

Subject: Pennine Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement

Status: For Publication

Report to: The Cabinet

Date: 3rd December 2008

Report of: Chief Executive

Portfolio

Holder: Leader of the Council

Key Decision: No

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update Members on the progress in developing a Multi-Area Agreement for Pennine Lancashire.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objectives.

- Delivering Regeneration across the Borough (Economy, Housing)
- Promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit (Economy)

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- Strategic Risks – Rossendale faces a number of challenges in relation to its economy. For examples skills levels at NVQ 4 and above are among the lowest in the county. The opportunities to address these challenges as a single local authority are fewer than if we work in partnership with colleague authorities in Pennine Lancashire.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 As reported to Elected Members on 10 September 2008, Multi-Area Agreements (MAAs) were introduced as part of the 2006 White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities. They are voluntary agreements between central government and a group of councils, focused on a specific set of outcomes and targets. In Pennine Lancashire these Councils comprise Rossendale, Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley, together covering an area that has been identified as a distinct economic footprint, and Lancashire County Council. At this meeting the MAA was agreed in principle and authority to sign the document delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader. The formal sign-off of the MAA is scheduled for the week commencing 1 December 2008.

4.2 Work has taken place over recent months to develop and strengthen the Multi Area Agreement for Pennine Lancashire. The principal aim of this document is to set out a range of issues and actions by which the productivity gap between Pennine Lancashire and the rest of the North West can be narrowed. The current economic climate makes this work even more essential.

4.3 The main themes in the draft considered in September 2008 (draft 5) are still included in the final version, but in significantly greater detail. Greater clarity has been provided in relation to Government Actions and Pennine Lancashire Authority actions. In addition an economic impact assessment of the proposed actions has been carried out which shows that the totality of MAA proposals is estimated to mean £384m GVA per annum from 2018.

4.4 The MAA is focused on 7 main themes:

- Funding
- Transport
- Higher Education
- Worklessness
- Spatial Planning
- Housing
- Economic Development

The MAA contains detailed information about the challenges and opportunities in Pennine Lancashire in relation to each of these issues, together with proposed actions.

4.5 One of the main Government Actions is to have a Strategic Investment Block Allocation for Pennine Lancashire and a Pennine Lancashire Business Plan. This would increase funding flexibility for the area. Working in this way increases opportunities for Rossendale to access programmes and projects from which it has previously been excluded due to allocation criteria.

4.5 Strong governance arrangements will be required for the delivery of this MAA. The development of the PLLACE (Pennine Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives) structures as set out in the document will be central to this. The

Version Number: 2		Page: 2 of 4	
----------------------	--	-----------------	--

proposed Pennine Lancashire Economic Development Company will be an important element of the delivery infrastructure, as will the work of local authorities themselves.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 5.1 Development and initial funding of the Multi-Area Agreement will come from existing Council resources. It is uncertain as yet if additional funding will be made by Central Government to support the MAAs, and if any should be forthcoming should it be pooled or not.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 The Council will need to ensure we have systems to assess the governance arrangements around the delivery of the MAA. The Council's work on the Pennine Lancashire Economic Development Company will contribute towards this.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

There are no human resources implications.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The Multi-Area Agreement for Pennine Lancashire provides a mechanism to strengthen delivery on the shared agenda for economic regeneration which is developing across the area.

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 That Cabinet note the report and the MAA for Pennine Lancashire.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 10.1 Policy Overview and Scrutiny
Local Strategic Partnership Executive

11. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required No

(Not at this stage. An equality impact assessment will be carried out on the individual elements of the MAA).

Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached No

Version Number: 2		Page: 3 of 4	
----------------------	--	-----------------	--

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Contact Officer	
Name	Carolyn Wilkins
Position	Chief Executive
Service / Team	Executive Team
Telephone	01706 252428
Email address	carolynwilkins@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities 2006