

Subject:

Status: For Publication

Pennine Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement

Report to:

Policy Overview and Scrutiny
Local Strategic Partnership Executive
The Cabinet

Date:

2 September 2008
8 September 2008
10 September 2008

Report of: Chief Executive

Portfolio

Holder: Leader of the Council

Key Decision:

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the progress to date in developing a Multi-Area Agreement for Pennine Lancashire and requesting agreement to Rossendale Borough Council signing up to the Agreement in principle, subject to the approval of final amendments being delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objectives.
- Delivering Regeneration across the Borough (Economy, Housing)
 - Promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit (Economy)

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

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- Strategic Risks – Rossendale faces a number of challenges in relation to its economy. For examples skills levels at NVQ 4 and above are among the lowest in the county. The opportunities to address these challenges as a single local authority are fewer than if we work in partnership with colleague authorities in Pennine Lancashire.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 Multi-Area Agreements (MAAs) were introduced as part of the 2006 White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities. They are voluntary agreements between central government and a group of councils, focused on a specific set of outcomes and targets. In Pennine Lancashire these Councils comprise Rossendale, Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley, together covering an area that has been identified as a distinct economic footprint, and Lancashire County Council. A multi area agreement is designed to be cross-boundary local area agreement (LAA). They bring together key players in flexible ways to tackle issues that are best addressed in partnership – at a regional and sub-regional level.

The major issues that MAAs can tackle include:

- skills deficits
- housing market imbalances
- transport and infrastructure projects
- economic development

4.2 The Sub-National Review (SNR) set out the Government’s commitment to reduce economic inequalities between and within regions by tackling the most pressing economic challenges where they occur – nationally, regionally or locally. The SNR also committed Government to work with local authorities to develop their first MAAs. The SNR also suggested the priorities of the MAA should add value to existing work and focus on local priorities.

4.3 Pennine Lancashire was successful in being identified as an area to submit one of the first MAAs and work has been taking place between the authorities over recent months to develop the document. The latest draft is attached as Appendix A. This work has been taken forward within the context of the developing Integrated Economic Strategy for Pennine Lancashire, and reflects the priorities and aspirations within it. Government Office North West are supportive of the process and have been involved in discussions relating to the draft.

4.4 The draft MAA identifies four priority areas:

- Economic and Physical Development
- Transport Planning
- Skills and Worklessness
- Housing – Spatial Planning

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Each section in the document under these headings contains a summary of the Pennine Lancashire context in relation to the issue, together with what we want to achieve, the outcomes this will deliver and the main 'asks' of government to support their achievement.

- 4.5 Strong governance arrangements will be required for the delivery of this MAA. The development of the PLLACE (Pennine Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives) structures as set out in the document will be central to this. The proposed Pennine Lancashire Economic Development Company will be an important element of the delivery infrastructure, as will the work of local authorities themselves.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 5.1 Development and initial funding of the Multi-Area Agreement will come from existing Council resources. It is uncertain as yet if additional funding will be made by Central Government to support the MAAs, and if any should be forthcoming should it be pooled or not.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 The Council will need to ensure we have systems to assess the governance arrangements around the delivery of the MAA . The Councils work on the Pennine Lancashire Economic Development Company will contribute towards this .

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

There are no human resources implications.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The Multi-Area Agreement for Pennine Lancashire provides a mechanism to strengthen delivery on the shared agenda for economic regeneration which is being developed across the area.

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 That Cabinet approve the Pennine Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement in principle and delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to consider and agree amendments to the document prior to final signing.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

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10.1 Policy Overview and Scrutiny
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11. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required Not at this stage. An equality impact assessment will be carried out on the individual elements of the MAA

Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached No

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

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Background Papers:

Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration 2007
White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities 2006