

Milton Keynes Community Safety Partnership

January 15th 2007

Local Area Agreement 2007-10

Reason for report

1. To present the second draft of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) for consideration by the Partnership
2. To request approval of the Safer and Stronger Communities strand of the Agreement.

Background

The LAA represents an agreement between Milton Keynes Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and central government concerning strategic priorities and service delivery over the next three years. Its principal concern is to deliver services in areas that are not currently covered by single agencies; i.e. where a Partnership approach is essential. The title of the LAA, *Closing the Gap*, reflects this concern.

The LAA lasts three years, and is subject to annual review and revision (the “refresh” process). It is currently a voluntary agreement, but will soon be mandatory for all local authority areas. It is divided into four blocks:

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

The following issues may be borne in mind when reading the LAA:

- The blocks are introduced as convenient chapter headings, but they are not supposed to act as silos. The LAA should function as a single unit, with the same strategic concerns reflected in each of the blocks.
- The LAA represents a major statement of priorities over the next three years, and it is very much a partnership document. It can only be achieved by co-operation between all partner agencies including the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- In theory it is possible to negotiate “enabling measures” with central government in which the latter agrees to relax certain conditions in return for improved service delivery. In practice very few enabling measures have been granted in the areas that have adopted LAAs so far. Those put forward by

Milton Keynes have already been largely rejected on a variety of grounds. The LAA is therefore better considered as a co-operative method of tackling key issues than as a means of securing relaxation of government strictures.

- The LAA is not a method of securing additional funding. No new money will be released through the LAA.
- The LAA should be flexible enough to revise targets and introduce new ones over its period of life. It will become a “rolling three year plan“ that is likely to become an essential tool in future planning.

Recommendations

The LSP is responsible for putting together the Local Area Agreement, but the Safer and Stronger Communities block is delegated to the Community Safety Partnership. The Partnership is asked to consider the entire draft Agreement and to approve the safer and stronger communities block.

Attachments

Closing the Gap - text
Closing the Gap - targets

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