



## Wirral Local Strategic Partnership Briefing Note

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Review of Wirral's Local Strategic Partnership</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> February 2011</b>

### 1. Executive Summary

As requested by the LSP Executive Board on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2010, a review has been undertaken of the Wirral Local Strategic Partnership. All members of the Executive Board and Assembly members have been approached and have had the opportunity to express their thoughts and views with regards to the future role of the LSP. The findings that emerged from the review are provided within this briefing note .

### 2. Background

In September 2010, Wirral's LSP Executive Board requested a review of the future purpose of the LSP, given the changing policy environment at both local and national level. Nationally, the Coalition Government has signaled a strong move towards the local determination of priorities and local accountability for the delivery of services. A number of the mechanisms of central/local relationships, such as local area agreements (LAA) and Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA), have been abolished and whereas previously LSPs had been 'required' by central government, Ministers' clear view now is that it is entirely within the gift of local areas to determine if they should have an LSP and what that LSP should focus on. The review of Wirral's LSP therefore represents an excellent opportunity to focus future partnership activity on what is important for Wirral.

In October and November 2010, John Highton (Wirral Council) and Richard Perry (Government Office North West) undertook a review of the LSP Executive Board and Assembly. This involved interviews with each member of the Executive Board, the collation and review of comments from Assembly members and a desk review of practice from other LSP areas.

### 3. Emerging Areas of Priority

#### What is working well:

The review found that the following aspects of the LSP were currently working well and should be retained moving forward:

- There was a strong commitment from partners for the LSP and the value of bringing key partners together to share a common understanding of priorities;

- The LSP is well run and well serviced;
- It provides a useful mechanism for keeping people informed and has prompted partner activity as a result of information brought to it;
- It is strong on performance management and performance information (although there is not universal belief that the right priorities are being managed);
- There was strong support for the 'dragons den' style exercise and theme champions that had supported the development of local area agreement priorities.
- The Sustainable Community Strategy, Comprehensive Area Assessment and Local Area Agreements had provided a focus that now needed to be updated
- Voluntary, Community and Faith (VCF) sector feel well engaged at a strategic level.

### **What is not working so well:**

The Review found that the following aspects of the LSP were currently not working so well and should be resolved moving forward:

- The LSP has defaulted to an information sharing forum and lost its focus on problem solving and joint partner action;
- The agenda has been dominated by 'national' as opposed to 'local' issues and this has been reflected in the LAA;
- Meetings are local authority led with limited challenge made to partners at the meetings
- There is a perceived lack of action arising from meetings and no clear continuity, and resolution, of priorities;
- The Assembly feels disconnected from the Board, lacking a clear role and focus;
- Private sector engagement, still not clear to what purpose and whether LSP is the appropriate mechanism;
- Clarification needed on the distinction between the VCF as a deliverer of services and a representative of community interests. VCF want to move from commenting on problems to helping to solve them.

### **4. Next Steps**

These findings will inform further discussion at the LSP Executive Board meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2011 to agree the future role of the partnership.

