

## **PROGRESS ON LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT 'ECONOMIC' AND 'ENVIRONMENTAL' OUTCOMES**

### 1. Introduction

Summarised below is the progress and impact of the LAA outcomes on which the Directorate is leading. In addition to this text, more detailed reports on each outcome are available on the [www.devonsp.org.uk](http://www.devonsp.org.uk) site. Also, most of these outcomes are reflected in the Delivery Plan for the Devon Economic Strategy, see [www.devoneconomy.co.uk](http://www.devoneconomy.co.uk).

On the whole, performance across the World Class Environment theme is on track to achieve both targets and milestones, with all but 2 of the 9 priorities rated as either GREEN or AMBER. Issues to highlight include:

LAA2: funding issue on green infrastructure;

LAA4: recession adversely impacting on renewable energy sector and funding is being sought to continue this work beyond March 2010;

LAA6: insufficient funding is available for reduction of carbon emissions through public sector supply chains in 2010/11;

LAA8: funding is being sought for a small capital grants scheme for County Wildlife Sites;

LAA33: there was a delayed start to Devon Warm Zone activity and there are improved marketing arrangements to increase take up.

For the Growing Economy theme, performance is on track to achieve both targets and milestones, with all but one of the 10 priorities rated as either GREEN or AMBER which is significant given the current economic climate. Undoubtedly, there is adverse impact on LAA24 – reducing the gap in benefit claims rates and employment rates between priority communities and the average for Devon. Devon Strategic Partnership has been asked to:-

- support implementation of the Houghton Report recommendations, specifically regarding expanding employment, work experience, apprenticeship and training opportunities for the long term unemployed priority customers;
- advertise vacancies through Job Centre Plus and work through Local Employment Partnerships to prepare priority customers for their vacancies.

Other issues to highlight include:

LAA17: developing relationships with Plymouth and Torbay to support co-ordination of the work of Local Employment and Skills Boards;

LAA19: risks associated with implementing a Devon wide innovation strategy due to the recession and LGR;

LAA20: excellent performance in increasing bus usage but not in reducing the percentage of pupils travelling to school by car;

LAA21: good progress with transportation infrastructure schemes.

**Equalities:** Screening for Equality Needs and Impact Assessments have been completed for all these outcomes.

## **2. Summary Statements**

### **Economy**

#### **LAA 14 Most disadvantaged communities:**

The local indicators for this theme arise from the three Strategic Investment Frameworks which are proposed. These SIFs identify key physical regeneration projects to be undertaken and related projects which are designed to help the 'disadvantaged' to benefit from the construction and activities to be accommodated in the new buildings. Key funding partners, notably the local authorities and RDA, agree the SIF and their intended contributions to its delivery. A SIF for Northern Devon has been agreed in principle and a small 'joint delivery team' has been recruited to focus on schemes in Ilfracombe, Bideford, Holsworthy and South Molton, in particular. The opportunity for a similar approach in Exeter/Newton Abbot and Exmouth/Seaton/Dawlish/Teignmouth has been raised with partners and proposals are being formulated for the 4 coastal towns. The outputs from each SIF will be aggregated to measure the impact across Devon. The SIFs will be complemented by thematic approaches to enhance the impact of regeneration schemes elsewhere in the county, linking with other LAA outcomes such as skills, worklessness and social inclusion. These links are reinforced through the Devon Economic Partnership and implementation/monitoring of the Devon Economic Strategy (please see [www.devoneconomy.co.uk](http://www.devoneconomy.co.uk)). DCC has allocated £230k for the northern Devon SIF, £120k for Exeter/Newton Abbot and £100k for the southern coastal towns with £700k capital funding also available.

#### **LAA 15b Social/community enterprise:**

A group has been meeting for the past 18 months to explore means of assisting development of social enterprises. The initial aims were to clarify the numbers and types of these enterprises in Devon (255) and to pursue three case studies relating to preventative health provision, learning disabilities and community asset development. There has been slow but tangible progress on each of these which have provide the foundations for an action plan, drawn up in conjunction with representatives of the Third Sector. Further exemplars in the fields of environment, creative industries, housing, climate change, and waste will be encouraged and supported. In addition,

means of helping social enterprises tender for contracts with the public sector are being delivered with Devon Procurement Services and Teignbridge CVS which is leading on a county wide project to build capacity in the third sector. Additional funding of at least £75,000 pa will be needed to progress this initiative and the County Council has allocated £50,000. These funds are being used to support development of the Devon School for Social Entrepreneurs at Dartington and to provide business development advice to social enterprises via Business Link. With an estimated 255 social enterprises in the county, geographical impact will be widespread and strongly influenced by the response from the community.

### **LAA 17 Adult Skills:**

This outcome is being co-ordinated through the Productive Skills for Devon partnership. The framework for the 2008-11 Delivery Plan was agreed and the local detail provided in the light of the Partnership's experience over the previous 3 years. Nearly £1.3m from the Learning and Skills Council and DCC has been invested to date and the partnership is now considering how a proportion of the reward money from the LPSA2 skills theme (£1.66 m) can be reinvested in the programme for the next two years. This is likely to focus on further research, organisational support for the employment and skills boards and workforce development groups, capital schemes, community outreach and innovation. Much of the work is thematic but specific geographical impact has included north Devon and Torridge, Princetown, Teignmouth and Dawlish and most of the 'priority' communities. Partners have collaborated to submit a proposal for the Future Jobs Fund to create supported employment to long term unemployed young people.

### **LAA 18 Adoption of ICT:**

The Devon ICT strategy commissioned by DCC has been completed. We have engaged widely (3 workshops along with 'one to ones' with Devon's stakeholders in ICT) and developed a blueprint for the exploitation of ICT in Devon to "enable wealth and well being throughout the county".

As a result of DCC taking the lead, ICT is firmly at the top of the economic development and strategic planning agenda for enabling greater productivity (by mitigating the peripherality of many of our rural businesses), enabling stronger communities - with the concept of work hubs, access to public services, internet rangers (the young assisting the old with IT!) and providing a solution to impending PO closures and contributing to a greener Devon with the concept of ICT providing smart working and flexible working opportunities. There are tasks for improving infrastructure, developing a capable workforce and ICT savvy citizens and providing content rich online services that contribute to the strengthening of our priority communities.

We have identified 10 funding opportunities and DCC has allocated £179k revenue and £700k capital to help implement the Strategy. We are working closely with our ICT colleagues in maximising the opportunities the proposed wider area network offers for Devon.

### **LAA 19 Innovation Strategy:**

We have hosted two workshops - a future economic vision and a subsequent innovation workshop.

The vision identified that climate change was our biggest challenge and that Devon was in strong position in meeting this challenge. A sustainable economy that adopted a different set of matrices to measure success and wealth was unanimously agreed; i.e. triple bottom line accounting should be adopted. In addition ICT, technology and innovation were seen to be the tools for achieving a sustainable, green and prosperous economy. We should be innovative in identifying and encouraging what wealth really is and that our biggest challenge might not be in the new ideas but in escaping the old ones.

We then hosted an innovation workshop to identify the current platform for innovative thinking in Devon, to identify exemplars and to make recommendations for an innovation action plan for Devon. Innovation was seen as not just good practice, but *next* practice, and that to have an innovative economy required a supportive culture where entrepreneurs can be creative and rewarded for the successful exploitation of new ideas. Whilst failure is often a common early stepping stone - the failure to innovate was seen as invitation to failure.

We are currently analysing these findings looking at European examples, identifying gaps that we might fill and looking towards identifying suitable funding opportunities.

#### **LAA 20 Local bus journeys:**

The target for 08/09 was for 23,502,811 local bus journeys to originate in the authority area; the achievement was one million more than this. The national concessionary travel scheme has increased patronage, but the underlying trend over the last six years has also shown a steady increase in patronage in Devon, bucking the nation trend of decline outside London. The increase can be attributed to investment in new low floor easy access buses on key routes; innovation including promoting and developing services with potential for growth such as Park & Ride, the X53 Jurassic Coast service and Culm Valley Connect service 1. It has also been achieved through working in partnership with bus operators and improving both the quality and scope of public transport information.

#### **LAA 21 Transport infrastructure improvements:**

East of Exeter infrastructure: Detailed negotiations have resulted in agreement that Clyst Honiton bypass is likely to be funded by a combination of Growth Point funds and Regional Infrastructure Funding. This will enable the scheme to begin construction in 2010. Detailed discussions continue for the design and construction of the scheme. The major scheme bid for Programme Entry has been accepted by the Dept for Transport which is an important step in the process and provides confidence that funding has been secured.

South Devon Link Road: a public enquiry into the side road orders currently is taking place. DCC has provided 11 witnesses to give evidence to support the scheme over a 6 week period. There are a series of objectors to the scheme, including the Kingskerswell Alliance who suggest a different approach involving making greater

use of the existing road network coupled with a series of demand management measures. The inspector is expected to report by the end of the year.

East of Plymouth Strategic Transport Infrastructure: this scheme is being progressed by Plymouth City Council with the aim of submitting a Programme Entry Bid to the DfT in 2010.

Exeter Principal Urban Area and High Quality Public Transport: major scheme bids currently are being progressed. The programme for construction has been deferred by the Regional Assembly. However, the progression of the Scheme Entry bids is expected in 2010.

Additional passing loop on Exeter – Waterloo line: construction has commenced and will be complete in 2010.

### **LAA 22 Employment Space:**

Through the Devon Economic Partnership, consultants were engaged to research and draft an Employment Space Strategy for Devon, including Plymouth and Torbay. This Strategy has been agreed. This provides a basis for formulating a Delivery Plan and the associated prioritisation of sites. Detailed proposals are being formulated for a number of sites including, Skypark, the Exeter Science Park and a rural business park in Holsworthy and preliminary work is underway for other sites, including those in Teignmouth, Seaton and Ilfracombe.

### **LAA 24 Worklessness:**

The Devon Worklessness Forum now includes the main organisations contracted by Job Centre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council to address 'worklessness'. Having agreed the county targets for both those in employment and those with disabilities, discussions are underway with local partners to agree a series of specific actions, summarised below:

- Develop neighbourhood action teams to progress partnership work and all work under the motto, 'If worklessness is part of the problem, then work is part of the solution'.
- Work with local providers and partners to target activity in the priority areas to engage disadvantaged customers on the journey towards and into work eg in Exeter and focussed on priority groups such as travellers.
- Develop and deliver an enhanced employer engagement strategy
- Gain operational support for partnership work and understanding of LAA targets.
- Consolidate Devon Worklessness Forum to bring together relevant partners and co-ordinate these initiatives.

- Partners have developed an application to the Future Jobs Fund to provide employment for 18-24 year olds who have been unemployed for over 12 months.

### **LAA 25 Land based activity**

Funding was awarded for employment of a project development worker to assist farmers and land owners access grants from the RDPE.; Sarah Woollacott commenced in the Economy Unit in February and currently has a case load of 200 potential applications. The Environment Agency is reviewing a soils map for the county. A Devon Agri-Food Board has been created to provide more consistent co-ordination of initiatives in this sector. These activities complement a series of other initiatives designed to diversify the rural economy and include research into the impact of climate change on agriculture.

### **World Class Environment Theme**

#### **LAA 1: Reducing Waste**

£1.292 million of capital funding and £422,000 revenue funding was shared between Devon authorities to further their joint goal of reduced waste arising and to landfill which is the LAA1 target and national indicator NI193 (percentage of Municipal Solid Waste Landfilled). The LAA1 target for 08/09 was 48.5%. The target was actually exceeded with only 47.49% of Devon's MSW being landfilled. However, there is a shortfall in the Waste Infrastructure Capital Grant funding in 2010/11 which is approx one third of previous years' allocations and revenue funding also is likely to be severely restricted.

#### **LAA2: Improve the Quantity, Quality [Clean, Green and Safe] and Accessibility of Public Spaces and Green Infrastructure**

The partnership has agreed baseline performance and targets, following publication of the Place Survey. A leaflet explaining the work of the partnership, the delivery plan and the role of green infrastructure in the LDF process has been produced and distributed to all stakeholders and interested parties. A sub group is currently working on mapping of green infrastructure assets to feed into a planned conference in the autumn for which there is a shortfall of £6,000 to be met.

#### **LAA3: Climate Change Adaptation**

A project plan has been produced and was discussed at CMB on 6 July before being presented at the DSP Delivery Board on 9 July. Existing policies and data relevant to adaptation is being documented, a local impacts profile is being prepared and key vulnerabilities identified against the background of the recently published UKCLIP forecasts.

#### **LAA4: Renewable Energy For Devon**

RE4D has continued to be delivered through 08/09 and now can continue until March 2010, largely due to funding from DCC and targets for business support, installations,

RE sector support and RE sector training are being delivered across all of Devon (all except Plymouth and Torbay).

The current economic climate has had an impact on the RE sector and this is also being affected by some of the larger companies being bought by national organisations or moving out of Devon. This means that we are not even achieving the baseline turnover by employee and GVA figures, set on the basis of a regional report commissioned by RegenSW. There is also consolidation among the smaller SMEs in Devon. However, installations and RE4D Grants are continuing and carbon dioxide savings are ahead of our target. Combined turnover of those responding to our survey (36 orgs of a possible 64) is up £2.9m with jobs up 30%.

There have been ongoing delays in raising the Cooperation Interreg EU funding, largely due to lack of commitment from French partners. The funding bid is now due to go in October 2009 with a start date of Feb 2010. We are also working on “Competitiveness” EU funding for business support as an alternative option. DCC has awarded grants worth £96k from the capital grants fund of £450k in the first 2 rounds. The expenditure of this fund will continue to support our targets.

#### **LAA5: Reducing Carbon Emissions**

Work has been undertaken to revisit the proxy indicators developed for LAA5 to assess progress. This priority is a summation of work across several other LAA workstreams, as well as accounting for the carbon management programmes of DSP partner organisations.

An update of progress against proxy indicators was commissioned from the university and this shows mixed progress. The County Council also reviewed the progress of those DSP partners committed to carbon management programmes for their progress – District Councils; Devon and Cornwall Police; the PCT; the University. This concludes that “the LAA target of 9kt CO<sub>2</sub> reduction will only be met if partners increase the scale of their current implementation and aim to exceed their stated targets. In addition to all the actions planned by partners, it is essential that some large scale actions.....are implemented successfully”. Progress with the Envision business support programme seems to have been successful, but progress with the fuel poverty strand of the work is less certain given the complexity of the funding and delivery arrangements. However, recent funding secured from the County Council to increase the DWZ ‘offer’ and a revised marketing plan may help to address the situation.

#### **LAA6: Driving Business Competitiveness and Reducing Carbon Emissions in Public Sector Supply Chains**

A number of public sector bodies have established a steering group and started to work on policy development and promotion in the area of sustainable procurement. Activity is currently focused on identifying the supply chain and benchmarking procurement activities against the Flexible Framework for Procurement.

A bid for BREW Centre funding was successful – external specialist advice has been contracted to aid with project delivery. A further bid to the SW RIEP is in progress for Local Improvement Advisor support, to further aid facilitation and advice. The

project is on track against the outputs identified and a clear lead identified in Devon Procurement Services.

### **LAA 8: Biodiversity**

49 of the 55 Strategic Nature Areas now have a written profile and basic Nature Maps have been produced for each District. The programme of Parish Biodiversity Audits is under way, with 29 of the target of 60 having been completed. Work is under way with the Community Council to ensure biodiversity is included in the parish planning advice given to communities.

A draft biodiversity monitoring framework has been produced and a pilot has been undertaken.

Finance for a small capital grants scheme to fund infrastructure (fencing, gates, scrub clearance) for County Wildlife Sites is being sought.

### **LAA12: Improving Cultural Opportunities in Devon**

This priority has two local targets (i) to establish a Devon Cultural Partnership and (ii) to undertake a study of cultural infrastructure needs for Devon. We now have the national returns for NI 8-12 which shows Devon at or just above average in terms of 16+ cultural participation. The publication of the Active Places survey is awaited; its results will help shape priorities.

Recent positive steps in this area have included:

(i) the formation of a new SW Local Authorities Cultural Partnership, following the demise of the Culture SW consortium;

(ii) the formation through Exeter CC of a 'Planning for Culture' working group to consider infrastructure needs in and around Exeter. Plans are also in hand for a complementary PAC group for northern Devon.

The recent changes in DCMS policy (eg reduction of regional presence for cultural agencies such as MLA and Arts Council England; diversion of lottery funding to 2012) will raise particular challenges for the new Devon Partnership. New cultural partnerships have recently been established for Plymouth and for Torbay.

### **LAA33: Reducing Fuel Poverty**

The target for the Devon Warm Zone activity is 11,138 insulation measures within the Devon County Administrative area during the 2 ½ year life of the project. As a rough guide this should equate to 10,125 homes being insulated resulting in CO<sub>2</sub> savings of 8.1 ktonne .

To date 915 measures have been installed resulting in an estimated CO<sub>2</sub> saving of 464 Tonnes.

The start of the Devon Warmzones project was delayed, as was the production of the marketing plan, as a result of administrative complications around the delivery mechanism. These problems have now been rectified with the result that marketing activity has been stepped up with targeted mail outs having taken place. Further promotional activity, including radio advertising is planned shortly. Funding from the County Council will improve the take up of energy efficiency measures to vulnerable households who fall in the 'able to pay' category.

Technical and capacity issues of the insulation installer companies have also affected delivery of the project. These issues have been addressed with a large installer company being brought in to clear back logs that have arisen.

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