Summary

The Sutton Strategy is the borough’s sustainable community strategy. It is the document which sets out the Sutton Partnership’s shared vision for improving public service delivery in the borough. The strategy’s action plan is Sutton’s Local Area Agreement.

Last year the Government introduced a new Local Area Agreement (LAA) process. Under this new approach, all councils are now required to select priorities for improvement from the new set of national indicators.

We have taken the opportunity of the new LAA process to refresh the Sutton Strategy. The Executive is being asked to recommend to full Council that the new strategy is approved. This version of the strategy takes on board the comments received on an earlier draft which was the subject of consultation with partners.

Two main changes have been made to the refreshed Sutton Strategy. Firstly, the narrative section has been substantially updated to take account of new developments, work on the Local Development Framework, and to introduce the fairer/greener/safer themes, in alignment with the refreshed Sutton Plan approved by the Executive last month. Secondly, the new Local Area Agreement becomes the strategy’s action plan. Negotiations with the Government Office London on our Local Area Agreement are due to conclude by 30 May.

Recommendation

That the Executive recommends to full council’s 12 May meeting that:

(i) the Sutton Strategy 2008-20 be approved.
(ii) the function of approving the Local Area Agreement be delegated to the Executive.
(iii) the Executive authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader or the Opposition, to finalise outstanding targets in the Local Area Agreement, as part of the ongoing negotiations with Government Office London, due to conclude by 30 May 2008.
1 Background

1.1 The Sutton Partnership agreed the current Sutton Strategy in March 2007. However, the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 has introduced changes made by the Government to the process of producing and agreeing Local Area Agreements (LAA) for 2008 onwards, and all councils are now required to agree new LAAs with Government. The Sutton Partnership is taking this opportunity to refresh the Sutton Strategy in tandem with the negotiation of the new LAA, which forms the action plan of the strategy.

2. What is different about the new version of the Sutton Strategy?

2.1 A major change in the new version of the Sutton Strategy (Appendix A) is that the narrative section has been updated to ensure that there is now a clearer storyline around making the borough fairer, greener and safer. Flowing from this, the text which describes in greater detail our ambitions for the future under each of the priorities, has been updated to take account of the work that has been achieved through the partnership in 2007/08 and align with our new LAA. In particular, the new narrative takes account of the work which has been taking place on the Local Development Framework and the major changes taking place in many of our key service areas, such as the transformation of social care services.

2.2 In the year since we published the Sutton Strategy, we have introduced a new performance management approach and the strategy has been updated to take account of this change. The new version of the Sutton Strategy also includes an equality and diversity impact statement.

2.3 The strategy’s former action plan has been replaced with the new LAA. The draft LAA is Annex A in the new strategy. In keeping with all other councils, Sutton is negotiating a new LAA with Government which will run from 2008 to 2011. This process entails selecting up to a maximum of 35 targets from the new national indicator set. The Sutton Partnership has selected 25 indicators which are listed in the table below, grouped under the three themes of fairer, greener and safer (see table on page 3). In addition there are 17 mandatory indicators relating to children’s services which all councils are required to include in their LAA. The partnership has also identified one local indicator relating to local businesses.

2.4 Negotiations with Government on the targets that will be set for these indicators are currently ongoing. They are due to be completed by 30 May. In view of this, the Executive is being asked to recommend to full Council that the Chief Executive is authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition, to finalise outstanding targets in the LAA.
The Sutton Partnership's Local Area Agreement targets
(the national indicator number is shown in brackets)

FAIRER
Reducing mortality rates from all circulatory disease at ages under 75 (121)
Increasing the number of social care clients receiving self-directed support (130)
Improving support to carers (135)
Increasing the number of adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation (145)
Increasing the number of people who feel they can influence local decisions (4)
Increasing the number of young offenders in suitable education, employment and training (45)
Improving the effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health services (51)
Reducing obesity amongst primary school aged children in the reception year (55)
Reducing the inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 3 qualification by age of 19 (81)
Reducing the inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 2 qualification by age of 19 (82)
Reducing the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers at key stages 2 and 4 (102)
Increasing the number of affordable homes (155)
Increasing the borough’s percentage of decent homes (158)
Increasing the number of people of working age qualified to at least level 2 (163)
Reducing the number of people of working age claiming out of work benefits (152)

GREENER
Adapting to climate change (188)
Improving local biodiversity (197)
Reducing carbon dioxide emissions in the borough (186)
Reducing the number of children travelling to school by car (198)

SAFER
Reducing the serious violent crime rate (15)
Reducing serious acquisitive crime (16)
Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour (21)
Reducing repeat incidents of domestic violence (32)
Increasing young people’s participation in positive activities (110)
Increasing participation in sport (8)
4. Financial implications

4.1 The majority of the funding which underpins the partnership’s activities is managed by the individual partner organisations. Through the process of agreeing this strategy and setting the Local Area Agreement, this funding is used to deliver against the shared priorities of the partnership. Partner organisations are responsible for their own financial planning and expenditure and are responsible for ensuring appropriate allocation of resources to deliver on the targets agreed in this Strategy. The resources implications for the council of the measures set out in the Sutton Strategy are reflected within the Council’s three year capital and revenue budgets.

4.2 In 2007/08 the Council received a number of funding streams under the heading of the Local Area Agreement which were to be used to achieve the targets set out in the Local Area Agreement. From 2008/09 this funding is being replaced with a single Area Based Grant (ABG) which is an unringfenced allocation made directly to local authorities to supplement other mainstream funding. The ABG is intended to support the delivery of local, regional and national priorities in the local area. The Council has received an ABG allocation of £7.7m in 2008/09, £11.8m in 2009/10 and £11.5m in 2010/11. The Council will use the ABG alongside existing mainstream funding to achieve the targets set out in the Local Area Agreement.

5. Recommendation

That the Executive recommends to full council that:
(i) the Sutton Strategy 2008-20 be approved.
(ii) the function of approving the Local Area Agreement be delegated to the Executive.
(iii) the Executive authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader or the Opposition, to finalise outstanding targets in the Local Area Agreement, as part of the ongoing negotiations with Government Office London, due to conclude by 30 May 2008.

Influence of the council’s core values

One of the council’s core values is partnership. The Sutton Strategy is the document which translates this value into a practical plan of action to enable us to deliver through partnership on our commitments to the people who live and work in the borough.