



## Learning to deliver improvement project Consultant's brief

### 1. Introduction

Wychavon is the largest district in Worcestershire. With a population of 116,900, the district covers 260 square miles and contains a mix of rural and urban communities. It includes the historic market towns of Evesham, Pershore and Droitwich Spa and over 100 villages.

Effectively addressing issues such as crime, health, housing needs, transport, activities for young people, the environment, supporting economic activity and community cohesion requires organisations to work together, through bodies such as Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs).

Wychavon's Community Plan Core Group and LSPs are participants in the West Midlands Learning to Deliver programme. We are now looking for a suitable organisation or individual to work with us to deliver our Learning to Delivery improvement project early in 2008.

This brief sets out the current context of LSPs and community planning in Wychavon and provides some background to the Learning to Deliver programme. It outlines our improvement project and how we envisage you can help us with delivering it.

### 2. LSPs in Wychavon's

We've taken an innovative approach to **Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)** in Wychavon as we recognise a 'one size fits all' LSP for the whole district would not work.

The **Wychavon Community Plan Core Group** is the strategic partnership for the district. It prepares the Wychavon community strategy, manages delivery of actions in the plan, gives a steer to the district's LSPs and builds links with the county LSP, the **Worcestershire Partnership**.

Our **three area based LSPs** are centred around the district's main towns and surrounding rural areas. They bring together the public, private, community and voluntary sectors at a local level to deliver real improvements that benefit people living, working and visiting the areas they cover. The Evesham and Pershore area LSPs started life as **Market Town Partnerships**, with a significant amount of funding from the national Market Towns Programme for regeneration projects. The

**Droitwich Spa Area Partnership** was set up from scratch as the area wasn't eligible for Market Towns funding and didn't have an equivalent partnership already in place. All three LSPs have a strong track record of delivery.

In September 2007, we adopted new **Terms of Reference** for the Core Group and LSPs. These set out the partnerships' core purpose and responsibilities; accountability arrangements; how decisions are made; the roles and responsibilities of partnership members. The Terms of Reference provide greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of partnership members and lines of communication than previously existed.

### 3. Wychavon's Community Strategy

In October 2007 we launched the new Wychavon Community Strategy, '**Shaping the future together**'. The strategy contains the vision and priorities for the Wychavon district from 2007 to 2010. It sets out how the organisations involved in preparing it are working together to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in or visits the district.

Our vision for Wychavon is a safe, green, healthy and beautiful district that is a vibrant and creative place for everyone to live, work and visit. The strategy follows the same themes that other Worcestershire community strategies are using, these are:

- Communities that are safe and feel safe
- A better environment – for today and tomorrow
- Economic success that is shared by all
- Improving health and well-being
- Meeting the needs of children and young people
- Stronger communities: this theme covers a range of issues including, housing, inclusion, leisure, culture and transport.

These are also the thematic blocks of Worcestershire's current **Local Area Agreement (LAA)**.

At the strategy launch event, partners made a public commitment to delivering the Community Strategy by signing up to the shared priorities. They were also invited to commit to working with others on taking forward some of the ideas for action set out in the plan. We are now developing some of these into more concrete actions to include in an action plan to support delivery of the strategy.

### 4. The Learning to Deliver programme

All 38 LSPs in the West Midlands are currently involved in the **Learning to Deliver (L2D) programme**. The programme aims to provide targeted and relevant support to LSPs within the West Midlands to help them improve the delivery of their Local Area Agreements and Sustainable Community Strategies. It also aims to help the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) and its member

organisations and other regional agencies to develop a strategic assessment of the strengths and challenges faced by LSPs in the region.

The L2D programme is funded by the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership using Capacity Building resources devolved to the region by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Each participating LSP has identified one or two key improvements and has developed a project plan to address these issues using funding allocated by the L2D programme. Current improvement projects cover issues such as governance and accountability, performance management, voluntary and community sector involvement, delivery planning, leadership training and climate change.

## 5. Our improvement project

The Core Group and LSPs have a good track record of partnership working and project delivery and we are proud of our new Community Strategy. However, with the increasing emphasis being placed on LSPs and delivery through LAAs, we need to strengthen the partnerships further to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' to meet the new challenges. Improving communications and increasing ownership of the Community Strategy priorities are key areas for improvement.

The aim of our L2D improvement project is, therefore, to strengthen relationships between the strategic Community Plan Core Group and the three LSPs in Wychavon resulting in more effective delivery of the priorities in the new Wychavon Community Strategy and relevant outcomes in Worcestershire's LAA.

Our project has three key objectives:

- **To strengthen the relationships, and in particular, communications between the Wychavon Community Plan Core Group and the three LSPs.**
- **To facilitate more effective two-way communication between Core Group and LSP members and the organisations/networks they represent.**
- **To gain wider ownership for delivering the shared priorities in Wychavon's Community Strategy.**

## 5. Delivering the project

We are looking for a suitable organisation/individual to work with us to deliver the project, which we envisage will comprise the following elements:

- a) **An audit of current methods of communication** and feedback between:
  - the Core Group and LSPs
  - partnership members and the sector, organisation, partnership or network they represent

including establishing how effective they are and key gaps. It would also be useful to audit how partners are using the Community Strategy priorities to influence their own organisation's/partnership's strategic and financial planning.

- b) Identifying **preferences for future communication**/involvement and exploring views on potential 'tools' such as one-off fact sheets; regular newsletter; e-communications, training, events.
- c) Holding a **facilitated event** involving a small group of Core Group/LSP members (mix of statutory, private, community and voluntary sector) to develop a simple communications framework and create an 'editorial' team to contribute to a new communication tool, such as a newsletter.
- d) Working with us to **create the first issue of a regular communication product**, e.g newsletter or e-mail bulletin.

## 6. Sources of more information

For more information about Wychavon's LSPs and Community Strategy, we recommend the following:

- Wychavon's Community Strategy 2007-2010
- Terms of reference for Wychavon's Community Plan Core Group & LSPs
- DVD showcasing successful LSP projects
- [www.wychavon.gov.uk/communityplanning](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/communityplanning)

You can find out more about the L2D programme at [www.wmlga.gov.uk](http://www.wmlga.gov.uk)

## 7. Project Champions

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