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**Report to**

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

5 March 2008

Cabinet

11 March 2008

**Report of**

Chief Executive

**Title**

Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement

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**1 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree and adopt the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy and to agree a set of indicators for the new Local Area Agreement as a basis for further negotiation with central government.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is asked to consider and comment upon the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy document set out in appendix a and the proposed indicator set for the LAA set out in appendix b.
- 2.2 Cabinet is asked to approve the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy set out in appendix a and recommend this to Council for adoption
- 2.3 Cabinet is asked to approve the proposed indicator set for the Local Area Agreement set out in appendix b as the basis for further negotiation with central government

**3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 The development of a local Sustainable Community Strategy for Coventry is a government requirement and is the subject of national government guidance and inspection. It is the responsibility of Coventry City Council as the local authority to ensure that the strategy is developed and adopted.
- 3.2 The Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy has been developed from the second Coventry Community Plan that was adopted in July 2004 and has been developed in partnership through the Coventry Partnership, the city's Local Strategic Partnership that consists of public, private, voluntary and community organisations, including Coventry City Council using evidence from a strategic assessment of the needs of the city that was undertaken in summer 2007.

- 3.3 It is important that the development of both the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement are evidence based and build upon the analysis of the current position in Coventry, expected future trends and the existing priorities and strategies that have been agreed with central government, local partner organisations and local people and communities.
- 3.4 The Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy has been developed within the context of future growth and aspirations for the city. It will set out the long-term vision for the city and long term strategic objectives and outcomes for Coventry that will make our city a place where people choose to live, work, learn and to do business and focus on ensuring that future growth is used to transform the city and benefit local people by improving quality of life, raising aspirations and narrowing the gap in the city.
- 3.5 Sustainability issues, including climate change and the environment and equality of opportunity and community cohesion need to influence the development of the strategy and be embedded within it.
- 3.6 Community involvement is essential to the development, delivery and evaluation of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the development of a formal Community Engagement Strategy will form part of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 3.7 By setting out the overall strategic direction and outcomes for the city for the next twenty years the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy provides a clear focus and priorities that will inform the development of a range of key strategies and organisations plans that will help to deliver the improvements and the activities needed to achieve the agreed strategic long term outcomes for the city. Examples include the city's Economic Development Strategy and the Climate Change Strategy.
- 3.8 The **Local Development Framework** (LDF) sets out the policies that provide for the spatial planning and future physical development of Coventry and is particularly important to the achievement of the Sustainable Community Strategy so central government has advised that the Core Strategy of the LDF should form part of the city's overall Sustainable Community Strategy. Coventry's Local Development Framework Core Strategy is being developed within the context of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy that sets out the strategic planning policy for the region, including the number of additional dwellings that the city should plan for.
- 3.9 Another important means of delivering the long-term outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy will be the city's new **Local Area Agreement** (LAA). This replaces the current three-year Local Area Agreement that is due to finish at the end of March 2008.

#### **4 Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy**

- 4.1 Cabinet agreed the consultation process and consultation draft of the Sustainable Community Strategy at its meeting on 14 November 2007. An extensive consultation exercise took place from Monday 3 December to Friday 25 January 2008 and the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy has been revised to take account of the comments received. An analysis of the comments received and the amendments made is available as a separate document. The final version of the strategy was considered by the Coventry Partnership Board at its meeting on 21 February 2008.
- 4.2 Once the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy has been adopted action plans and a performance management framework will be developed to ensure that the outcome and priorities in it are achieved, including the delivery of the new Local Area Agreement.

## **5 Local Area Agreement**

- 5.1 The new Local Area Agreement will be signed between the Coventry Partnership, Coventry City Council and central government and will set out, after negotiation, up to 35 agreed priorities with improvement targets across a range of areas such as employment and skills, housing, environment, community safety, health. There will also be an additional 16 statutory targets for early years and educational attainment in schools.
- 5.2 The new Local Area Agreement has a three-year time scale and should include short-term priorities that will help to achieve the long-term objectives and outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 5.3 The Local Area Agreement priorities and targets are based upon the National Indicator Set of 198 indicators. The Local Area Agreement is key to central government's assessment of the council's performance in the future and will also be used to assess the performance of the Coventry Partnership and other partners.
- 5.4 Although formal approval of the Local Area Agreement will take place in June 2008, the council and Coventry Partnership have been asked to provide a proposed set of indicators for central government to consider in March 2008 although it is acknowledged that at this stage these can still be changed.
- 5.5 Extensive discussions have taken place with partner organisations including the Local Public Service Board to identify indicators for the Local Area Agreement and initial negotiations have taken place with the Government Office for the West Midlands about the indicators that central government departments consider should be included within the Coventry Local Area Agreement.
- 5.6 Care has been taken to ensure that the indicators selected are robust and measurable and make sense together as a set. Equality and cohesion issues will be addressed through all the indicators where it is appropriate and priorities requiring partnership working have received particular attention. As with the current Local Area Agreement, with the exception of anti-social behaviour, perception measures have been avoided as they do not lend themselves to robust performance management of target setting over three years. The following criteria have also been applied:
  - Is it a priority for us locally?
  - Is there a real need for improvement?
  - Can we make an impact over three years?
  - Is it a herd-leader – does it deliver on a number of outcomes?
  - Is it a government priority for improvement?
  - Is it something we are already committed to?
  - Do we have the resources to deliver – or can we re-direct resources?
- 5.7 At this stage the indicators set out in appendix B are not finalised or formally agreed and can be changed before the final LAA is agreed in June 2008. However, they will provide the basis for further negotiations and target setting with central government

## **6 Proposal and Other Option(s) to be Considered**

- 6.1 It is proposed that Cabinet approve the document attached at appendix A as the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy and recommend this to Council.

6.2 It is also proposed that Cabinet should approve the indicator set at appendix 2 as the basis for use in negotiations with central government on the new Local Area Agreement for Coventry.

6.3 There are no other options proposed.

**7 Other specific implications**

	<b>Implications (See below)</b>	<b>No Implications</b>
Best Value	√	
Children and Young People	√	
Climate Change and Sustainable Development	√	
Comparable Benchmark Data	√	
Corporate Parenting	√	
Coventry Community Plan	√	
Crime and Disorder	√	
Equal Opportunities	√	
Finance	√	
Health and Safety		√
Human Resources		√
Human Rights Act	√	
Impact on Partner Organisations	√	
Information and Communications Technology		√
Legal Implications	√	
Neighbourhood Management	√	
Property Implications		√
Race Equality Scheme	√	
Risk Management		√
Trade Union Consultation		√
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact	√	

7.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy will provide strategic direction for the council and its partners and will be used to inform the development of delivery strategies and to set priorities and targets. It will therefore have implications for the council's and our partners' services; partnership working and aims to improve equality of opportunity and to make the city more sustainable and tackle climate change. The development of the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement has involved a range of partners including the voluntary sector and it will inform the choice of priorities and targets and used in performance management in the future.

- 7.2 **Equal Opportunities** – the Sustainable Community Strategy has a cross cutting theme with aims to make Coventry a more equal city with cohesive communities and neighbourhoods. The strategy was developed from an initial strategic assessment of the city which considered the needs of different communities and issues of race, gender and disability. Consultation on the strategy has involved a wider range of different local communities and interests. The development of the action plans for the Local Area Agreement will include equality impact assessment for each priority and actions will be targeted accordingly.
- 7.3 **Finance** - the Comprehensive Spending Review included a new reward grant associated with the new Local Area Agreements and the development of a new Area Based Grant that will pull together many of the specific area-based grants that are currently received by the council and other partners. The development of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement will influence how this funding is allocated from 2008/09.

## 8 Monitoring

- 8.1 The council, including the scrutiny function; Coventry Partnership and the new Local Public Service Board will be involved in the performance management of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement. This will need to be robust and will form part of the council's formal performance management framework.

## 9 Timescale and expected outcomes

- 9.1 The Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy has a twenty year timescale and action plans will be developed for short medium and long term planning. The Local Area Agreement has a three year timescale and once agreed in June will run from April 2008 to March 2011.

	Yes	No
<b>Key Decision</b>	√ <b>Sustainable Community Strategy only</b>	
<b>Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)</b>	√ <b>Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee 5<sup>th</sup> March 2008</b>	
<b>Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)</b>	√ <b>Sustainable Community Strategy only 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008</b>	

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

**Description of paper**

Initial Strategic Assessment of Coventry  
Coventry Community Plan  
Analysis of Consultation

**Location**

Room 71 Council House and the  
Coventry Partnership Website  
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