

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION UNIT  
MEDIA INFORMATION  
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### **The Challenge of Local Area Agreements**

The Minister for Local Government Nick Raynsford MP is among a strong panel of speakers at the Local Government Information Unit's (LGIU) forthcoming conference 'Performing for Partnership: the Challenge of Local Area Agreements' (LAAs).

The day conference takes place on Tuesday 23 November in the New Connaught Rooms in London's Covent Garden from 9.30am to 4.30pm.

Other speakers include Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart, Chair of the Local Government Association (LGA); Ben Page, Director of the Social Research Unit at MORI; and Frances Done, Managing Director for Local Government, Housing and Criminal Justice at the Audit Commission. Cllr Dave Wilcox, Chair of the LGIU, will chair the event.

LAAs, a key component in the government's ten year plan for local government, are set to be central to delivering improvement and integration of local services and putting local government at the forefront of bringing local solutions to local priorities. With the ability to pool budgets and work in partnership across the local government, health, police and other services LAAs could be a powerful tool for driving improvement from the local level. 21 LAA pilots will run in 2005, with all councils running mini LAAs; then all councils will be involved in full LAAs from April 2006.

The LGIU is bringing together a unique range of speakers to discuss the developing agenda and the complexities of managing performance across services. Speakers will be asked to address two central questions:

- If LAAs are about allowing councils to be at the heart of setting local priorities and joining up services, rather than merely being agents for delivering Whitehall targets, what is the scale of the political opportunity?
- How can councils gain maximum benefit from the LAA initiative?

The conference is aimed at councillors, MPs and officers involved in partnership working within local authorities, the health sector and the police. It will consist of a plenary session, a round table discussion and seminars on more detailed areas of the LAA policy.