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## Appendix B

### QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

(NB. In some instances the answer outlines covers a number of preceding questions)

#### **Question 1**

*Is there agreement that the key role of the LSP should be to develop the vision for the local area, through the Sustainable Community Strategy and the “delivery contract” through the LAA?*

Yes, provided that the sustainable community strategy is up to date.

#### **Question 2**

*Is it important that LSPs reflect regional/sub-regional plans where relevant in their Sustainable Community Strategy priorities and that regional organisations and partnerships take account of key local needs. How can this greater co-ordination best be facilitated?*

It is recognised that this should be achieved, but tensions will always exist as a result of regional strategies not always having relevance at a more local level. It is important that local views are fed into regional strategies. This needs to be achieved via the political process, where possible.

#### **Question 3**

*Would a requirement on bodies producing theme or service-based plans to “have regard” to the Sustainable Community Strategy in doing so and vice versa, increase the LSP’s ability to take the over-arching view of an area?*

Yes. It is important that the LSP ensures that there are appropriate linkages between the various plans and strategies and any help in this regard would be useful.

#### **Question 4**

*Are the proposed steps in the development of a Sustainable Community Strategy as suggested correct?*

Yes, with the addition of appropriate monitoring.

#### **Question 5**

*What more could be done to ensure Sustainable Community Strategies are better able to make the links between social, economic and environmental goals to deal more effectively with an area’s cross-boundary and longer-term impacts?*

There is a need to rationalise and simplify the current strategic and priority framework at national and regional level. This would help ensure that linkages can be better achieved at the local level.

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**Question 6**

*What should be the role of an LSP in supporting neighbourhood engagement and ensuring the neighbourhood/parish voice, including diverse communities, is heard at the principal local level?*

**Question 7**

*In two-tier areas, is it most appropriate for the responsibility for neighbourhood engagement to rest with the district level LSP?*

It is important that there are elected representatives and representatives from the business and voluntary sector and community groups on the LSP. The LSP needs to provide co-ordination at a local level to ensure that the key partners engage with communities in an integrated way. District level is seen as the most appropriate for this purpose.

**Question 8**

*How can spatial planning best contribute to Sustainable Community Strategies through the LSP and ensure that LDFs and Sustainable Community Strategies are closely linked?*

**Question 9**

*How could revised guidance and accompanying support materials best ensure that Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Development Frameworks join up effectively?*

The Local Development Framework will have to reflect and complement the sustainable community strategy and vice versa. Any guidance and supporting materials should be complementary, although at present the timescales for LDF and sustainable community strategies might be very different.

District and County LSPs require common data sets and there needs to be consistency in the way in which LDF and LSPs are resourced. There is a perception locally that as the LSP has developed, it should be better able to input into the LDF process.

**Question 10**

*Should every Local Authority area have its own LSP?*

**Question 11**

*Would the establishment of a great delineation of roles between County and District LSPs as outlined be sensible?*

Yes, every local authority should have an LSP if so required. It is also recognised that there is need to work with adjoining Authorities and sub-regions. There needs to be clarity around the role of the County LSP and the content of the sustainable community strategy at county and local levels and better co-ordination between the

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LSPs.

**Question 12**

*Should the LSP be made up of the thematic partnerships in the area together with an LSP board?*

Question why this is so prescriptive. Although it is recognised that the LAA process is likely to shape the future composition of LSPs, some flexibility will still be required with respect to composition. Needs to be responsive to local needs.

**Question 13**

*A rationalisation of local partnerships would help the LSP executive take an effective overview. Would clustering partnerships around the four LAA blocks be a sensible way to achieve this?*

This appears overly complicated. It is also felt that the LAA blocks do not cover everything.

**Question 14**

*Geographic boundaries of partners within LSPs is important. What are the opportunities for, and barriers to, co-terminosity-shared geographic boundaries?*

One of the main barriers is the constant changing of organisational structures and personnel.

**Question 15**

*Within the LSP framework and its established priorities, would the creation of single delivery vehicles to take forward particular issues be helpful?*

No.

**Question 16**

*How can the neighbourhood and parish tiers be involved most effectively on the LSP on a) the executive and b) individual thematic partnerships?*

**Question 17**

*How can the private, voluntary and community sectors be involved most effectively on the LSP as a) the executive and b) individual thematic partnerships?*

By means of appropriate composition, structures and communication at the local level.

**Question 18**

*Would a duty to co-operate with the Local Authority, in producing and implementing the Community Strategy, help to set LSPs on the firmer footing and better enable their enhanced delivery co-ordination role?*

**Question 19**

*If so, what obligations, such as attendance, financial or staff support, would be*

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*useful to place on partners?*

**Question 20**

*If so, which public sector agencies would the duty be most sensibly placed on?*

**Question 21**

*Should there be a statutory duty on Local Authorities and named partners to promote the engagement of the voluntary and community sectors in the LSP?*

It is felt that making it a statutory duty to co-operate in delivering the sustainable community strategy would result in 2 or 3 of the public sector partners thus affected doing all the work. It is felt that mutual interest and benefit for all partners is what is required for LSPs to work effectively. Legislation will not bring in the voluntary, community or the business sectors. The LSP locally needed to be seen as both important and effective.

**Question 22**

*Should each partnership be encouraged to produce protocols or 'partnership agreements' between partners to ensure clear lines of accountability for the delivery of agreed outcomes?*

This appears unnecessarily bureaucratic.

**Question 23**

*The Government believes that if partnership working was included as part of other key agencies' assessments it would be effective in securing greater commitment from other public sector agencies. What are your views?*

Partnership working should be included in general assessments of other public agencies other than local government. This would definitely encourage their involvement.

**Question 24**

*What do you see as the key role for executive Councillors within LSPs?*

**Question 25**

*What do you see as the appropriate role for backbenchers particularly in ensuring a high quality of local engagement?*

**Question 26**

*What would make Councillors' powers of Overview and Scrutiny more effective in scrutinising the 4 blocks of the LAA?*

Councillors on the LSP have a key bridging role in terms of linking the Council and the LSP together. In the context of this question, all Councillors play an important role with respect to community engagement and the thematic partnerships. However, it is difficult to envisage how overview and scrutiny could effectively hold the LSP and the partners involved to account in a constructive fashion.

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The structures/composition and operation of 4<sup>th</sup> option authorities seem to be ignored by these questions. Locally, we have nominated our Leader and Chief Executive as the District Council representative on the LSP.

**Question 27**

*What would be the most appropriate way for a Member of Parliament to be involved with the LSP and how can the Government ensure that it is complementary to the role of local Councillors?*

To ensure that LSP partners do not pull in different directions. MPs should be kept informed of LSP issues, but they should not play an active role. Also, LSPs often cover more than one constituency.

**Question 28**

*How can the Government promote effective community engagement and involvement, from all sections of the community, in shaping local priorities and public services?*

**Question 29**

*How can the Government maximise the opportunities for joint policy and joint activity on community engagement, including the LDF, the LAA and the Sustainable Community Strategy?*

**Question 30**

*How can accountability to local people and businesses be enhanced?*

Need to ensure that there is a fair representation from the community on the LSP, while being mindful that an LSP, if too large, can become an information exchange forum rather than an active executive body delivering things locally.

The onus is on the Government to join together at a national level policies and activities affecting local communities, including the LDF, the LAA, the sustainable community strategy and the myriad other plans and strategies currently required by Government departments.

Accountability to local people and businesses can only be done at a local level; the only way in which the Government can help facilitate this is by providing appropriate resources to local organisations and increasing the governance and Councillor involvement within LSPs.

**Question 31**

*What are your LSP's key support/skills gaps?*

**Question 32**

*What extra or different support would be most helpful in shifting to a more delivery focused role?*

**Question 33**

*How would LSPs prefer to receive information and support; through guidance, toolkits, sign-posting to existing information, practical learning opportunities, etc?*

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Proper resources are required to underpin and support the LSP and associated partnerships. It needs to be seen as the 'day job' and accorded priority for all the partners involved. Thus Government as a whole needs to articulate what are priorities and what are not priorities to allow resources to be re-directed. Greater awareness of partner associations and what motivates them should be developed among partners. There should be common information systems, where possible.

Practical learning opportunities are preferable. It is also recognised that there could be merit in LSP partners attending some Member training sessions.

**Question 34**

*How can LSPs ensure that adequate learning and support provision is available to build the capacity of communities to engage with the LSP and its partners at the various levels?*

By training opportunities and proper resourcing/targeting around this.

**Question 35**

*What learning or development do you feel is required by LSPs in order to deliver sustainable communities that embody the principles of sustainable development at the local level?*

Need to understand what each partner is doing and have common data bases in order to work towards a common action plan. The key commodities locally are time, resources and competing priorities.