

# Bolton Council

**Report to:** Executive Member Corporate Strategy and Finance

**Date:** 24 January 2007

**Report of:** Chief Executive

**Report No:**

**Contact Officer:** Carol James, Head of Strategic Projects

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**Report Title:** **Local Area Agreement 6-month Review and LSP Annual Review**

**Non Confidential:** This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

**Purpose:** This report provides the Executive Member with information on the outcome of the recent 6-monthly assessment of Bolton's Local Area Agreement undertaken by Government Office North West.

**Recommendations:** The Executive Member is asked to:

- Comment on the performance issues around the LAA highlighted in this report
- Request a full report on the final LSP traffic light assessment 2006
- Request further regular reports on LAA performance
- Support and reinforce the role of Executive Members and Area Forums in working with officers to drive performance improvements across all LAA blocks

**Decision:**

**Background Doc(s)**  
**– all enclosed:**

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leader / Executive Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Monitoring Officer

**Date:**

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## Summary & background

In April 2006, Bolton's Local Area Agreement (LAA) was agreed by the Bolton Vision partnership and central government – via Government Office North West (GONW) and with Bolton Council as the Accountable Body. The LAA builds on the success of the Bolton Vision partnership, setting out a clear action plan for delivering elements of Bolton's Community Strategy. Our LAA runs from 2006-07 to 2008-09, and aims to make the borough a: "great place to grow up, live, learn, work, do business and visit: so that the potential of each person, each community and the borough as a whole can be realised."

The Agreement is divided into the following 7 blocks:

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

It includes jointly agreed outcomes, indicators and 74 targets and incorporates Bolton's Local Public Service Agreement 2 for 2005-8.

As Members will be aware, the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (NRS) has been aligned with the Local Area Agreement, and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund has been pooled into the LAA towards the delivery of the outcomes/targets which include the national neighbourhood renewal floor targets. The implementation of the NRS is being undertaken through neighbourhood action planning, where activity in local areas is supporting the achievement of the LAA targets across the LAA blocks. The Area Forums are informed and involved in the work around the neighbourhood action plans, and have been allocated Neighbourhood Renewal Fund budgets to commission activity across the range of LAA targets.

Under the terms of the Local Area Agreement, it falls to Government Office North West to oversee 6-monthly reviews of Bolton's performance against the targets contained in the LAA.

This and the annual LAA assessment has now replaced the annual 'traffic-light' assessment of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP), the last of which was undertaken in Bolton in November/December 2006 (based on 2005/6 performance) with the final judgment currently being subject to national moderation. Whilst provisional feedback on this from GONW suggests that reducing health inequalities and improving educational attainment remain challenging issues for Bolton, the detail will be reported back to the Executive Member in due course.

Attached is the first 6-monthly review of Bolton's LAA prepared by GONW based on a self-assessment submitted by Bolton's LSP. GONW have awarded Bolton's LAA a 'green light' (the top rating) both for its

	<p>progress to date and its direction of travel overall. It should be stated at this stage that only 25% of the targets in the LAA are monitored on a quarterly, so this report does not provide a full picture of LAA performance. A full first annual review report (covering all LAA targets) is due in June 2007. This will be an important milestone in terms of Bolton's LAA.</p> <p>The view of GONW is that effective partnership working, strong LAA governance and robust performance management arrangements have meant that good gains are already being made in terms of improving outcomes for the local community.</p> <p>Whilst the report by GONW shows that the LAA is already making a positive impact overall, it also identifies a range of issues which warrant further consideration by the LSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The 6-monthly Statement of Grant Usage reveals a slow build up of relevant expenditure. Action is being taken by the Council and its partners to address this.</li> <li>○ The report highlights a number of risks around achieving LAA outcomes, indicating a number of areas where performance is currently not on target. These issues have however already been identified by the Council and its partners, with robust plans in place to get performance back on track.</li> </ul>