Executive summary

In January 2007 Lambeth First (the borough’s Local Strategic Partnership) requested a detailed review of the existing Community Strategy to take account of the latest government guidance on Sustainable Community Strategies and to ensure that the strategy addressed new/persistent challenges facing the borough.

This review led to the development of a new Sustainable Community Strategy (2008-2020). This revised strategy builds on the 2004 Community Strategy, reflects the vision/long term outcomes that Lambeth First wishes to achieve for the borough and provides a clear direction for the work of the LSP in the medium and long term. This new Sustainable Community Strategy is underpinned by a three year action plan which is the new Local Area Agreement (2008-2011) for Lambeth.

The Sustainable Community Strategy takes as its central focus the concept of worklessness, as analysis has shown that tackling this core problem will lead to wider improvements in quality of life. It also sets out how the partnership will tackle the wider economic, social and environmental issues facing Lambeth in order to achieve a thriving and prosperous borough.

Summary of financial implications

The Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement will deploy existing partnership resources, including the Working Neighbourhoods Fund to deliver the strategy. In addition, partner organisations of Lambeth First will be expected to cascade the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy and medium term priorities of the
Local Area Agreement through their organisations via their own service and financial planning processes.

**Recommendations**

**Cabinet**

1. That the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020 at Appendix 1 be endorsed and referred to Council on 9 July 2008 for final approval.

2. That the draft Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy (Appendix 1) be approved, subject to Council approval of the recommendations set out below.

**Council**


2. To concur with Cabinet’s approval of the draft Local Area Agreement.

3. To agree that the function of approving the Local Area Agreement be discharged by Cabinet as an executive function.

**Consultation**

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<tr>
<th>Name of consultee</th>
<th>Directorate or Organisation</th>
<th>Date sent to consultee</th>
<th>Date response received from consultee</th>
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<td>Councillor Steve Reed</td>
<td>Leader of the Council</td>
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Report history

| Decision type: | Key decision | Urgency item? | No |
| Authorised by Cabinet member: | Date report drafted: | Report deadline: | Date report sent: |
| 20.05.08 | 13.05.08 | 23.05.08 | 23.05.08 |

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Background documents
SCS/LAA Consultation Report 2008
State of the Borough Report 2008
LAA Story of Place / LAA Submission March 2008
Lambeth Residents’ Survey 2007
Local Area Agreement Direction issued by the Secretary of State on 5 March 2008
Variation to the Secretary of State’s LAA Direction issued 28 May 2008

Appendices

- Appendix one: Moving Forward Together: Lambeth’s Sustainable Community Strategy (2008-2020)
Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020 and Local Area Agreement 2008-2011

1. Context

1.1 In January 2007 Lambeth First requested a detailed review of Lambeth’s existing Community Strategy which was approved in 2004. The aim of this review was to ensure our Community Strategy took account of new government guidance around the need to develop a Sustainable Community Strategy, ensure that the strategy addressed new challenges facing the borough and continued to effectively tackle persistent issues. This review is now complete and has led to the development of a new Sustainable Community Strategy (2008-2020).

1.2 Once approved, the new Sustainable Community Strategy will be the overarching long term strategic plan for the borough and, as such, will influence all other partnership strategies, plans and policies. The strategy will be owned by Lambeth First and implemented by its partners – which include Lambeth Council.

1.3 In addition, to ensure delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy the council has worked with Lambeth First partners to develop a refreshed Local Area Agreement for the borough. This sets out improvement priorities for Lambeth over the next three years and should be viewed as the key medium term delivery plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

2. Proposals and reasons

Sustainable Community Strategy

2.1 As a key partner within Lambeth First and a provider of major public services to the community, it is vital that the council supports the long term focus of the Sustainable Community Strategy and proactively works with partners within Lambeth First to deliver the strategy’s outcomes. To ensure there is political support for the strategy, Cabinet and Full Council are therefore being asked to endorse and approve the strategic focus of the document respectively.

2.2 Specifically, the Sustainable Community Strategy consists of the following elements:

2.2.1 A proposed long term vision for the borough which is consistent with the council’s vision, as expressed within our refreshed Corporate Plan (2008-11). The vision aims to ensure that by 2020 “Lambeth is a diverse, dynamic and enterprising borough at the heart of London.”

2.2.2 Underpinning this vision, the Sustainable Community Strategy sets out seven long-term outcomes. These will focus our efforts and enable the partnership to deliver the strategy’s vision. These are:

- Lambeth is a great place to do business with higher levels of investment and business growth
- Greater wellbeing for households through higher numbers of residents in employment
Children and young people are on the path to success through the provision of good quality education, training and jobs which reduces the risk of exclusion and offending

Safe and cohesive places where people are empowered and have the confidence to play active roles in their communities

Improved health and wellbeing of people which enables them to live active and independent lives

Lower levels of poverty and social exclusion in Lambeth by helping more of our socially excluded adults in employment, education and training

Mixed and sustainable communities with an increased supply of new homes, improved existing dwellings and a high quality physical environment

Together, the vision and outcomes are also consistent with the emerging vision in the Local Development Framework’s Core Strategy. Once complete the Local Development Framework will guide spatial planning within the borough. Alignment between the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Development Framework will ensure spatial planning is consistent with the long term direction of the borough, as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

2.2.3 Our core theme running through the strategy, and addressed within each outcome, is the issue of worklessness. Our analysis identified worklessness as being a key causative factor of many of the issues facing Lambeth such as poverty and social exclusion. These issues in turn led to poor health, crime, poor education and low aspirations. By framing our new Sustainable Community Strategy around worklessness we believe we can make a positive step toward breaking this cycle.

2.2.4 Finally, the Sustainable Community Strategy has set out four universal issues – equalities and community cohesion, sustainability, culture and neighbourhood working. In seeking to deliver our long term outcomes we will ensure that we will consider these issues when developing/delivering partnership actions and projects.

Local Area Agreement

2.3 In order to begin delivering the long term outcomes in the Sustainable Community Strategy over the next three years, the council and partners have developed a refreshed Local Area Agreement. This sets out key targets and areas of work we will seek to make progress against from 2008-11.

2.4 The Local Area Agreement was produced by a cross-cutting group from across the partnership and involved Lambeth First’s theme partnership boards. The Local Area Agreement closely corresponds to the outcomes within the Sustainable Community Strategy with a predominance of performance indicators around employment generation, skills development, supporting economically disadvantaged families/individuals and improving community safety.

2.5 However the Local Area Agreement is negotiated with central government, via Government Office for London, and the government’s emerging devolution agenda is being applied with varying success and purpose in different Whitehall departments. This means that in practice, Lambeth’s Local Area Agreement
resembles a ‘central-local agreement’ and has had to include some performance indicators required by central government for delivering PSA targets rather than performance indicators that correlate to the core focus of our Sustainable Community Strategy.

2.6 In developing our Local Area Agreement, statutory guidance requires the agreement to include ‘up to’ 35 performance indicators. Lambeth’s Local Area Agreement includes a full set of 35 indicators that seeks to balance local priorities with the needs of key Whitehall PSAs. It also includes three local indicators reflecting local needs\(^1\). The full list of Local Area Agreement indicators and targets is contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy attached to this report.

2.7 In addition to seeking Cabinet approval of the LAA, recommendation 2 of this report is also seeking the approval of full Council. Although, unlike the Sustainable Community Strategy, there is currently no statutory requirement to obtain Council approval of the LAA, the draft statutory guidance *Creating Strong & Prosperous Communities* indicated that full Council should be responsible for formally adopting the LAA. As stated in the letter dated 5 March that accompanied the Direction issued by the Secretary of State, it was agreed in the light of responses to consultation that decisions as to who should be responsible for functions relating to LAAs should instead be a matter left to local discretion. The letter states:

“This was on the basis that LAAs are the delivery agreement for the long term objectives identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy and, as such, the objectives in the LAA should already have been subject to full council scrutiny and sign off…”

2.8 However, as the Sustainable Community Strategy has not yet been considered by Council, Council will be asked on 9 July to approve the Sustainable Community Strategy and ratify the LAA. Council will also be invited to agree that the approval of the LAA, or any revisions thereto, should be discharged by Cabinet as an executive function. This is addressed further in paragraph 4.6 below.

2.9 The Direction of the Secretary of State requires all of the authorities listed in the schedule thereto, including Lambeth, to prepare and submit to her, a draft LAA on or before 30\(^{th}\) May. This has been achieved in negotiation with GOL although it has not been possible to arrange the necessary authority to delegate the approval of the LAA to Cabinet by this date. Officers have been informed that other authorities have also been affected by this very tight timetable and recent changes to the statutory position, as a result of which a revised Direction was issued by the Secretary of State on 28 May, prescribing a new deadline of 27 June for submission of the draft LAA. When submitting the draft LAA it will be made clear that this is subject to approval of Recommendation 2 above by full Council on 9 July and that any changes agreed by Council will be communicated to GOL immediately thereafter.

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\(^1\) These are performance indicators in addition to the 35 which will not be monitored by Lambeth First but not by central government
3. Comments from Executive Director of Finance and Resources

3.1 Lambeth First recognises that the long term outcomes within the Sustainable Community Strategy and the targets within the Local Area Agreement will need to be met through existing financial resources (Area Based Grant, partner organisation funding – which will include council funding) and any additional funding streams secured from central government – such as the Working Neighbourhoods Fund. However, Lambeth First are clear that many of the improvements sets out within the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement are not dependent on additional funding, rather they require the council and partners to work together more effectively to deliver services in new and innovative ways.

3.2 In addition, the council has already sought to ensure that, where possible, its organisational priorities/outcomes are consistent with those in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The refreshed Corporate Plan (2008-11) shows how the council’s priorities and outcomes contribute to the focus of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

3.3 Further, as the Corporate Plan (2008-11) will underpin our service and financial planning process for 2009/10 – 2011/12, we will be in a position to ensure that the council contributes to the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy both in 2008/09 and over the medium term through its own financial resources.

4. Comments from Director of Legal and Democratic Services

4.1 By virtue of section 2, Local Government Act 2000, local authorities have the power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area. This power may be exercised in relation to, or for the benefit of, the whole or any part of the authority’s area or all or any persons resident or present in their area.

4.2 The section 2 power includes power for a local authority to, inter alia, give financial assistance to, enter into an agreement with, or provide staff, goods, services or accommodation to, any person. However, the well-being power does not enable the authority to raise money, nor to do anything which it is unable to do by virtue of any existing statutory prohibition, restriction or limitation on its powers.

4.3 Section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000 places a statutory obligation on the Council to prepare a strategy for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK.

4.4 Part 5 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 provides for a Local Area Agreement (“LAA”), which is an agreement between a local authority and certain partner authorities, approved by the Secretary of State. It must be prepared by the local authority which will consult partner authorities and others (including persons from the voluntary and community sector and local businesses). The local authority and partner authorities are required to co-operate with each other in determining local improvement targets.
for the area to be included in the LAA. Part 5 also amends section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000 to provide that the local authorities which prepare LAA’s must consult partner authorities when preparing their sustainable community strategy.

4.5 Article 4 of the Council’s Constitution provides that the functions of the full Council include the approval and adoption of various policies, plans and strategies which together make up the Council’s budgetary and policy framework. These include the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (Part 4, Section 3 of the Constitution) require that the Cabinet’s proposals in relation to any such policy, plan or strategy be submitted to full Council and that, in reaching a decision, the Council may adopt the Cabinet’s proposals, amend them, refer them back to the Cabinet for consideration or, in principle, submit its own proposals in their place.

4.6 Reference is made in paragraphs 2.7 to 2.9 above to the Direction issued by the Secretary of State on 5 March (and revised on 28 May), pursuant to section 106 of the 2007 Act, and to the covering letter which refers to the intention to amend the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 so that the functions relating to the preparation, submission and modification of a LAA under sections 106, 110, 111 and 113 of the 2007 Act will be “local choice” functions, i.e. that may be, but need not be, the responsibility of Cabinet. It is therefore necessary for Council to make this “local choice” decision at the next scheduled ordinary meeting on 9 July but, in view of the deadline for the submission of the LAA the draft approved by Cabinet on 16 June will need to be submitted to the Secretary of State before the Council meeting, making it clear that the submission is subject to the adoption of recommendation 2 by Council on 9 July. Sections 107-112 of the 2007 Act make provision for the possible revision of the draft LAA and local improvement targets in any event.

4.7 Article 7.05 of the Council's Constitution provides that:

"The Cabinet is responsible for undertaking all of the Council's functions except for those functions (including regulatory functions) that are reserved to the Council and that are undertaken by the full Council or delegated by the Council to committees, sub-committees or officers."

Article 4.04 of the Constitution provides that the functions of the (full) Council include:

"To approve and adopt the following policies, plans and strategies which together will make up the Council's budgetary and policy framework …" (None of the plans and strategies listed in Article 4.04 include the LAA) and:

"To agree all local choice functions set out in Part 3 of this Constitution which the Council decides should be undertaken by itself rather than the Cabinet."

5. Results of consultation

5.1 In developing the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement Lambeth First undertook a consultation and communications programme to
ascertain views and invite feedback. A series of events and consultation activities took place between 3 December 2007 and 29 February 2008.

5.2 In addition, Lambeth First consulted with each of its theme partnerships, local councillors, businesses and people who live/work/visit Lambeth. A variety of methods were used throughout the consultation. Electronic kiosks were placed in 20 post offices and local customer centres around Lambeth and we received 3,311 responses. People also had the opportunity to fill in an online questionnaire and email feedback to consultation@lambethfirst.org.uk. For participants who wished to provide more detailed feedback, Lambeth First developed the SCS workbook. These other channels generated 148 responses.

5.3 Local town centre areas were also targeted with 300 street surveys carried out in Clapham, Stockwell and Streatham. Drama workshops were also held at the People First Expo events in North Lambeth, Norwood and Brixton. This allowed 50 people to provide feedback on their priorities. Lambeth Voluntary Action Council (LVAC) also ran workshops with 137 representatives from voluntary/community sector organisations and older people within the borough to gather their views.

5.4 In total 4,226 people gave their views during the formal consultation period for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

5.5 Key findings included the need to:

5.5.1 Ensure the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement had a strong focus around community safety and tackling crime/gangs.

5.5.2 Ensure the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement included a focus on housing and health within the strategy. Earlier drafts of the strategy did not sufficiently show how these issues contributed to the worklessness agenda.

5.5.3 Deliver services flexibly to different communities and age groups.

5.5.4 Show how our focus on worklessness also took account of the environment and sustainability.

5.5.5 Make the links between the vision and outcomes within the Sustainable Community Strategy and planning policy.

5.5.6 Reduce youth offending and raise aspirations of young people.

5.5.7 Balance targeted activities for specific geographic areas/communities with improvements to universal services.

5.6 The Sustainable Community Strategy and associated Local Area Agreement now incorporate these key issues. Detailed information setting out how Lambeth First responded to this feedback is set out within Appendix Four of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
6. **Organisational implications**

6.1 **Risk management:**
The vision and outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy will be articulated in a rolling series of three year thematic strategies and the Local Area Agreement. These in turn will influence corporate planning, which will capture risks and record them on the corporate risk register as appropriate.

6.2 **Equalities impact assessment:**
An Equalities and Cohesion Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Sustainable Community Strategy and an Equalities & Cohesion Action Plan is also under development. The latter will set out a distinctive perspective on tackling worklessness and on tackling the other major issues which impinge on equality, diversity and integration/cohesion. These were completed at the end of May.

Key issues emerging out of the assessment included:

- The need for all communities to be involved in spatial planning
- The provision of tailored support for SME businesses and those owned by individuals from our BME communities
- Targeted work with children and young people who are involved in gangs
- A focus on reducing health inequalities
- The need to undertake targeted work to enable socially excluded communities to gain employment
- Ensuring that the council works with other local authorities to ensure that housing needs of individuals and families are met

6.3 **Community safety implications:**
The Sustainable Community Strategy’s includes a specific outcome around creating empowered, safe and cohesive places. In addition, we believe that tackling worklessness will reduce crime as poverty rates and financial wellbeing will improve.

6.4 **Environmental implications:**
The Sustainable Community Strategy promotes environmental sustainability for 2020, will improve the quality of the local environment/public realm and will balance the demands for residential, commercial and green space. The Local Area Agreement will focus on providing good quality housing, improving the local environment, and reducing CO2 emissions over the next three years. In addition, throughout the development of the strategy we have ensured that the outcomes we are pursuing are consistent with the Government’s five principles of sustainability. Each outcome within the strategy sets out which sustainability principle it contributes toward.

6.5 **Staffing and accommodation implications:**
No specific implications arise from the Sustainable Community Strategy or Local Area Agreement.

6.6 **Any other implications:**
There are no other implications identified at this time.
7. **Timetable for implementation**

7.1 The vision and outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy will direct the work of the partnership, its theme partnerships and the partner organisations from 2008 to 2020. The first Local Area Agreement will run from 2008 to 2011, with subsequent agreements lasting for each three year period from 2011 to 2020. Both documents will undergo a light touch refresh on an annual basis in accordance with emerging statutory guidance from central government. Any changes made as a result of this refresh will be brought to Cabinet and Full Council for discussion and approval.

7.2 Key milestones for Lambeth First to commence delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and associated Local Area Agreement include:

7.2.1 **May 2008**: Complete mapping of activities that are already in place which enable delivery of our outcomes and identification of new activities/programmes that will address gaps in service provision.

7.2.2 **May 2008 – March 2009**: Implement and coordinate activities across Lambeth First with performance reviewed every six weeks.

7.3 The annual refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement will commence in August 2008. A specific project plan for this will be developed once both documents have been approved by Cabinet, Full Council and the Lambeth First Executive.