

Strong and Prosperous Communities

The Local Government White Paper



Where we are

- Huge improvement in public services and local authority performance since 1997 driven by massive investment, top-down performance management and hard work by local government and others on the ground
- However, there are new and complex challenges which require joined-up responses on tough cross-cutting issues, like social exclusion
- Expectations have also increased: people expect more say, personalised services and higher standards
- Our response to these challenges: a radical, devolutionary White Paper which fundamentally re-balances the relationship between central and local government.



The Deal

The offer

- A stronger role for local authorities to lead their communities, shape their areas and bring local public services together
- More space for local authorities and other local service providers to innovate and respond to local needs
- Stronger focus on top priorities

In exchange for

- More bottom-up accountability
- Stronger local authority leadership
- Better and more efficient services
- Tougher intervention when things go wrong



Our proposals

- Product of extensive debate and consultation
- Based on experience of best local authorities working with their partners
- Proposals:
 - Empowers citizens and communities
 - Create stronger and more visible leadership
 - Put in place a new framework within which local authorities and their partners can work
 - Offer the tools local government needs and helps all areas tackle the challenges of the 21st Century and achieve their potential

- Fundamentally rebalance the central-local relationship:
 - Single set of national outcome indicators (agreed through CSR)
 - Small number of targets agreed with each area (35, plus DfES statutory targets) = 51 tops
 - Reformed, more-risk-based and better targeted inspection regime
- More accountable and responsive services at local level
 - Enhanced right to be heard: Community Call for Action and encourage petitions
 - Promoting community ownership and management of assets
 - Involving and consulting service users and providing better information
- Stronger role for local authorities as place-shapers and local leaders
 - Local authorities to develop Local Area Agreements in partnership with other agencies
 - New role for LSPs and thematic partnerships
 - Place duty on named partners to co-operate in agreeing LAA targets and to have regard to meeting them
 - Presumption that all area based funding will go through LAAs

- Stronger and more stable local authority leadership
 - 3 options – mayors, elected executives and indirectly elected leaders with a 4 year term
 - Permissive approach to whole Council elections and single member wards
 - Restructuring in a small number of county areas and improved two-tier working.
- Councillors as democratic champions
 - Championing the interests of citizens and driving service improvement
 - Strengthening and broadening Overview & Scrutiny
 - Promoting the involvement of under-represented groups as Councillors
- Taking forward the debate on economic development in towns, cities and regions
 - Strong cities and strong regions
 - DfT reforms to Passenger Transport Authorities
 - Multi-Area Agreements
 - Further work in the run up to CSR07



In Five Years' Time

- A new look for local government – more confident, more proactive, more innovative, more in tune with their communities.
- A new relationship:
 - between central and local government
 - between local partners
 - between citizens and local government.



Key issues: LAA transition

Critical path

- **Mar 07:** Round 3 LAAs agreed for 07-08
- **July 07:** CSR07 will bring in new outcomes (PSAs) and partial indicator set
- **Autumn 07:** CSR07 divvy-up completed: clarity on funding streams
- **Autumn 07:** possible LG Bill to get Royal Assent
- **Mar 08:** new LAAs? Confirmation of indicator set
- **Mar 09:** rest of performance framework in place (CAA etc.)