

WYFRA	FINANCE AND BEST VALUE COMMITTEE	24 MARCH 2006	ITEM NO
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REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF FIRE SAFETY & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

PURPOSE OF REPORT: TO ADVISE OF INVOLVEMENT AND PROGRESS WITH LEEDS AND WAKEFIELD LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS

RECOMMENDATION: THAT MEMBERS NOTE THE REPORT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT DETAILS

EXEMPTION CATEGORY: NONE

ACCESS CONTACT OFFICER: N CHARLSTON 01274 655721

BACKGROUND PAPERS OPEN TO INSPECTION:

LEEDS – LAA SUBMISSION (OUTCOMES, INDICATORS, BASELINES & TARGETS)

WAKEFIELD – SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES (OUTCOMES, INDICATORS, BASELINES & TARGETS)

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Local Area Agreements (LAA) represent a new approach to improve co-ordination between central government and local authorities and their partners, working through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP's) or other similar structures such as Local Public Service Boards.
- 1.2 The LAA gives the freedom for councils to work with other local organisations to find creative, efficient solutions to local problems.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Leeds and Wakefield LAAs are currently being negotiated with Government. Although the Government Offices will broker an agreement on the priority outcomes to be achieved locally, deciding on how these priorities are delivered will be in the hands of the local authority and its partners.
- 2.2 The current Leeds and Wakefield 'Safer, Stronger Communities' blocks now includes this Authority's PSA 3 target (i.e. 20% reduction in accidental fire deaths in dwellings) and an additional fire safety target to reduce all deliberate fires.
- 2.3 The reduction in deliberate fires is considered a 'stretch target' and as such qualifies for a reward grant for the Councils should the target reduction be achieved. Pump-priming monies may also be made available to partner organisations/agencies that have committed to achieving stretch targets over the next three years.
- 2.4 By becoming more involved with LAA planning arrangements, the Authority is contributing to the broader framework of community engagement and improved service provision through partnering arrangements. A formalisation of involvement with regard to the Authority's responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder legislation has also been brought about through improved working relationships at strategic and operational levels of both organisations.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Authority is eligible for funding in the form of a pump-priming grant followed by a reward grant if the stretch targets are achieved although the actual income is not yet known. Once the actual level of income is known it will be reported back to the Authority.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Having fire safety included in the Leeds and Wakefield LAA provides the Authority with an opportunity to assist in building and sustaining effective partnerships between all sectors contributing to safer and stronger communities in order to focus resources jointly on improving outcomes in relation to community safety.
- 4.2 We can now report to Members that fire related targets form part of all four LAA's in West Yorkshire, i.e. Leeds, Bradford, Kirklees and Wakefield. Calderdale will be commencing LAA negotiations in 2007.