>

One Year On: Government's progress on third sector involvement in public service delivery - This updated leaflet details progress made against the commitments in the action plan. This includes significant activity across Government departments, the Office of the Third Sector's own work and case studies reporting on how third sector organisations are working with the public sector to transform public services.

<http://www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/publications/576755>

Children Looked After in England (Including Adoption and Care Leavers): Year ending 31 March 2007 - This statistical first release provides provisional statistics on looked after children at a national level. This is an update of the statistical volume that was published on 31 March 2006

<http://www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/publications/576776>

National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society - This is a transcript of the speech by Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Baroness Andrews to the Foundations Home Improvement Agency Annual Conference on 4 December 2007. She talks about the housing challenges facing Britain as its population ages.

<http://www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/publications/576810>

Working Neighbourhood Fund: Allocations 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 - This document gives a full breakdown of Working Neighbourhoods Fund allocations for 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11. The fund is a new dedicated fund for local councils and communities to develop more concentrated, concerted, community-led approaches to getting people in the most deprived areas of England back to work.

<http://www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/publications/576853>

Local Authority Children's Services Funding: 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 - This circular gives details of grants that the department is making available to authorities for children and young people's services from 2008-09 to 2010-11. It supports the information in the local government finance settlements announced by Communities and Local Government on 6 December 2007.

<http://www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/publications/576378>

Supporting People Distribution Formula: Technical consultation paper - Summary of responses and invitation to refresh responses - This document gives a summary of responses to a consultation on Supporting People's funding redistribution formula. It invites respondents to refresh their responses by 14 January 2008, if appropriate, before final allocations are confirmed.

<http://www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/publications/582849>

Local Area Agreement Operational Guidance 2007 (17 Dec) -

The operational guidance, Development of the new LAA Framework, is one of a series of publications relating to LAAs and to the comprehensive area assessment that have been published since September. It gives a useful summary of the more technical aspects of the new system and reinforces the view in local government that the new LAA system will be more effective and devolutionary than the current one.

<http://www.lgiu.gov.uk/briefing-detail.jsp?&id=1683&md=0§ion=briefing>

Goodwill to all: equality and diversity in action (19 Dec) - Read detailed case studies showing how local area agreements (LAAs) can help fulfil the requirement to embrace all sections of local communities in designing and implementing public services.

<http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=7675048>

For further information including summary briefing notes, please contact Sarah Risnes on 0151 691 8149 or email sarahrisnes@wirral.gov.uk

Future publications

Document on the technical definitions underpinning the national indicators due February 2008.

For further information including summary briefing notes, please contact Sarah Risnes on 0151 691 8149 or email sarahrisnes@wirral.gov.uk

Events and conferences

LAA Plus

As a regular subscriber to LAA Plus, Wirral has two free places on each of the following events. If you would like to attend any of these, or you think someone in your working group may benefit please contact Sarah Risnes on 0151 691 8149 or email sarahrisnes@wirral.gov.uk to book a place.

Date	Event	Venue
Wednesday 9 th January 2008	Delivering Community Cohesion through the LAA (set 3)	London
Thurs 10 th Jan	Making the LAA real through neighbourhood level delivery (set 3)	London
Thurs 24 th Jan	Making the best use of the duty to cooperate	Liverpool
Tuesday 12 th February 2008	Involving the third sector in your LAA (set 3)	Manchester
Wednesday 13 th February 2008	Economic Development and the Environment (set 3)	Leeds
Tues 11 th March 2008	Demonstrating the impact your LAA has had	Sheffield

LAA latest news/ success stories

Planit Workshop – 27th September

An innovative approach to understanding sustainability was experienced by 16 members of the LAA blocks at a Planit LAA Workshop on 27th September.

Planit is an interactive learning experience with delegates working together to meet the outcomes of the LAA in a virtual world. The learning simulation allows delegates to actively participate and to collaborate to meet goals. Decisions made are reflected in the development of the virtual town.

The objectives of the day were to increase the understanding of sustainable development and strengthen partnership working to deliver outcomes that support sustainable communities.

For further information on future sessions please contact Sue Weldon on 0151 691 8030 or email sueweldon@wirral.gov.uk

LAA Exemplars announced - 21st November

11 councils have been chosen as “demonstration sites” for the new LAAs. John Healey, Local Government Minister, said that the authorities would work with the government to deliver ambitious agreements that would serve as best practice for other areas.

The 11 areas are Cornwall, Coventry, Essex, LB Lambeth, Leeds, Leicester, Manchester, Portsmouth, Stockton, Sunderland and Westminster.

Economic Development and Enterprise

A year in the life of Reach Out

Wirral LSP recognised that areas with significant concentrations of deprivation required a new, innovative approach to engage workless households which often mainstream and even local community & voluntary organisations were not reaching.

Therefore, following a successful pilot in 2005, *Reach Out* was launched across all of Wirral’s neighbourhood renewal areas in September 2006.

Delivered by an organisation from the third sector, this innovative approach engages workless households from the most hard to reach communities, by taking the service to their home. The Reach Out model is tailored specifically to meet the varying needs of each neighbourhood renewal area, with each having its own unique branding.

Reach Out guidance workers engage residents in the familiar surroundings of their own home and promote the value of being in work. They explore skills and employability needs, as well as multiple barriers to employment associated with long term benefit dependency. The guidance workers support people and families to

develop an action plan and to access the appropriate services, which may be delivered by mainstream and/or local community & voluntary organisations.

The guidance workers follow up all referrals for additional mentoring and support and if necessary, to identify areas of on-going need.

This initiative is successfully engaging and supporting workless households from Wirral's most deprived communities to access employment opportunities that they may otherwise be unaware of.

To October 2007, over 34,000 doors have been knocked on and 11,000 have been answered. 249 people who have been out of the labour market for between 1 and 15 years have been supported back into employment along with 53 education and 199 training outcomes. In addition 30 families have moved out of the child poverty index.

For more information please contact Bev Staniford on 0151 691 8166 or email bevstaniford@wirral.gov.uk

Safer and Stronger Communities

Repeat Victimisation Prevention

This project sought to reduce burglary in dwellings by reducing the number of premises that suffered multiple burglaries.

Victim Support was commissioned to target harden properties through providing a security surveyor, joiner, locksmith, manager and administrative officer.

The project was initiated in 2001 and has been funded from a wide range of sources including Neighbourhood Renewal, Housing Market Renewal, CAD, Safer Stronger Communities Fund, Local Area Agreements Pump Priming, Neighbourhood Management and donations. The scheme has been adapted to provide this service to victims of domestic violence in appropriate circumstances, providing safe havens when required.

As an outcome of this project, 4000 plus properties have been secured and burglary dwelling has been reduced across the Borough and the greatest impact has been seen in the neighbourhood renewal areas.

For further information please contact Jim Thompson on 0151 606 5443 or email jimthompson@wirral.gov.uk

Healthier Communities and Older People

Community Residential Alcohol Detoxification Service pilot

It is widely accepted that alcohol consumption has been rising steadily in recent years and that high numbers of people are drinking above the recommended limits. The cost of treating the chronic and acute effects of alcohol misuse is already placing a huge burden on the NHS. The negative effects on mental health, crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, community and family life are also well documented.

A particular source of concern for Wirral is the number of adults presenting and re-presenting at Hospital with alcohol related and alcohol specific illnesses in need of detoxification. Whilst the medical needs of these people are being addressed, the problems, which cause the alcohol abuse, are not, hence the high incidence of repeat admissions.

It is believed that a more therapeutic approach in the community with the potential for the provision of after care and support would be more appropriate in meeting individual needs. It is also anticipated that a community-based service would be more cost effective. It is also thought that savings will also be made in the longer term as repeat admissions are reduced.

In response to this, the PCT applied for and secured Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) to develop and pilot a community based service to provide care and support to adults admitted to Hospital with an alcohol related or alcohol specific illness, who need support to withdraw from their alcohol misuse. This is one of a number of alcohol projects being developed by the PCT, the DAAT and Wirral Alcohol Service as part of an overall Alcohol Redesign Strategy for Wirral.

This is really exciting for Wirral, as this level of investment in alcohol services is unprecedented in any other local authority area, providing an opportunity to be at the forefront in addressing a huge problem with innovative service solutions.

The project was delivered in a community residential facility and referrals made via Wirral's Main Hospital – Arrowe Park.

Patients admitted to the hospital stay until they are medically fit, usually two to three days and are referred to a community residential detox' facility, owned by a local provider specialising in the provision of services aimed at alcohol and substance misusers. Patients complete their detoxification with therapeutic support from specialist staff. Patients stay up to seven days and leave with a package of after care and support and a follow up appointment at the hospital two weeks after discharge.

As a pilot project an interim evaluation was undertaken on the activity delivered in 2006/7 and outputs highlighted included 51 referrals to service of which 76.4% completed their treatment and 247 hospital bed days saved.

For further information please contact Lesley Hilton on 651 0011 x 379

BikeSafe

Merseyside's BikeSafe course is run by Wirral Council in conjunction with highly skilled motorcyclists from Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and volunteers from Wirral's Advanced Motorists.

The course is designed to reduce the number of people killed and injured on Wirral's roads each year. The two-day weekend workshop consists of specialist talks and theory sessions from the Police, medics and other professionals and involves two

observed rides, amongst other activities, and aims to provide the motorcyclist with the skills to equip them to help them stay safer on the roads.

To date 180 motorcyclists have attended bike safe courses and the number of motorcyclists killed and injured on Wirral's roads fell from 90 in 2005 to 61 in 2006, which is largely attributable to the BikeSafe course.

The course is open to anyone aged 17 and over with access to a two wheeled motor vehicle which is appropriately insured and fit for on road riding. The course runs from spring to autumn due to the winter months bringing cold weather, poor riding conditions and less hours of daylight.

Certificates are presented to the motorcyclists at the end of the two days. This certificate can be used to secure motorcycle insurance premium reductions with some insurance companies.

For further information please contact Jenny Jewsbury/David Rees on 606 2228 or email jennyjewsbury@wirral.gov.uk or davidrees@wirral.gov.uk

Children and Young People

4 Wheel Ed

'4 Wheel Ed' is a new Road Safety programme which was launched in September in Mosslands School, Wallasey and replaces the old MegaDrive programme. The programme is aimed at lower sixth formers aged 16 and 17, who are likely to become new drivers in the near future. 576 lower sixth formers will receive the training this school year.

Statistics show that one in five new drivers will be involved in a collision in the first year of driving and 1 in 3 new drivers will be involved in a collision in the first two years of driving. In Wirral during 2006, 194 16-19 year olds were injured in Road Traffic Collisions, of which, 77% were drivers and passengers of cars.

The 4 Wheel Ed programme aims to reduce the number of young people killed and seriously injured in crashes.

4 Wheel Ed is delivered by members of Wirral's Roadsafe Partnership (Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Wirral Council's Road Safety Team), youth workers from Response (Wirral Drug and Alcohol Team) and a Collision Examiner from VOSA (Vehicle and Operator Services Agency).

The partners deliver hard-hitting road safety information, advice and facts to groups of young people in 4 separate sessions. The sessions cover important issues such as seatbelts, drink/drug driving, speeding, mobile phones, driver attitudes and information about the highway code. Various methods are used to deliver this information, including footage and images of crashes and the people killed or seriously injured in them.

Students who take part in 4 Wheel Ed can also go on to win driving lessons, or Pass Plus / advanced driving lessons for those who have already passed their driving test.

Wirral Council's Road Safety Officers are busy contacting further secondary schools in Wirral to book them in for 4 Wheel Ed sessions over the rest of the school year 2007-2008.

For further information please contact Jenny Jewsbury/David Rees on 0151 606 2228 or email jennyjewsbury@wirral.gov.uk or davidrees@wirral.gov.uk

Mpower Music for Life Project

This project seeks to implement a structure of quality, life-long musical experiences within the Wirral NR wards. There are two main strands – the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic strand and the Urban Voice strand. The main programmes provide a holistic approach to music encompassing performance, composition and appraisal activities.

Regular performance opportunities are provided in a variety of venues (e.g. school halls, community centres, Pacific Road Theatre, Philharmonic Hall). The next big concert is at Pacific Road on 27th November 2007. Approximately 100 children from UV schools have been invited to perform at the RLP as part of 'A Gospel Christmas' at the Philharmonic Hall in December 07 and the Community Choir have been invited to sing with the RLP Community Choir at the Philharmonic Hall in March 2008.

An 'MPower Song' has been commissioned. It has been written by Tyndale Thomas. This was recorded at Parr Street Studios, Liverpool on 17th November 2007. A number of children will be featured on the recording as will be the Community Choir. A CD will be produced.

In the first year the project reached over 1500 children and adults in the NR wards. Yet more saw the public performances, the second year looks to equal, if not surpass these numbers.

For further information please contact Jo Brockbank on 0151 346 6689

Coming soon.....

The next bulletin in March will include:

- update on Wirral's 2008/09 Local Area Agreement
- Wirral's Sustainable Community Strategy
- update on dedicated LSP website
- more good news stories!

Any items you would like to see or share in this update would be greatly appreciated, particularly good news stories. **Please contact Maxine Joynson on 0151 691 8266 or email maxinejoynson@wirral.gov.uk**

Thank you for taking the time and interest in reading this and very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year!