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POLICY BRIEFINGS

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Local Strategic Partnerships

Consultation Document

October 2000

This Document

This document provides advice on the establishment and functioning of “Local Strategic Partnerships” (LSPs), and on the support available from central government for this purpose. While the guidance is not statutory, it will be used by Government Offices for assessing how far individual partnerships meet the requirements for LSPs as part of the allocations process for relevant funding streams such as the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. It has been written by a team of officials from across Whitehall and the LGA as a consultation document. It represents very much our first thoughts, and we would welcome comments and suggestions on how it could be improved - an address to which these can be sent is on page 36.

Who should read it?

The guidance is aimed at **all** prospective members of LSPs - public, private, community and voluntary sectors - members of existing partnerships, those in Government Offices, Regional Development Agencies and in other service deliverers plus those in central and local government who are expected to work with and through LSPs. Comments and responses from the community, voluntary and business sectors would be most helpful as the expertise they have can bring much to this guidance. We have tried to ensure copies have been sent to all those with an interest, but please feel free to distribute photocopies freely. An electronic version is available at www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk/conindex.htm.

Foreword by Rt Hon Hilary Armstrong MP

Our aim is to improve everyone's quality of life. It is only common sense to accept that we can do so better if we work together. Government sees local strategic partnerships (LSPs) as one key route to ensuring that we all work in this way. LSPs are multi-agency, multi-sectoral, strategic partnerships. They can co-ordinate between local services, agencies and bodies to ensure coherence and effective working at the local level. They can embrace the community, voluntary and private sectors to ensure their influence over service provision.

This is of course nothing new - on the ground it has always been happening more than we in Whitehall acknowledge. Both central and local government have also increasingly been working through formal or informal partnerships - and this Government has launched a wide range of new partnership-based initiatives to tackle specific issues.

The aspiration behind local strategic partnerships is that all local service providers should work with each other, the private sector and the broader local community to agree a holistic approach to solving problems with a common vision, agreed objectives, pooled expertise and agreed priorities for the allocation of resources.

What the Government wants to do now is:

- set out clearly how these partnerships fit with the new initiatives announced in the Spending Review, particularly those concerned with reducing the gap between deprived areas and the rest of the country;
- make sure Government does not get in the way of sensible "joining up" working on the ground;
- encourage existing partnerships in a locality to learn from each other, in particular in making themselves more open and inclusive;
- support and encourage service providers to respond to ideas for change that come from the community; and
- help those partnerships still in the early stages to progress so that every area has the opportunity to benefit from this approach.

We do not want to start setting central requirements over how partnerships should work, or even over what they should do. But we do want to ensure that partnerships are inclusive - with genuine involvement from the community, business and voluntary sectors as well as from local government - and effective.

We will set out more details of the specific roles LSPs can play in helping to deliver on urban regeneration in the Urban White Paper, and in tackling neighbourhood deprivation in the National Strategy Action Plan.

We are publishing this draft guidance now because of links between local strategic partnerships and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. It is not intended to be the last word. We will publish a revised version following this consultation, and we would welcome your comments and examples of how to make this work on the ground for then. The process of building effective partnerships and pulling together initiatives can take years - and this guidance is only a tentative first step.

SECTION ONE Introduction

What is a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

- 1.1 An LSP is a cross sectoral, cross agency, umbrella partnership which is focussed and committed to improving the quality of life and governance in a particular locality. LSPs will therefore bring together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to provide a single overarching local co-ordination framework within which other, more specific local partnerships can operate. This will ensure that local partnerships know how they fit into the wider picture and will allow local partners to move to simpler, less bureaucratic structures where it makes sense to do so.
- 1.2 An LSP is intended to improve local public services by bringing those who deliver or commission different services together with those for whom the services are provided. This will enable services to be aligned in a way that most effectively meets the needs and aspirations of those who use them, providing a forum in which to decide where their common priorities lie. The key is that LSPs should lead to better public service results. Over time, the Government will look increasingly to successful LSPs to lead in developing new initiatives that depend on local partnership arrangements for their implementation.

Why should local partners establish or get involved with an LSP?

- 1.3 The benefits of service providers coming together to work in partnership on the ground with the local community, voluntary and business sector have been clear for some time and many areas will already have such a partnership. There is increasing evidence that there are real benefits from bringing such ad-hoc co-operation together under a single co-ordinating partnership for an area. LSPs will be the relevant strategic mechanism linking the neighbourhood to the region, co-ordinating across and between partnership activity.
- 1.4 LSPs should:
 - develop common aims and joint priorities;
 - build common purpose and shared commitment;
 - draw on expertise of community, voluntary and private sector partners to make services more responsive and effective;
 - co-ordinate the delivery of local services and agreed objectives more effectively;
 - lead to improvements in the delivery of mainstream services;
 - enhance the sharing of local information and best practice;
 - increase awareness of activities and communication between local players;
 - provide a forum for debate and discussion; and
 - enable the development of simpler partnership structures for individual initiatives.
- 1.5 Working locally in this joined up, representative, inclusive way can deliver significant improvements in outcomes, multiplying the positive contribution of each player to the local area.
- 1.6 The Government would like to see LSPs across the country. It is also aware of growing concerns about the number of different partnerships and plans required by various central government initiatives. Most local communities now engage in a great deal of partnership working in relation to many different initiatives, some promoted by central government and its agencies, and some purely local in origin. Often the same people and bodies sit on a number of different partnerships. Building on the experience of the Local Government Association's New Commitment to Regeneration initiative (further information at www.lga.gov.uk/lga/newcommitment/index.htm) and other similar local initiatives such as Health Action Zones, LSPs can exercise a broad strategic oversight across service

providers and other partnerships in the area, to ensure that their activities are compatible and mutually supportive.

How do LSPs relate to the new local governance agenda?

1.7 LSPs are an integral part of wider reforms to make sure Government - both central and local - is more accountable, open, effective and responsive to local needs. In particular, LSPs can play a central role in the following:

- 1) the new community planning agenda;
- 2) local Public Service Agreements;
- 3) Neighbourhood Renewal:
 - the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal;
 - the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF);
 - Neighbourhood Management; and
- 4) Co-ordination of partnerships and partners.

i) Community Planning

1.8 The Local Government Act 2000 places all local authorities under a duty to prepare community strategies. The Act requires local authorities in preparing these strategies to consult and seek the participation of such organisations and people as they consider appropriate. As set out in the draft guidance on preparing community strategies (issued August 2000), the Government believes that the most effective way of ensuring the commitment of other organisations to the community planning process is for local authorities to establish a community planning partnership including key partners operating in the area that the strategy is to cover, perhaps building on its work on Local Agenda 21 or other broad partnership work. Partnerships established in line with the guidance on community strategies would, by definition, be LSPs. Although this is not a statutory necessity, it seems unlikely that local authorities and local players would want more than one strategic partnership. The relationship between LSPs and community strategies is set out in more detail at Annex C below.

ii) Local Public Service Agreements

1.9 Local PSAs offer local authorities the opportunity to commit themselves to delivering key national and local priorities in return for agreed operational flexibilities and pump-priming grants of up to £1m per authority. Authorities that meet the more stretching performance targets agreed in local PSAs will also gain access to a new Performance Reward Fund. A pilot with 20 authorities will run in 2001-02, ahead of a planned wider rollout to other county councils, metropolitan districts, London boroughs and unitary authorities for 2002/03, and it is hoped, to shire districts thereafter.

1.10 A local authority's proposal for a local PSA should set out its vision and strategy to deliver enhanced outcomes for its residents. It should reflect any vision and strategy already developed by the authority with local people and key partners, in particular the overarching aims set out in its community strategy. Each local PSA will focus on about twelve key outcomes which reflect a mix of national and local priorities, including, where appropriate, targets to improve outcomes for areas or groups most at risk of social exclusion. Local authorities will need to demonstrate that the local priorities they are proposing are important to, and supported by, local people and partners. For most, if not all, aspects of the local PSA, the authority will need to work closely with its partners to deliver the agreed enhanced outcomes - for example, in the key areas of health, education, crime and worklessness. The

LSP provides both a forum in which to agree priorities with key partners - including different agencies, the local community and business - and an opportunity to agree the actions necessary to deliver them. More detail on the links between LSPs and local PSAs is set out below at Annex B.

iii) Neighbourhood Renewal

- 1.11 The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR) - The framework National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal issued for consultation earlier this year showed how the effectiveness of core public services in deprived neighbourhoods is compromised by their failure to work with each other, with local people and with organisations from other sectors. It suggested that the impact of services at the neighbourhood level is rarely co-ordinated, despite the huge potential advantages of doing so, and that residents' voices are often unheard or ignored. The NSNR set out in detail how LSPs could play a central role in putting this right. Following the widespread support for this idea during the consultation, the Government is working up details of how LSPs can take this role forward, and will publish further guidance later this year in the National Strategy Action Plan.
- 1.12 The Government expects all local authorities and LSPs to ensure that their local strategies reflect key messages from the NSNR and in particular how it will apply to their own areas and the changes this will require in working practices.
- 1.13 The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund As part of the Local Government settlement announced at the end of the 2000 Spending Review, the new Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) will channel an extra £100m in 2001-02, £300m in 2002-03 and £400m in 2003-04 to the most deprived areas. In order to benefit from NRF funding in 2001-02, the Government is asking the relevant local authorities to commit to participate in establishing an LSP, and to agreeing a local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy with the LSP setting out how NRF resources will be used to help achieve the new deprivation targets on jobs, crime, education and health. Details of this new fund are set out in the parallel DETR consultation document on the NRF.
- 1.14 Neighbourhood Management The idea of neighbourhood management was set out in the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and the report of the Social Exclusion Unit's Policy Action Team 4, "Neighbourhood Management". In brief, a neighbourhood manager would be responsible for co-ordinating services at the very local level (a single estate or few hundred houses), including negotiating with service providers about the services they run, and feeding the neighbourhood's views into higher tiers of government. The idea received broad support in the National Strategy consultation, and the Government will be funding a number of pathfinders alongside those already being supported by local authorities and others.
- 1.15 LSPs offer an obvious route through which neighbourhood managers can exercise leverage over main programmes at the neighbourhood level. LSPs will be in a position to ensure that agencies prioritise key neighbourhoods, participate in neighbourhood renewal and perform in terms of achieving agreed neighbourhood goals. A neighbourhood manager's patch is likely to be very similar to the local forums many partnerships use as a key way of ensuring neighbourhood's views feed through to the LSP.
- 1.16 Details of the Neighbourhood Management pilot programme will be published by DETR shortly. Government will want to ensure that proposals for pilots are for neighbourhoods identified by LSPs as priorities for their areas, and that the relationship between neighbourhood manager and LSP has been clearly thought through.

iv) *Co-ordination of partnerships and partners*

- 1.17 The Local Government Act 2000 gives councils new powers to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. This will give them far greater scope to work closely with other local bodies, like health authorities and local transport companies, to provide services in ways that people want. The Secretary of State has power to amend or disapply any legislation which he/she considers prevents or obstructs local authorities from acting to improve the well-being of their local communities. The Secretary of State also has the ability to exempt local authorities from certain statutory plan-making requirements where they can demonstrate it is in the best interests of their local area to do so. These new powers should make it easier for local partnerships to work effectively and to move to more effective partnership structures where it makes sense for them to do so.

SECTION TWO

Setting Up An LSP

How should local partners go about establishing an LSP?

- 2.1 Many local areas already have some form of strategic partnership covering the statutory, business and community sectors - for example, set up as part of the LGA's "New Commitment to Regeneration" initiative, Local Agenda 21 partnerships, or to draw-up city/district-wide strategies. Where such a partnership already exists, the expectation would be that they would be well-placed to take on the role of becoming the official LSP for the area - although partnerships will want to think carefully about what changes they may need to make before they can do so. In all areas Government would encourage local partners to build on what already exists and works. Using their knowledge of existing local partnerships, Government Offices will be in a position to offer advice to local partners still in the early stages of setting up an LSP or those requiring information on networks and partnership working arrangements already in place. This will facilitate the sharing of good practice, enabling new or young LSPs to take on board lessons learnt from those already established.
- 2.2 In areas where no strategic or similar partnership already exists, local authorities - in particular given the links to the new community planning powers - are likely to be best placed to convene an initial meeting of relevant local people to consider the establishment of an LSP. Where a partnership exists that is either already the relevant body to take on the functions of an LSP, or which could easily be expanded to do so, it may be more appropriate for the partnership itself to take the lead in contacting other potential partners.
- 2.3 In either case, it is important that the LSP represents a genuine partnership of equals, and its structure and procedures must be set up with this end in view. The benefits of partnership working will not be realised if the LSP is seen as merely rubber-stamping decisions taken by any one or any group of service providers. From the first stages of preparing to establish the partnership, special care needs to be taken to ensure resident, business, voluntary sector and community representatives are accorded equal weight in influence and decision-taking with the local authority and other statutory agencies, balancing the needs and wants of the various partners; for example, by introducing revolving chairing arrangements and appropriate levels of representation and accountability. Furthermore, LSPs will need to think through at an early stage how they will be able to demonstrate the successful establishment and progress of the LSP to Government Offices (see section three on recognition and scrutiny).

- 2.4 There are a wide range of existing successful models of partnership working, and Government does not intend to prescribe how LSPs should operate. But we will expect partnerships that want to be recognized as the LSP for their area to demonstrate how they have ensured a proper balance of interests within the partnership. It is important that LSPs are not monopolised by any one partner and that those who provide initial leadership take special care to step back when others are more ready to play a fuller part. We fully realise that building a genuine cross-sectoral partnership, accountable to the local area, can take many years - but the more successful have focussed on the challenge of engaging a wide range of stakeholders from the start.

What area should an LSP cover?

- 2.5 As set out in the draft Community Strategy Guidance, the Government does not intend to specify the level at which Community Strategies should be produced or the specific geographical area they should cover. However, LSPs should both cover a wide enough area to allow strategic choices to be made and involve representatives from key partners with sufficient authority to allow meaningful decisions to be taken, and at the same time remain close enough to individual neighbourhoods and communities to allow sufficient focus on determining actions to deliver priorities at the level of the local school, Primary Care Group/Trust, Job Centre Area and so on. When considering establishing an LSP, local partners may also want to consider the geographical coverage of existing partnerships.
- 2.6 In areas where there are two tiers of local government, LSPs will need to ensure proper co-ordination between services delivered by districts and those delivered by counties. Which area the LSP itself covers will depend on local circumstances. Some shire districts may be too small to allow meaningful strategic co-ordination, particularly where key services such as the police or health providers operate at a wider level. In other areas, the county level may be too far removed from the problems at a neighbourhood level for strategic co-ordination to be properly grounded in the daily life of individual communities. Where the latter is the case, there are services for which the county is responsible, such as education and social services, which are absolutely fundamental to local strategies tackling neighbourhood deprivation - so every LSP will need to ensure commitment from both local tiers. There is of course no reason why LSPs should be bound by existing local government boundaries where there are strong reasons why, for example, a grouping of districts within or across county boundaries makes more sense - or where the natural planning area is a conurbation that straddles local authority boundaries.
- 2.7 Given the importance of avoiding further partnership proliferation, it may be best for an LSP to adopt geographical boundaries that maximize the potential opportunities for partnership working and rationalisation - in particular building on existing models that work well for the New Commitment to Regeneration and emerging thinking on Community Strategies.

What area should a partnership cover?

Local partners will be best placed to decide what area it is most appropriate for a local strategic partnership to cover. For example:

Who should be members of the LSP?

Plymouth 2020, Bradford Vision and the Liverpool Partnership Group cover the same areas as the city council unitary authorities:

2.8 As

The Luton/Dunstable Partnership follows the conurbation's boundaries and involves 3 local authority areas - Luton, South Bedfordshire, and Bedfordshire.

The Suffolk New Commitment Partnership and the Northumberland Strategic Partnership cover whole counties, bringing together 8 local authorities - the county and the seven districts - for Suffolk, and 7 local authorities in Northumberland (the county and all 6 shire districts).

suggested by the community strategy guidance in reference to community planning partnerships, the membership and size of a LSP should reflect both its aims and the breadth of issues that might fall within its scope. These will differ from place to place, so local partners will be better placed than central Government to determine the exact membership of their local partnership. Having said this, there are key sectors/players who we would expect to be involved in **every** LSP. These are:

- Public Sector representatives including elected councillors;
- Private Sector representatives;
- Voluntary Sector representatives; and
- Community Sector representatives.

2.9 Local partners should together with Government Offices use their influence to ensure genuine and effective representation of all these groups. For example, local authorities, including elected members, may be well placed to actively canvass and encourage involvement and awareness of LSP activity and agenda. LSPs should be able to demonstrate that they are listening to and taking account of needs expressed at the neighbourhood level in addition to relevant community sector involvement in the partnership itself.

2.10 Government does not want to prescribe which, and how many, key players are involved in particular partnership meetings and would encourage partnerships to discuss with each other which model best suits their circumstances. Representation from each of the key players should be at a sufficient level to be able to speak with the authority of those they represent. Many partnerships have found that effective discussion can be hampered by too many participants at any one session and so have developed more innovative ways of involving key players without the necessity of lengthy over bureaucratic meetings.

The Public Sector

2.11 LSPs will be an important mechanism for ensuring multi-agency engagement for achieving national goals. We would expect each LSP to include representatives from **all** the key services:

- Health;
- Police and Probation Service;

- Education (at all levels including higher and further education);
- Learning & Skills Councils and the new Connexions Service;
- The Employment Service and Benefits Agency (from 2001 these will be the “Working Age Agency”);
- Social Services;
- Local Authority; and
- Housing Providers.

2.12 This is not an exhaustive list. There are other players who are important and there will be areas where certain key partners are more relevant than others. LSPs should endeavour to include **all** the players who are essential and relevant to the locality. For example, LSPs tackling rural deprivation may want to include the Countryside Agency as one of their key partners, and the Regional Development Agency will be a key member of LSPs in areas where they are delivering economic regeneration.

Elected Members and the Council

2.13 Local government is responsible for delivering high quality services, in line with national objectives and standards, to meet local needs. Leaders, directly elected Mayors and ward councillors have the public mandate which brings democratic legitimacy to the local decision making process. Councillors not only set the strategic direction of the council’s services but determine policy and priorities for the local community within the overall objectives set by Government. They are in a position to ensure that the interests of the local community come first. Council members are already involved with local partnerships on a very wide ranging basis, for example New Commitment to Regeneration partnerships are often chaired by Council leaders, while ward councillors are on the board of many of the New Deal for Communities partnerships. The Government sees a strong role for elected members in the strategic planning process and wants to encourage them to be fully involved in LSP activity.

2.14 The Government believes that it should be up to each individual LSP to determine the exact details of how elected members are involved and what role they should play. It must be ensured, however, that they are properly included in the process and committed to delivering their part of any agreed strategies or action plans. One possible way of demonstrating the commitment of elected members is for the partnership’s plans to be formally endorsed - for example, as part of the “*Quality Protects: Transforming Children’s Services*” initiative, council leaders are required to formally sign off the local authority contribution to the partnership’s action plan.

The Community & Voluntary Sectors

2.15 The involvement of local people and local communities is central to the achievement of neighbourhood strategies and key to long-term sustainable change. Individuals, groups and communities provide an untapped pool of ideas, knowledge, skills, experience, energy and enthusiasm which can be a real driver for change.

2.16 The level of community and voluntary activity in an area is often a gauge of the social health and spirit of that area and as such is a vital complementary strand to the provision of decent public services and a quality environment in changing people’s lives. LSPs should, therefore, ensure that community and voluntary organisations and the wider community are in a position to play a full and equal part in multi-agency partnerships on the same basis with statutory authorities and better resourced partners.

- 2.17 The sector is diverse with differences in the nature, scale and support needs of groups. LSPs should be aware of and responsive to this complexity when establishing mechanisms for involvement in order that the full range of perspectives and contributions are included. The Compact between government and the voluntary and community sector and its associated Codes of Practise provide guidance on these matters.
- 2.18 LSPs offer a fresh opportunity to put people in the heart of the partnership process. In the past, too little attention has been paid to building the capacity of communities to participate in programmes and services to improve local conditions. We have begun to put this right and there are now a range of Government programmes offering support and investment. While this is an ongoing process, much has been learned about what works and how communities can best be empowered to play a full role. LSPs will want to take note of the experience available and build on the emerging best practice.
- 2.19 Community involvement takes different forms; it can be the involvement of community representatives on statutory partnerships or the involvement of individuals in their community through their own choice. For the former, mechanisms need to be in place to ensure that this happens in an open, inclusive and meaningful way. The latter can do much to promote social inclusion and cohesion and help create the pre-conditions for effective community involvement in statutory partnerships.
- 2.20 Attention should be given at an early stage to ensuring that all sections of the community have the opportunity to participate - not just 'the usual suspects'. Particular measures may be needed to encourage the involvement of communities of interest that can be marginalised in these processes. Engaging women, the disabled, older persons, faith and youth groups, and people from black and minority ethnic communities can be especially challenging. LSPs will need, therefore, to be imaginative and flexible in their approach and take advantage of the range of available ways that have been successfully used for achieving the widest participation. A specific focus will be needed within the LSP to ensure that a consistent and integrated approach to community involvement is agreed and adopted by all partners.
- 2.21 Local infrastructure within the community and voluntary sector is important in stimulating, encouraging and sustaining the voluntary and community effort. Such community support organisations (e.g Councils for Voluntary Service, Rural Community Councils, Volunteer Bureaux, Community Development Agencies, Development Trusts etc) provide a range of technical assistance, know how and practical help and take a developmental role. They also set up and support forums and networks which are vital for drawing both geographical communities and communities of interest into partnerships. LSPs should draw on these existing networks but should also make sure that communities are able to feed in directly to the development of their strategies.
- 2.22 LSP partners will want to work together to clarify the capacity building role of these organisations and to find ways in which they can be resourced and funded. Funding specifically for community capacity building is being made available through the New Deal for Communities.

*The Private
Sector*

Community involvement / consultation

2.23 LSPs need private sector buy-in to be

Salford

The Salford Partnership's Strategy and Action Plan results from extensive consultation across the partnership. Further strands of consultation are being developed:

- *the development of business and community forums;*
- *introducing an annual standing conference on regeneration;*
- *production of a communications and marketing plan to ensure the widest dissemination of information.*

effective as local businesses are key consumers of, and contributors to, so many of the local activities and services and play a vital part in the health of local neighbourhoods. The private sector also has much of value to add to local partnership working in terms of local knowledge and expertise. How and by whom the private sector is represented on an LSP depends on local circumstances. A high level representative from local Chambers of Commerce, local business forum or key employers would be one way. What is important is that whoever fills this role represents all local business and private sector needs and desires, not just their own. Regional Development Agencies will also be a good facilitator for private sector interaction and engagement in LSP activity.

2.24 One option would be for local business brokers to work with the LSP, to help local businesses who want to get involved locally to work out what their best contribution could be, and to navigate the maze of local initiatives. Business organisations of this kind may work best at the regional or subregional level (and some are already doing this).

Membership of the Partnership

Salford

Salford's community strategy has 9 community committees covering the whole city and involves a range of local groups and partners at the local level. They prepare local action plans and are looking increasingly at the local delivery of services, eg, the city and the police are now using the same areas as building blocks for action under crime and disorder. Representatives of each area are also coming together to discuss city wide issues which will feed into the LSP.

At the local level a variety of innovative consultation mechanisms are being deployed, eg, in the New Deal area, local people have been employed and trained to survey and facilitate the views of local people using techniques developed by Oxfam.

The Salford partnership has been in existence since 1994. The partnership includes:

Salford City Council; the TEC, the Chamber of Commerce; the Health Authority, Primary Care Groups (East and West); Manchester, Salford and Trafford HAZ; the Government Office; the Fire Service; Police; Salford and Trafford EAZ; the Employment Service, Housing Corporation and Housing Associations, local university and colleges; local private employers, and the Community Voluntary Service.

Accountability

- 2.25 LSPs are intended to help local service providers co-ordinate their actions. Partnerships will influence decisions by developing consensus about agreed priorities and goals. But it is the individual partners who will remain responsible and accountable for decisions on their own services and the use of their own resources. Delivering the partnership's common goals will depend on its ability to demonstrate to individual partners that it can help them achieve their individual goals.
- 2.26 Those partnerships that seek recognition, for example to meet the requirements of the NRF, will be assessed by Government Offices (see 3.35), and inspection regimes such as Best Value are likely to pay increasing attention to the success with which local authorities and other statutory agencies work together with other relevant interests. But the primary accountability of members of LSPs is likely to remain to the organisations which they represent, and through them to the wider public.
- 2.27 LSPs can increase their legitimacy in the eyes of other local partners by making their discussions and decision-taking as open as possible, for example, by publishing internal papers via the use of a dedicated website.

Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies

- 2.28 LSPs in areas where there is substantial deprivation will be encouraged to draw up local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies. These will be a key part of their Community Strategies. Strategies will be expected to identify local priority neighbourhoods, diagnose their problems and design an appropriate local response, building on what is already happening including existing neighbourhood and locality based regeneration programmes. Detailed guidance on how this can be done and what help will be available will be provided in the

forthcoming National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan.

Timing

- 2.29 The Government is aware that establishing effective partnership working takes time, and it has for that reason set no deadline by which it expects local authorities to have developed their community strategies. In those areas which do not have a suitable existing partnership that could form the basis of an LSP, a fully functioning partnership may take some years to develop. Building meaningful community, resident and business involvement is unlikely to be quick or easy, nor is it easy to keep all the main public services actively committed to joint working. Time spent getting the foundations right is unlikely to be wasted. Once established, setting themselves both interim and/or annual milestones will help LSPs gauge their own performance.
- 2.30 In assessing LSPs against funding requirements (NRF for example), allowance will be made for how far it is realistic to expect an individual LSP to have progressed by any given date. However, those authorities in receipt of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund will be required to make a clear commitment to establishing and developing an LSP, alongside demonstrable evidence of year on year progress and community engagement. Additional guidance can be found in the draft Neighbourhood Renewal Fund consultation document

SECTION THREE Recognition and Scrutiny

Recognition

- 3.1 Ministers will want reassurance that individual LSPs meet certain minimum criteria before considering requests for freedoms and flexibilities (see para 3.14) or assessing LSPs against defined funding criteria (for example, for eligibility for the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund). There is of course no requirement for partnerships to be recognized for community planning purposes.
- 3.2 Recognition will depend on partnerships demonstrating that they are effective, representative and capable of playing a key strategic role in the locality. In particular, LSPs should be able to demonstrate that they meet the following key requirements:
- actively involve all the key players, including the community, voluntary, and private sector;
 - have established genuine common local priorities and agreed actions and milestones leading to demonstrable improvements against measurable baselines;
 - reduce not add to the 'bureaucratic burden'; and
 - build on best practise from successful partnerships.
- 3.3 Ministers will want demonstrable evidence that LSP plans and priorities are firmly grounded in a clear understanding of daily life in the neighbourhoods concerned.
- 3.4 The precise way that these requirements are met will vary from area to area, depending on local circumstances. Ministers are also aware of the time taken to build meaningful partnerships, and will take into account how far it is reasonable to expect any particular partnership to have made progress against these criteria depending on its starting point.

Role of Government Offices

- 3.5 Government Offices (GOs) will be responsible for advising Ministers on how far LSPs meet

these criteria. At the same time, they will be expected to actively encourage and assist LSPs come together in their region, using their knowledge of other local partnerships and their influence with key service providers where necessary. LSPs should ensure GOs are closely involved with the partnership, so that any concerns are flagged up at an early date and potential obstacles can be overcome. Although GOs will be closely involved with LSP activity they will not be formal members. This will enable them to judge performance from direct knowledge, without being implicated in the decisions made. GOs will also be able to act as a clearing house for LSP requests for freedoms and flexibilities, and partnership rationalisation. The Regional Co-ordination Unit will broker agreements with Whitehall departments where necessary.

- 3.6 As set out in paragraph 1.13, local authorities eligible for the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund will be required to be part of and working with a local strategic partnership. The details of how the recognition process will work for this purpose are set out in the parallel NRF consultation document, and the forthcoming special grant report.
- 3.7 Most partnerships will acknowledge there will usually be areas where they are seeking to improve their representation or processes. While this may lead to an ongoing process of continuous improvement in partnership with the GO, our intention is to recognise LSPs as soon as Ministers are confident that the basic requirements have been met.
- 3.8 We envisage that once partnerships have been recognized as the LSP for their area, they will automatically be deemed to have met any requirements for partnership working on subsequent Government initiatives.

Incentives for Partnership Working

- 3.9 LSPs should lead to synergy at the local level. Effective, representative and credible LSPs should have little need to incentivise partners to be involved as the benefits from taking an active role in prioritising objectives and in the community planning process should quickly become visible and apparent. The rewards gained from taking part are: increased influence over community strategy; strategic co-ordination of local activity, service delivery and local governance; reduced bureaucratic burdens; maximising the use of resources; and increased knowledge about the area and services provided (best practice sharing). If partners do not see clear benefits in terms of improved outcomes, it is unlikely that any government incentives or sanctions could foster genuine partnership working.
- 3.10 There is a strong case for an incentive for partners to come to the table in the first place - in particular to foster joint-working in deprived areas where problems may be more complex. This is why the Government has decided to link eligibility for the NRF to the establishment of an LSP. Given that local authorities will have broad freedom to use NRF resources as they see fit, provided this is agreed with the LSP, the expectation is that local authorities will use at least some NRF resources in future years as “match” funding to encourage key local service providers to invest in priority areas and to focus mainstream programmes to local priorities and needs.
- 3.11 Central government has a responsibility to ensure its local service delivery agents play a full part in LSPs, and have the necessary operational freedoms to respond to agreed local priorities where appropriate. This is in no way to undermine local service deliverers’ responsibility for delivering their own objectives or their accountability for doing so. The rationale behind LSPs is not that one partner should sacrifice its interests for another - but that through agreeing a joint approach all partners will be able to achieve their own ends

more efficiently and more effectively. Where local partners, from whichever sector, are unable to engage individual local service providers, they should raise this in the first instance with the Government Office.

- 3.12 Participation in LSPs for non public sector partners is of course purely voluntary - though their contribution to the partnership is vital. Voluntary and community groups are often most in need of support in the most deprived areas where, as already noted, there can be particular problems in getting residents' voices heard. To encourage full participation in LSPs, additional support will be made available from the next phase of the New Deal for Communities. This will include funding to cover the cost of residents' and groups' participation, and to allow LSPs to use innovative approaches to involving local people, alongside funding for small "Community Chests". It is envisaged that such Community Chests could be administered by a subgroup comprising the LSP's voluntary and community representatives though it will be important to maintain diversity of access to such funds to prevent funding continually going to the same groups and communities. Further details will be published by DETR shortly.
- 3.13 Many local partnerships already include business representatives, and the principle of public-private partnership is well-established. The private sector is likely to be most attracted to LSPs where they perceive them as adding value and meeting their needs and local priorities. This is likely to be strengthened if the LSP can become both an important networking centre and a "one-stop shop" for business to deal with a broad range of service providers and partnerships. LSPs should discuss with business representatives at an early stage how the LSP can best help meet business' needs but also how the businesses themselves can best contribute to service design and delivery given their particular expertise, resources and perspectives. Ultimately, businesses have a direct interest in community development and neighbourhood renewal, both as 'corporate citizens' and commercially - in re-building local markets among disadvantaged communities.

Freedoms and Flexibilities

- 3.14 The Government does not wish to stand in the way of sensible local endeavors to promote joined-up partnership working at the local level. Most partnership structures set up under various central Government initiatives set out clear individual requirements, for example, for planning, accountability, monitoring and evaluation. These requirements can differ between initiatives reflecting their different focus. Their cumulative effect can be burdensome and a hindrance to effective local partnership working. Where these differences could hamper moves to simpler, less-bureaucratic partnership structures, the Government will give favourable consideration to LSPs' proposals to modify individual requirements, provided the outcomes these requirements were put in place to safeguard are not compromised.
- 3.15 If councils, and LSPs, think the well-being of their localities can be improved by amending or disapplying certain legislative requirements, new powers in the Local Government Act 2000 will allow the Secretary of State to enable this. The Secretary of State can also exempt local authorities from certain statutory plan-making requirements where local authorities can demonstrate it is in the best interest of the area to do so.

Links to Other Initiatives/Guidance

- 3.16 Partnerships may want to be aware of the following linked documents:

- *'Preparing Community Strategies'* - Draft guidance to local authorities (August 2000);

- 'Neighbourhood Renewal Fund' - A Consultation Paper (October 2000); and
- 'Local Public Service Agreements; A Prospectus for Pilot Authorities' (July 2000).

3.17 All of which are available on the DETR website www.local-regions.detr.gov.uk. The electronic version of this guidance, available at www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk/conindex.htm, will be updated to include links to these documents, and to the Urban White Paper and National Strategy Action Plan when these are published.

Annex A

Relationships with Key Partnerships / Area Based Initiatives

Introduction

This annex sets out some of the existing partnerships and players at the regional and local level with whom we would expect LSPs to build a clear working relationship in order to fulfil the role of providing strategic direction across public services in their area. We would welcome local partners and partnerships' views on how these relationships can best be developed.

Over time, local partners will want to consider whether it makes sense to bring some of the separate partnership structures together - as indeed many partnerships are already doing.

The Government believes that local partners are best placed to determine the most appropriate way in which the various bodies can best work together. But it is also aware of the frustration some local partners are experiencing as a result of the number of separate current partnership initiatives - and that rules set by Whitehall are often perceived as preventing more sensible local working arrangements.

Ministers are committed to expanding the flexibility of local delivery arrangements wherever possible provided this does not compromise the delivery of agreed priority outcomes or dilute the role of key players including the community. For example, paragraph 13.24 of the NHS Plan states that, "*The NHS will help develop Local Strategic Partnerships, into which, in the medium term, health action zones and other local action zones could be integrated to strengthen links between health, education, employment and other causes of social exclusion.*"

Where LSPs and other partnerships would like to develop a relationship that may appear to be prevented under the guidance for various government initiatives, this should be discussed with the usual Government Office contacts as soon as possible.

Government hopes that LSPs will offer an opportunity to rationalise existing partnerships into simpler and less bureaucratic structures with a strong basis in local circumstances, priorities and needs. Where it is not possible or effective to integrate another local partnership into the LSP (or a subset of it), it will be even more necessary for clear links to be established between that partnership and the over-arching LSP.

A clear distinction can be made between partnerships that have a strategic function and partnerships that operate as delivery bodies. Our initial view is that there is likely to be more scope to bring together those partnerships with a strategic role - and that LSPs may be less suited to taking on delivery functions. The list below sets out first those partnerships where we consider the synergies are likely to be strongest, then lists a wider subset of partnerships with which LSPs will need to build a clear working relationship.

i) *Existing local partnerships with strategic role*

New Commitment to Regeneration Partnerships

The New Commitment partnerships have voluntarily developed strategic plans for the regeneration of their areas. The partnerships have representatives from the public, private and community and voluntary sectors. All the partners agree a vision with strategic objectives and an action plan. Individual partners then take responsibility for the delivery of particular areas of the action plan. In terms of working methods, structures and organisation, most NCR partnerships would provide a strong basis for an LSP.

Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCPs)

Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership's purpose is to plan the supply and delivery of high quality early education and childcare places. They cover all local authority areas in England to develop and agree plans for services for childcare and early years services - and in particular to ensure a good quality, free early education place for all four year olds whose parents want one, and good quality affordable childcare for children aged 0-14 in every neighbourhood. Local authorities were initially responsible for convening the partnerships, which must cover all the relevant early years and childcare interests, and which are responsible for delivering the National Childcare Strategy in their area. Partnerships agree an annual plan, which is then used as the basis for the LA's bid for resources from DfEE. Although in their infancy, EYDCPs have been successful in drawing together a wide range of people and professionals from across the maintained, private and voluntary sectors to plan responsive early years and childcare services.

Learning Partnerships (LPs)

Learning Partnerships bring together the local providers of learning and guidance and other relevant organisations and groupings to share plans and learning and labour market information and to agree local strategies to widen participation in learning, increase attainment, improve standards, meet local skill needs, and contribute to the Government's social inclusion and regeneration agendas. All LPs include senior representatives of TECs, FE sector colleges, local authorities and schools and Careers Services and most have a much broader membership including HE sector representatives, the Employment Service, employers, training providers, Trade Unions, voluntary and community organisations. Most also link/network closely with other local partnerships in the learning arena, for example, Education Business Partnerships. They develop local learning targets linked to the National Learning Targets and agree a learning plan for the area. This plan sets out how the Partnership intends to co-ordinate local action to create a more coherent, effective and accessible set of local arrangements. Learning partnerships are responsible for ensuring that provision is responsive to local community needs.

Learning Partnerships are likely to become the "learning arm" of the strategic partnership and are being encouraged to develop this model. LPs are strategic forums that enable partners to understand their area, their customers needs and each others' capabilities in order to ensure co-ordinated planning and delivery and to avoid wasteful duplication. These partnerships are, therefore, in a prime position to forge strong links with LSPs, fitting well into the strategic umbrella framework and providing valuable local information, links and networks.

Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs)

The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 established local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships led by the local authorities and police and involving many other local organisations. They are required to conduct a full audit of crime and disorder issues in their areas and then to develop a strategy for dealing with the main problems identified. The partnerships are required to consult with the community at large in carrying out their work. It will be very important that LSPs and CDRPs work closely together especially in areas of strategic planning and consultation with communities.

Local Agenda 21 (LA21)

LA 21 is a process by which local authorities may work with a wide range of partners towards sustainable development at the local level. LA 21 encourages working across traditional boundaries

and the forging of links with community and voluntary agencies, as well as with business, statutory agencies and individual citizens. LA 21 recognises that each area will want to arrive at its own strategy and that priorities will vary. It has encouraged local authorities and their partners to consider the inter-relationships between social, environmental, economic and resource issues, in arriving at dynamic strategies which are built on visions, and contain action plans and implementation mechanisms. The aim is now to mainstream these principles within community planning and other elements of the modernising agenda.

Health Action Zones (HAZs)

Each of the 26 HAZs has, within the past 2 years, established partnership arrangements to monitor, co-ordinate and develop the work of the HAZ. HAZ partners include health and local authority representatives, the voluntary and business sectors and local communities. HAZs have not been developed to a single model, not to a specific geographical area, but have wide experience of partnership working and of tackling deprivation, which will be of value to LSPs. HAZs can be linked to the emerging development of LSPs, with a view to possibly becoming more integrated into LSPs over time.

Sure Start

Sure Start aims to improve the health and well-being of families and children before and from birth so children are ready to flourish when they go to school. It does this by setting up local Sure Start programmes to improve services for families with children under four, usually covering particular neighbourhoods. To date, 59 trailblazers have started work and another 70 programmes are getting underway. These are run by self-governing local partnerships bringing together different services, such as health, education and social services with local parents and community and voluntary sector organisations. The partnerships are usually targeted at poor geographical areas with around 800 children in them.

Community Legal Service Partnerships (CLSPs)

CLSPs have similar geographic coverage to that proposed for LSPs, and involve some of the same organisations, but with a specific focus on the need for, and provision of, legal services. A clear relationship between LSPs/community planning and CLSPs would enable the planning of legal services to be linked more closely to wider regeneration and anti-deprivation strategies. This would be particularly beneficial where such strategies relate to local housing, employment, benefits take up and/or the welfare of immigrants.

Relationships with other partnerships

ii) Other existing

partnerships LSPs need to build relationships with

**Regional /
Subregional
Relationships**

Regional
Development
Agencies

The Regional
Development
Agencies

(RDAs) have
all produced
Regional
Economic
Strategies
setting out the
priorities for
economic
development
and
regeneration in

their regions.
These,
together with
Regional
Planning
Guidance, set
out agreed
common

priorities at the
regional level.
Many of the
RDAs are
building upon
and using
existing sub-
regional
partnerships to
implement
their

strategies. In

other areas, the creation of the RDAs has acted as a catalyst for the development of further sub-regional partnerships which are intended to be strategic, consultative bodies to other partners in the area who are responsible for actual delivery. It will be important for LSPs and community planners to bear this wider framework in mind when putting together new community strategies and specific neighbourhood renewal strategies and setting internal LSP priorities.

RDAs will also be important members of LSPs where they are funding or delivering significant regeneration projects in or close to the LSP's area - for example, to ensure the LSP is able to take full advantage of new economic opportunities generated from the RDA's investment or where there are existing SRB schemes. While it is unrealistic to expect RDAs to be able to be full members of every LSP, LSPs will want to keep in regular contact with RDAs to make the most of potential

Plymouth

Plymouth has had an overarching multi-sector partnership since 1993. Gaining New Commitment to Regeneration pathfinder status, the Partnership re-launched itself as Plymouth 2020. The partnership oversees the city's area based initiatives which include: a health action zone, and education action zone, employment zone and community legal service partnership. The New Commitment partnership is a catalyst to harmonise planning and time tabling of all area based initiatives in the city.

Liverpool

Liverpool Partnership Group (LPG) brings together all the key partners across the city. They have each signed up to Liverpool First, the overarching strategic framework, within which individual and joint agency strategies and area based initiatives are developed and priorities agreed and implemented. For example: Merseyside Objective 1 Single Programming Document; SRB local partnerships; NDC partnership; Health Action Zone; Health Improvement Programme; Housing Strategy; Merseyside Integrated Transport Strategy; Liverpool and Sefton Employment Zone; and Liverpool Sports Action Zone.

Existing strategic partnerships, eg, Crime & Disorder, Learning, Health and Social Regeneration, are becoming co-ordinating bodies on behalf of the LPG, to facilitate joint working, reshaping of services and resources and ensure delivery of key elements through the Partnership's strategic drivers.

Sandwell

The Sandwell Civic Partnership, as a New Commitment to Regeneration partnership, oversees the borough's community strategy. The civic partners have agreed to commit to a joint planning process to prepare a shared long term vision and community strategy (the Sandwell Plan) and to jointly review the use of all resources to implement the plan. The Sandwell Civic Partnership is at the centre of a family of partnerships in Sandwell. There are four primary thematic partnerships which form the core of the community strategy:

- *Sandwell Learning Partnership;*
- *Sandwell Health Partnership;*
- *Sandwell Economic Partnership; and*
- *Sandwell Urban Form Partnership.*

synergies. LSPs should therefore discuss with their RDA how the relationship between the two bodies can best be structured dependent on local circumstances.

Regional Cultural Consortia

Regional Cultural Consortia are producing regional cultural strategies identifying key priorities right across the arts, sport, cultural heritage, tourism, creative industries spectrum for the regions, and will be a useful source of advice and information for LSPs. These issues are often of great importance to local communities.

National Lottery

National Lottery distributors are of course an important source of funding for a wide range of projects in the health, environment, culture, sport, heritage and charitable areas. LSPs will therefore find it useful to keep in contact with those Lottery distributors of most relevance to their area.

Sub-regional Agencies

Learning and Skills Councils, the Benefits Agency, the Employment Service, the Small Business Service and some Health Action Zones work within boundaries larger than the typical LSP area. It is important that partnerships and bodies such as these are involved in LSP activity despite the different geographical boundaries.

Subregional Strategies

The Greater Nottingham Partnership

The Greater Nottingham Partnership has taken on the role of a sub-regional partnership. As well as other partner agencies, eg, public agencies, business and the community, it covers six local authorities: Nottingham City council; Nottingham County council; and Rushcliffe, Broxtowe, Ashfield and Gedling borough and district councils. It therefore covers rural as well as urban areas.

New Deal for Communities (NDC) Partnerships
There are 39 existing NDC

partnerships in small neighbourhoods of around 4,000 people which are already developing and delivering neighbourhood regeneration schemes across the country, working in partnership with key agencies and service providers across the local area and the region. Making effective links with local and regional strategies, to find areas where the partnership can add value to other initiatives and programmes, has been particularly important.

These linkages will remain critical under the new initiatives now being developed under the NDC in particular neighbourhood wardens and neighbourhood management. Both initiatives will be delivered by community-driven local partnerships working closely with key agencies and service providers across the LSP area.

Many of the existing NDC Partnerships already involve the same senior figures from local service deliverers likely to be involved in LSPs. Given that NDC partnerships cover very much smaller areas than LSPs, and the strong community and resident role in leading NDC partnerships, it is unlikely that there would be advantages from bringing the two partnerships together. But it is clearly important that the two partnerships work together and that there is an open and full exchange of information and future plans. The likely degree of common membership between the two partnerships may provide the best way to ensure this, without the need for a more formal relationship. Again, the precise arrangements in the 39 areas will be for the relevant LSP and NDC Partnerships to agree, if necessary in consultation with their usual Government Office contacts.

NDC partnerships are a good working model for neighbourhood strategies and neighbourhood partnerships and will be useful in feeding up ideas and best practise to the relevant local strategic partnerships.

Single Regeneration Budget Partnerships

Many existing SRB partnerships will have similar membership and cover similar geographical areas to LSPs. Where it makes sense on the ground to do so - particularly where local service deliverers senior representatives on both are the same people - consideration should be given to bringing the partnerships together. This need not necessarily lead to full merger - LSPs may see themselves as primarily strategic bodies concerned with overall direction setting, and are unlikely to want to become involved in day-to-day programme administration. Arrangements should be determined to suit local circumstances, ranging from the LSP taking progress reports to the SRB Partnership becoming a "subset" of the LSP sharing the same meeting times and agenda. Where both partnerships are attracted to coming together, their proposals should be discussed in the first instance with their normal Government Office contacts.

Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) partnerships play an important role in delivering holistic regeneration schemes at the local level. The Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are responsible for administering the SRB, including the approval of the partnerships' annual Delivery Plan.

It will be important to ensure that there is an effective interface between LSPs and RDAs/SRB partnerships to ensure that new projects coming forward under existing SRB schemes are consistent with local strategies. Following SR2000, the SRB is being given a more economic focus and from April 2002 will become part of the RDAs single funding pot. It will be important to ensure, through the RDAs involvement in LSPs, that support for future economic development and regeneration schemes is not only consistent with RDA Regional Economic Strategies but also with LSPs' strategies.

Connexions

From April 2001, Connexions Partnerships will provide support and guidance to all young people aged 13 - 19, helping them to participate effectively in learning and reach their full potential. They will be responsible for strategic planning and funding of the support service at sub-regional level, based on the 47 Learning and Skills Council areas.

Day to day management of the Connexions service will be the responsibility of Local Management Committees (LMCs). LMCs will be working on a county or unitary local authority boundaries, or groupings of LA areas where partners decide so. It is important that the Connexions service is represented on, and working closely with, the relevant LSP especially with regards to strategic planning.

Drug Action Teams (DATs)

DATs are non-statutory groups set up under the "Tackling Drugs Together" White Paper. They involve key local organisations at chief officer level. From April 2001 all DATs will be co-terminous with local authorities; 116 single tier authorities and a further 34 will be county or two tier where the local authority has education and social service responsibilities. There is much to gain from a close working relationship between LSPs and DATs.

Youth Offending Teams (YOTs)

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 required local authorities with social services and education responsibilities (ie. County and unitary authorities), in partnership with the police, probation service, and health authorities, to establish multi-agency Youth Offending Teams in their areas. They are central to the youth justice reform programme and operate within a framework of annual

youth justice plans which local authorities are required to produce. The plans are designed to be compatible with the strategies of local CDRPs. YOTs would be prime partnerships for strong relations and co-ordination with LSP activity.

Annex B LSPs & Local Public Service Agreements (PSAs)

The Government does not envisage the creation of any new separate partnership bodies to oversee and help in the delivery of local PSAs. In many areas, it will take some time to build up formal local strategic partnerships, but in most areas it will be clear who will be in the partnership or which existing partnership body will develop into the LSP. The clear presumption is that, over time, the LSP should become the starting point for all partnership working arrangements, including those connected to the authority's local PSA.

In this first round of local PSAs at least, the Agreement will be between central government and the individual local authorities - partner organisations will not be signatories to the Agreement. However, there are a number of ways in which authorities will need to work closely with their partner members and the LSP:

- A local authority's proposal for a local PSA should set out its **vision and strategy** to deliver enhanced outcomes for its residents. This is not intended to be something to be developed in isolation for the submission of PSA proposals - it should reflect any vision and strategy already being developed by the authority with local people and key partners, principally the overarching aims set out in the community strategy for its area, where this exists. It should also reflect and build on the vision developed for its Best Practice Performance Plan and, in due course, for its local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (ies) (see below);
- **Establishing and demonstrating support for local priorities.** Each local PSA will focus on about twelve key outcomes which reflect a mix of national and local priorities. Local authorities will need to demonstrate that the local priorities they are proposing are important to and supported by local people and partners. Again, we envisage that authorities will draw on consultation already undertaken by LSPs, when drawing up community strategies, and/or under best value - rather than consulting specifically and separately on their proposed local PSA priorities. There should be synergy between the outcomes chosen and the work and focus of the LSP;
- **Delivery.** Whilst the local PSA is an agreement with the individual authority, both local and central government wish to see local partners fully involved in the delivery of local PSAs. For most, if not all, aspects of the local PSA, the authority will need to work closely with its partners to deliver the agreed enhanced outcomes and the LSP provides an appropriate forum in which to discuss and resolve this with key partners. The Government will encourage other public sector bodies, including health authorities, Learning and Skills Councils and RDAs, to work with local authorities on local PSAs;
- **In tackling deprivation.** All local PSA authorities should show how their local PSA will help them to tackle deprivation more effectively. For example, the local PSA might build on the 'floor' targets (set out in box 23.1 of the Spending Review 2000 White Paper) or develop targets for particular deprived neighbourhoods. This approach will be part of wider local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies, produced by LSPs, in many areas. In the most deprived areas, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund will be available as unhypothecated top-up funding for local authorities. It will be conditional on local PSAs (where they exist) having a deprivation focus, and on local authorities producing statements - agreed with LSPs - indicating how the NRF money will be spent to support Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies and thus to achieve anti-deprivation 'floor' targets (further details are set out in the parallel consultation document on the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund); and
- **Local monitoring and reporting.** Authorities will want their systems for monitoring and reporting to local partners on progress on their local PSA to fit in with the performance management framework they have for accountability for all objectives shared, and to be achieved, with partners.

Annex C Relationship to Community Strategies

LSPs should provide an effective mechanism for preparing community strategies, as local authorities are required to do by the Local Government Act 2000. This would integrate anti-deprivation strategies within the wider community strategies and councils' overarching plans to improve local well-being, thus making vital links to other strategies' themes and to other neighbourhoods.

The 2000 Act is part of a local authority reform programme, linked to wider changes in public services. These aim to ensure that the activities of the various bodies who provide services to the public: are better co-ordinated; are responsive to the concerns of local communities; are delivered in ways that suit people who depend on them; and take account of the needs of future generations.

A community strategy should aim to enhance the quality of life of the local community through action to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area and its inhabitants. This is also intended to contribute to sustainable development locally and nationally. These strategies will thus be prepared by partnerships of all the bodies that provide local services, that work with local communities and whose actions affect people's everyday lives. (There will be a strong link here with best value, which will act as a key tool in ensuring that the aspirations identified in the community strategy are turned into effective action on the ground.)

There is no definitive approach to the way in which such partnerships should be structured, the bodies that should be represented, or the way in which the partnership should operate. That is a matter for local authorities and their partners to decide. It is important, however, that the representatives of the member organisations have the necessary authority to speak for their organisation, to sign up to the long term vision and to commit resources to implementing the action plan. The membership and size of the partnership should reflect both its aims and the breadth of issues that might fall within the scope of a community strategy. Community planning and LSPs should thus provide an overarching framework within which other more specific partnerships, involving both service agencies and business and community interests, can operate.

LSPs and community strategies

Sandwell

The Sandwell Civic Partnership oversees the activities of both the New Commitment to Regeneration pathfinder and community planning. They are seen as the same activity.

Information

This draft guidance has been produced by a team including:

Department for Education and Employment
Department of Health
Local Government Association
Cabinet Office
Social Exclusion Unit
Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions
Home Office
HM Treasury
Regional Co-ordination Unit
Department of Social Security
Active Community Unit
Department of Culture, Media and Sport
Lord Chancellor's Department
No 10 Policy Unit

We would welcome responses to this consultation paper by no later than **14 November 2000**. Any

response received may be made public, unless the respondent has specifically asked for it to remain confidential

Responses to this paper should be sent to:

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An electronic version of this guidance can be found at:

www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk/conindex.htm

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