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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO NARROWING THE GAP**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**1.0     INTRODUCTION**

1.1     At its meeting on 5th June, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved to undertake an Inquiry into the Council's strategic priority of 'Narrowing the Gap'.

1.2     Particularly Members were interested to understand how the narrowing the gap aim was integrated into the work of other corporate strategies and Departmental and Area Plans.  In addition Members were interested in discussing the Local Area Agreement for Leeds 2006 – 2009 and how this supports the delivery of the Vision for Leeds.

1.3     Members were also interested to discuss how the Scrutiny process might offer challenge in terms of ensuring how the aspirations within the Vision for Leeds and the Local Area Agreement for Leeds are translated into practical actions.

**2.0     SCOPE OF THE INQUIRY**

2.1     The purpose of the Inquiry is to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:

**How do we measure Narrowing the Gap**

- What are the key objective measures and what do they tell us about the gap in the key policy areas that have an impact on quality of life in communities and the disparities between communities

**How do we plan to Narrow the Gap**

- How does the objective quantitative data inform the development of :- policies and plans, development of local initiatives / service interventions, allocation of discretionary and mainstream resources

- Do planned interventions and initiatives reflect the needs highlighted by the quantitative data

- Where are the gaps ( particularly those areas which are not in receipt of discretionary funding) How do we address these

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- Can we co-ordinate services more effectively to improve outcomes for residents

**A Community perspective on Narrowing the Gap**

- What are the perceptions of residents in different communities about the quality of life in their neighbourhood and elsewhere and how are these sought out, how do we help people to articulate perceptions, how are they recorded and analysed

- issues and areas of concern - are these reflected in the priorities for action in current plans and initiatives

- allocation of resources - does this reflect residents concerns and is there a perception that there is an imbalance between areas that receive discretionary funding and those that do not

- are services improving - does perception reflect the statistical information

**How can we more effectively measure Narrowing the Gap in a way that better reflects local priorities and the experience of local residents**

- Can we introduce more meaningful qualitative measures that reflect local residents views on priorities for action and satisfaction levels regarding interventions

**Leeds Local Area Agreement (LLAA)**

- How will this contribute to the achievement of Narrowing the Gap objectives

- Are there any significant gaps

- How should the LLAA planned activity be realigned / further developed

**3.0    COMMENTS OF THE RELEVANT DIRECTOR AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER**

3.1    To be sought from Cllr Harris at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 9th October 2006.

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## 4.0  TIMETABLE FOR THE INQUIRY

4.1  The Inquiry will take place between September and the end of March, with a view to issuing a final report in March 2007.

4.2  The Inquiry will include sessions of the full Committee, working groups and site visits.

## 5.0  SUBMISSION OF EVIDENCE

5.1  Throughout the Inquiry the Committee will commission written evidence to support its work.   The Committee will use the profile of a district partnership, in this case East Leeds, to illustrate performance, methodology and the objective measures used for narrowing the gap. However it should be noted that this is not an Inquiry into East Leeds.

5.2  **INITIAL EVIDENCE**

A profile of a district partnership area - East Leeds

This will cover:-

An overview of the district showing current performance against the floor targets to demonstrate the position against the national and city average in key policy areas such as Employment / Worklessness, Educational Attainment, Health Inequalities, Housing Conditions, Crime and the Environment

An overview of the district using the Index of Deprivation showing the number of super output areas (SOAs) within the 3%, 10%, and 20% most deprived and those areas experiencing deprivation within areas of relative affluence.

A more detailed analysis of specific neighbourhoods within each of the above bands covering the individual domains that comprise the Index to identify the key issues that contribute to the deprivation ranking.

5.2  **FURTHER EVIDENCE**

- An overview of the (East Leeds)  District Partnership Action Plan / Annual Delivery Plan of the Area Committees/ key service plans outside the control of the Area Committees to demonstrate how this has been informed by the objective measures and identify any gaps.

- Obtaining the Community perspective

- The role of the Leeds Local Area Agreement

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**6.0    WITNESSES**

6.1    The Committee is likely to seek evidence and views from a number of sources.  These will include:

- Officers of the Council and other partnership agencies
- Elected Members
- Voluntary Organisations and other community stakeholders

**7.0    POST INQUIRY REPORT MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

7.1    Following the completion of the Scrutiny inquiry and the publication of the final inquiry report and recommendations, the implementation of the agreed recommendations will be monitored.  The Committee will determine those arrangements at the end of the Inquiry.

7.2    The final inquiry report will include information on the detailed arrangements for how the implementation of recommendations will be monitored.

**8.0    MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

8.1    It is important to consider how the Committee will deem if its inquiry has been successful in making a difference to local people. Some measures of success may be obvious at the initial stages of an inquiry and can be included in these terms of reference. Other measures of success may become apparent as the inquiry progresses and discussions take place.

8.2    The Committee will look to publish practical recommendations.