GUIDE TO PARTNERSHIP WORKING

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

Partnership working is central to the way we work and plays an increasing role in shaping and delivering public services. The Council is involved in a wide range of partnerships – either in response to requirements imposed by central government or as a local response to challenging issues such as health inequalities or crime and disorder. These are essential to '*Making Gateshead a place where everyone Thrives*'.

The Council will look to fulfil its role as a community leader in the development of partnerships in Gateshead and realise the benefits of partnership working, including greater coordination of service activities, the more efficient use of resources and the increasing involvement of the community in decision making.

AIM OF THE GUIDE

This guide has been prepared for the benefit of Council officers and partners who are involved in partnerships, to ensure that they have the knowledge and the skills necessary to realise the full potential of partnership working at its best.

It aims to ensure that officers can take action to increase the Council's effectiveness in its involvement in partnerships. Therefore, it is vital that Gateshead Council officers involved in the setting-up, management and operation of partnerships are aware of, and observe, the common principles set out in this document. It prompts you to think about your involvement in partnerships, and what it is the Council both offers and needs to get out of particular partnerships.

Experience shows that only by adopting sound and transparent governance arrangements, risk management strategies, and regular monitoring and reviews, can partnerships deliver the clear benefits and positive outcomes of which they are capable.

In addition, the Council has approved Protocol 15 which is to be observed by officers when undertaking any involvement in partnership working. A copy is available on the Council's intranet.

USING THE GUIDE

As a result of working through this guide, you should:

- Understand the term 'partnership'
- Be able to apply the principles and standards of partnership working to achieve excellence
- Be able to demonstrate a clear rationale for the Council's involvement in any partnership (for example, how involvement with the partnership furthers the achievement of Council priorities and aspirations)
- Understand how the Council can engage effectively in a partnership and the relevant roles once the decision has been taken to participate
- Be able to prepare and set up the necessary arrangements for the partnership (including Governance)
- Be clear that the Council's investment of time and/or resources in a partnership (new or existing) is worthwhile, and that the Council is achieving best value; and,
- Be aware of the need for transparency in decision-making and commitment in relation to partnership working

PARTNERSHIP WORKING
Bringing together key stakeholders to address a common problem would seem to hold clear benefits; however, careful thought should be given to what the Council hopes to achieve before a partnership is set up, and whether those objectives could in fact be realised in another, simpler way.

An acceptance of the need to work in partnership is usually based on one or more of the following:

- the need to realise synergy (i.e. combining resources to deliver better outcomes than could be achieved by the partners individually) to solve common problems
- in recognition of the fact that many of the most difficult social, economic and environmental issues are not subject to organisational or geographic boundaries
- the need to overcome constraints and limitations (e.g. powers, resources, public perception) within which any single organisation operates
- to reintegrate fragmented services into co-ordinated packages (especially, to ensure that the needs of vulnerable and hard to reach service users are not neglected)
- to access resources made available only to partnerships
- to meet a statutory requirement.

Note: There may also be implications if the Council does not get involved in the partnership.

PARTNERSHIP DEFINITION
The council defines a partnership as:

"An agreement between two or more independent bodies to work collectively to achieve an objective"[1].

For this definition to apply the Council must be working with other parties towards compatible objectives.

The definition given above **applies** to the following type of relationships:

Strategic alliances:
- Formal forums
- Joint committees
- Management committees; and,
- Local Strategic Partnerships

Statutory partnerships (those required or covered by law), *e.g.*:
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Health and Social Care Act 2012

Partnerships where the Council acts as the accountable body for European, regional or national funding (*e.g.* Objective 2, ERDF).

Not-for-profit organisations that are conducted for the benefit of the community, *e.g.*:
- Charities

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[1] CIPFA, Building Effective Partnerships – Practical Guidance for Public Services, 1997

- Trusts
- Companies Limited by Guarantee; and,
- Companies where the Council is a shareholder

The following is **not** classed as partnership activity:

- Arrangements where the Council has **direct** control over budgets or decision making
- Informal groups set up to discuss and consider specific topics (consultation groups)
- Appointments and/or financial commitments to outside bodies where the Council has no strategic or policy function
- Private Finance Initiatives (PFI), Joint Ventures and other commercial agreements
- Contracts and arrangements where the Council simply pays other organisations to deliver a service or goods and *vice versa* - existing mechanisms will ensure that such contracts and agreements continue to be undertaken effectively. All contracts should be listed on the council's contracts register held by corporate procurement; and Grants.

IMPLEMENTING AN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP

Prior to commencing involvement in a partnership, it is recommended that you consider the following Standards and Principles whilst progressing through the self-assessment tool:

- Work through each question, using the guidance notes to help prompt your thoughts.
- This record of activity could be used as supporting evidence for inspection or other purposes.
- You should take advice from experts within the Council where necessary.

It is important that the Council can co-ordinate its partnership working, and therefore any proposal to establish a new partnership should be discussed with Strategic Directors.

Strategic and Service Directors are responsible for the effective management and integration of all partnership activity relevant to their role in achieving the shared outcomes of the Council. This includes ensuring that all partnerships in which they are engaged and responsible for:

- have Governance arrangements (see Appendix 1) in place which set out how authority and control (e.g. in terms of decision-making and expenditure) are exercised in a partnership and therefore also who is responsible and ultimately accountable
- completing the Council's operational risk register within their service and that partnerships are considered in the Service Business Continuity Plan.
- any areas of concern you identify should be addressed in your **Service Plan**.

It is also good practice to routinely review (at least annually) partnership involvement to consider how effective the Council's engagement in specific partnerships is and to establish whether a partnership is providing good value for money. Again, the self-assessment can be used for this activity.

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP REGISTER

Each partnership needs to be included in the corporate partnership register which is held within the Office of the Chief Executive (see Appendix 2). Strategic and Service Directors are responsible for completing this and reviewing the entry annually to ensure the details of the

partnership are up to date. The Partnership register is reviewed annually through the following process:

Month	Activity	Action Owner
April	Review the current Partnership Register and update the name of the Strategic Director where there have been changes. Review the current Partnership Register for duplicates and remove these if confirmed to be the same or flag in initial email to Service Directors where clarification is required.	Office of the Chief Executive
May	Initial email is distributed including the current register to Strategic and Service Directors plus key contacts asking them to review it within 2 weeks.	Office of the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors
June	A reminder email is sent 1 month later to those who have not yet responded with a 2-week deadline. Response returned are reviewed for completeness with follow up questions sent to key contacts where there are clear gaps in the information provided.	Office of the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors
July	Face-to-face meeting with those who still have not replied.	Office of the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors

 Note: When a partnership ceases to exist anymore, the corporate partnership register must be updated with this information in a timely manner.

FURTHER GUIDANCE, ADVICE AND INFORMATION
Further guidance and information on partnerships can be found on the following websites:
www.cipfa.org.uk
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

Further advice on setting up partnerships, or any aspects of their governance arrangements, is available from Corporate Services and Governance.

SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Partnership working requires skill and effort if it is to be done well. It can be very costly, even in terms of officer time alone, and can therefore only be justified as providing good value for money for as long as the achievements outweigh the resources consumed. This can only be achieved if the partnership has addressed the following:

Leadership

Effective partnerships have both ambition and drive and capitalise on the opportunities provided by shared expertise and energy. Real leadership, however, is required to ensure that this collective power is harnessed and does make a difference. Whether it is for negotiating increased resources or lobbying for policy changes, it is essential the partnership voice be heard, the shared view expressed and that mechanisms exist to influence all associated activity.

Trust

Effective partnerships are also dependent on the development of a high level of trust between all partners. This includes the evolution of an accurate understanding of the shared agenda and accountabilities, and clarity about specific roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication of effort. Partners should be clear about shared risk and reward and should support other partners when necessary. This level of trust is rare in a new partnership and has to develop through time, nurtured by a culture of openness and respect.

Learning

Partnership working provides countless opportunity for both improving learning and organisational development processes. These learning themes include:

- How partner organisations work.
- Building organisational and individual relationships.
- Shared learning, training and development to increase partnership effectiveness.
- Sharing best practice.
- Opportunities for merging strategies to increase impact.
- Understanding what works in partnership and what doesn't.
- Maximising shared benefits.
- Organisations and individuals learning together to improve the partnership approach.

Managing for performance

It is crucial to have mechanisms in place to demonstrate the added value of partnership working. This is dependent on a clear understanding of the shared objectives, of roles and responsibilities, and an openness and willingness to engage.

Resources should be in place to ensure that:

- Shared objectives and targets are set and agreed – ensuring clarity of purpose and the reduction of duplication.
- Targets should be SMART.
- Mechanisms are in place to measure and report on achievements.
- Evidence is collected to illustrate success.
- All progress is measured and regularly reported to partners.
- Shared success is celebrated.
- Clear exit strategies are in place and there is a shared understanding of when the usefulness and added value of a partnership is reached.

Equality

The Council is bound by the statutory Equality Duty and therefore must promote equality through the actions of all the partnerships it is part of.

STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN PARTNERSHIP WORKING

1. Officers should proactively seek to develop relevant partnerships which support the achievement of the Council's priorities and aspirations
- The Council should be fully aware of where and when partnerships and/or other organisations can help to achieve its objectives or provide added value.
- All appropriate partnership activity should be planned, integrated and well-supported, and should be able to demonstrate a direct contribution to '*making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives*'.
- Outcome measures should demonstrate where the partnership activity has resulted in additional benefit to the local community and service users.
- The contribution and relevance of all partnership work is well communicated and celebrated throughout the Council.

2. The principles of partnership working should be clearly understood and demonstrated by all Officers
- There should be clear evidence that the principles of partnership working are embedded in the Council and contribute to definable outcomes.
- Working in partnership is accepted as an integral part of the Council's activity and is embedded in all policy development and in all practice. All Councillors and Officers accept that this way of working is both essential and adds value and appropriate training is to be provided in partnership working for all.
- The Council should be able to demonstrate past success where alternate methods of working have enhanced the delivery of services.
- Levels of trust will be gained that allow confidence to be expressed in partnership working and that allow decision making to be devolved to the most appropriate forum.

3. The Council can demonstrate and understand the value of all its partnership arrangements and differentiate between them. Partners should have a similar level of understanding and trust with regard to the Council's role in the partnership.
- The rationale and contribution of each partnership is understood and valued by the Council in outcome terms
- Councillors and Officers involved in any partnership activity understand and can demonstrate and articulate the added value to the Council and can act as advocates both internally and externally for the partnership.
- Internal structures of the Council allow the contributions made by partnerships to be discussed and reviewed, resulting in policy decisions when appropriate.
- There is a consistent and shared understanding between Councillors, Officers and other partners about the value of partnership activity, and in particular the contribution of the Council, in terms of the impact on shared outcomes in the community.

4. Budget and policy decisions openly take account of the partnership approach acknowledging the implications and impact of this way of working
- Resource decisions take account of the contribution made by partnership to the achievement of organisational objectives.
- The implications and impact of budget decisions on partnership arrangements are transparently taken into account within the annual budget and service planning process and are taken into account prior to the formation and endorsement of relevant policies and decisions.

5. **Officers clearly understand the rationale for each partnership arrangement and understand their roles and responsibilities within them**
   - Officers are confident about their roles and responsibilities both to the partnership and the Council, and where appropriate are empowered to take decisions at the partnership on behalf of the Council.
   - The Council's role and duties in Health and Safety, Community Safety, Equality and Diversity should be considered at all times.
   - All Officers engaged in partnership working have had opportunities to learn about this area of work, and understand all standards and principles. A briefing system is in place that allows all contributions at partnership meetings to be accurate and properly supported and that ensures that partnership activity is subsequently appropriately reported, shared and actioned.

6. **Reviewing and monitoring all partnership activity is completely integrated into the work of Officers**
   - The Council is able to demonstrate the contribution and added value of each partnership at any time through a continuous monitoring and evaluation process, which clearly demonstrates impact on shared objectives. Directorates should review involvement in partnerships on an annual basis as a minimum.
   - The Council will also review and evaluate the status of all partnerships. The Council will utilise effective exit strategies where such evaluation demonstrates that a partnership is no longer making a contribution to the shared objectives.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

SELF-ASSESSMENT

It is recommended that you record any evidence of how the criteria have been met.
You should take advice from experts within the Council where necessary.

		Comments
1	**PURPOSE OF THE PARTNERSHIP**	
	Officers should proactively seek to develop relevant partnerships which support the achievement of the Council's priorities and aspirations	
1.1	Who or what is the partnership aimed at? • Consider what the partnership will be set up to do. • Has what it is trying to achieve changed over time or is it still the same as when it was established? • What statutory duties are being satisfied (if any)? • Who has been consulted and how has this been done? (E.g. do staff and unions need to be consulted?) • Who will be the service users, in terms of client group, age range, locality etc? Are there clear eligibility criteria and assessment processes for service delivery and are equality issues being adequately addressed? • How do the proposed arrangements promote/improve upon, existing local joint working?	
1.2	What are the partnership's objectives? Is the timescale for achieving them clear? • What are the aims, outcomes and targets that the partnership is intended to achieve? • Does the partnership have SMART targets? SMART means specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound. • If the objectives of the partnership are not clear then it may not be clear how the Council can contribute to the partnership or whether it warrants Council involvement. You might be able to suggest that the partnership articulate its aims and objectives if it hasn't already done so. • Some partnerships will only exist for a set period of time to achieve set objectives. Others can be more organic. Be clear on what the partnership's life expectancy is so you can plan properly for engagement.	
1.3	How does the partnership contribute towards achieving the Council's shared outcomes? • Partnership activity should link closely to the Thrive Agenda and other clearly defined responsibilities of the Council. • You might wish to consider whether political changes would have an impact on the partnership. • Where Council involvement with the partnership does not clearly link to the Council's priorities and aspirations, it may be beneficial for Directorates to consider whether there is any scope to change our involvement to allow the Council to ensure that ongoing involvement does link to Council priorities and aspirations, or to consider whether there is any benefit to continuing involvement with the partnership	

	at all.	
1.4	What are the expected outcomes from the Council's involvement in the partnership?	
2	**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**	
2.1	Who are the key partners? How have they been selected? • Who needs to be involved to achieve those aims? • Who will represent each partner?	
2.2	What role does the Council play in the partnership? • Are the Council's (and other partners') contributions to the partnership clear and appropriate? • You need to be clear what the partnership is expecting from the Council – is it activity to help the partnership achieve its objectives, to offer advice and support, or to deliver services? Perhaps nothing more than the Council's attendance is required; alternatively it could be providing funds. Make sure you are clear on what is expected of the Council and what can really be offered. It is also important to be clear about the benefit is for the Council of continuing involvement with the partnership – for example, how does involvement further the achievement of Council priorities and aspirations? • Examples of roles include shareholder, secretariat, accountable body, member of the board (or similar). You need to be clear on this as it might impact on the liabilities of the Council • In some cases the Council may formally be leading in a partnership, but sometimes it is an equal partner	
2.3	What are the responsibilities of the Council in the partnership? • These might include acting as accountable body, employing staff, health and safety. You need to be clear about any activity or responsibilities the Council needs to undertake in a partnership. • The Council must however promote community safety and equalities through the actions of all partnerships it is part of.	
2.4	Who represents the Council at the partnership (Councillor and/or officer)? • Officers need to clearly understand the rationale for each partnership arrangement and understand their roles and responsibilities within them • Partnerships are often looking for consistent representation at meetings. It also helps the flow of information into the Council if it is clear who goes to which meeting. Consider who attends if the normal representative can't go.	

Comments

	• You may need to consider how individual interests are balanced against the interests of the Council. • The Chief Executive will nominate a lead officer for each partnership who will be responsible for the Council's involvement in that partnership and in particular will ensure that all proposals, plans and strategies are reported to the Cabinet and Council, as necessary, for approval. (Protocol 15) • The Council has approved Protocol 15 to be observed by officers when undertaking any involvement in partnership working.	
3	**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**	
	The Council can demonstrate and understand the value of all its partnership arrangements and differentiate between them. It is crucial to have mechanisms in place to demonstrate the added value of partnership working. This is dependent on a clear understanding of the shared objectives, of roles and responsibilities, and an openness and willingness to engage.	Appropriate advice can be sought from the Office of the Chief Executive
3.1	Are there robust performance management arrangements in place within the partnership? • Some Partnerships will often use specific performance management frameworks. You need to know what is used by a partnership and how you can access data if need be. • How will evidence be collected to illustrate success? • Are challenging SMART targets set year on year? Agreed performance measures will need to be in place to track progress and achievement against the partnership's objectives. • Do you know which partner(s) are responsible for collecting, storing and reporting performance data? • Is performance monitored and reported on a regular basis?	
3.2	Are there performance management arrangements (and performance indicators) in place for the Council's own monitoring of its involvement in the partnership? • How will performance be monitored and managed? • Is reviewing and monitoring all partnership activity is completely integrated into the work of Officers? • The Council needs to demonstrate the contribution and added value of each partnership. Directorates should review involvement in partnerships on an annual basis as a minimum.	
3.3	Is the Council's engagement in the partnership reviewed regularly? • Some partnerships are set up to complete a specific task, others evolve over time. It is sometimes the case that individual partners are no longer relevant to the partnership. You should review your involvement in a partnership regularly to ensure that your involvement is still appropriate or whether your time and resources would be better deployed elsewhere.	

Comments

	• The Council will utilise effective exit strategies where such evaluation demonstrates that a partnership is no longer making a contribution to the shared objectives.	
4	**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**	
	If the partnership involves the secondment of staff, it is vital that appropriate advice is sought from Human Resources within Corporate Services and Governance.	
4.1	Are any of the partnership staff employed by (or seconded from) the Council? • *If yes*, define the line management responsibilities, and make sure that appropriate human resources policies and procedures (including health and safety) are in place and are followed. Further advice is available from the Council's Human Resources Team. • *If not*, you need to make sure that the employment status of any partnership staff is clear.	
4.2	Has the partnership ensured adequate pension arrangements are in place for their employees? • Most informal partnerships involve the secondment of staff from partner organisations, in which case it is likely that staff will remain members of their own employers' pension schemes (if in doubt it is always worth checking). • The situation is more complex where a partnership is a separate legal entity and is employing its own staff. There is a legal obligation on all employers with five or more employees to provide them, as a minimum, with access to a stakeholder pension. Council staff are not licensed to provide advice on these arrangements. • However, most partnerships involving the Council will be pursuing objectives consistent with those of the authority. In these circumstances the partnership can apply to be considered for membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (ideally the partnership should make an application before it is legally formed). • Further guidance on pension arrangements can be obtained from Human Resources.	
5	**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**	
	Budget and policy decisions need to openly take account of the partnership approach acknowledging the implications and impact of this way of working	If the partnership is to manage its own budget (or may at some stage in the future) it is vital that appropriate advice is sought from Corporate Resources.
5.1	Are there adequate resources available to support the Council's involvement in the partnership?	

Comments

	• The Council's contribution to the partnership might be in the form of human and/or financial resources. You need to make sure the full cost of involvement is considered – travelling to/from and attendance at meetings represent a cost to the Council, and there are other hidden costs including administration and management support, support services, use of premises and other assets, insurance and potential liabilities. • Providing the secretariat or accountable body function might have significant resource implications for the Council. • Have other financial issues (including charging and VAT) been adequately considered, and advice taken, where appropriate? Is consultation with HM Revenue & Customs necessary?	
5.2	Is the return on resources invested in the partnership adequate? • You need to consider if, on balance, the Council is benefiting from its input to the partnership. Make sure the contribution is monitored and reviewed regularly in terms of value for money.	
5.3	Does the Council receive any monies from the partnership?	
5.4	Are there financial monitoring and reporting systems in place within the partnership? Who is responsible for managing them? • If the partnership is to manage its own budget (or may at some stage in the future), or involve the secondment of staff, it is vital that appropriate advice is sought from Corporate Resources and Corporate Services and Governance, respectively.	
5.5	Are there financial monitoring and reporting systems in place within the Council in relation to the partnership? • The Council's involvement in a partnership must be conducted in accordance with the Financial Regulations • Financial monitoring and reporting is particularly important if the Council is acting as accountable body for the partnership, but adequate arrangements should be in place for every partnership. • Make sure a separate cost centre has been set up for the partnership. • Has the Auditor been consulted? (This must be done if the partnership's accounts are to be separately audited.)	
5.6	Does the Council exert financial control in the partnership?	

	Comments

5.7	Are there any insurance requirements? • For example, is insurance cover required for the Council representative on the partnership?	
6	**COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK**	

6.1	How is the activity of the partnership reported within the Council?
	    • It is important to keep the right people up to date with partnership activity – consider who needs to know about it, and what the best way to keep them informed is.
	    • In many cases partnerships are responsible for setting and/or implementing plans or strategies or delivering services. Plans and strategies may need to be approved or endorsed by Cabinet, or if part of the Council's policy framework, by the Council. In all cases, the Council will be responsible for its contribution to a partnership. (Protocol 15)
	    • Many partnerships are also responsible for agreeing targets and monitoring performance. The development and monitoring of such performance frameworks must also be approved or endorsed by Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet. (Protocol 15)	

6.2	Are there arrangements in place to brief Council representatives before partnership meetings?
	    • Making sure the Council representative is able to represent the Council's views effectively is vital. They may also need to be able to inform the partnership of progress within the Council on matters of interest to it.
	    • If more than one representative from the Council attends the same partnership, it is important that they present a consistent view.	

6.3	Is a formal record kept of agreements or key decisions made by the partnership?
	    • Consider who would know what decisions have been made if the usual representative was to leave.
	    • It is also important to keep a track of what the Council is signing up to.	

6.4	Will the partnership use the Council's logo on any publicity material or reports? • If so, they will need to follow the guidelines from the Communications team.	
7	**INFORMATION SHARING**	
7.1	Are there any information sharing protocols for the partnership? • Are you clear about who is entitled to access information about the partnership's activity? Or what information you need to keep confidential?	

Comments

	• Consider the Freedom of Information Act and issues of Data Protection if necessary. • Further guidance is available from Corporate Services and Governance.	
8	**PROCUREMENT**	
8.1	Does the partnership have the authority to undertake the procurement of services? • Who will act as the awarding/contracting body? Clear lines of contractual responsibility must be in place before the procurement process is begun.	
8.2	Does the partnership apply the principles encompassed within the Council's agreed approach to procurement? • Issues of whole-life costing, sustainability, the impact on the local economy, and due regard to equality, should be determined at the start of the procurement, along with a clear understanding of how any tender will be evaluated. This could be price driven, focus on quality or an appropriate price/quality ratio	
8.3	How will the procurement deliver the required outcomes? Are you looking for the market to come up with proposals or are there clear standards or definitive specification which must be applied? • Contract must be clear about the use of performance indicators and any measure of success/effectiveness	
8.4	Does any procurement activity comply with all relevant UK and EU legislation? • All public sector organisations must comply with the requirements of the EU Procurement Directive. This covers prescribed minimum timescales and delivery requirements, and it is therefore essential that sufficient time is allowed to complete the process. • For further information please contact the Procurement Team within Corporate Services and Governance.	
9	**AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS**	
9.1	Has the need for internal and/or external audit arrangements been considered? • If the Council is acting as accountable body, seek advice from Corporate Resources. **Internal Audit** may undertake periodic reviews of partnerships for which the Council is the accountable body, those which are identified as high risk or critical to the delivery of the Thrive Agenda. They may also check on the implementation and integration of actions into business plans and APEX, to address issues that have been highlighted through the self-assessment process.	
10	**LEGAL ISSUES**	
	Whether legally binding or not, when it comes to the preparation of partnership agreements, assistance is to be	

Comments

	sought from Corporate Services and Governance, who will undertake the drafting of suitable documentation or advise on the suitability of any agreement produced by a prospective partner organisation. Also see Appendix 1	
10.1	Does the Council have the legal power to enter the partnership?	
10.2	Does the partnership have any legal status? • It might be a charity, limited company, public company or statutory body. If not, is there a constitution or formal written agreement in place?	

10.3	Does the Council's involvement in the partnership need Cabinet or Council approval?
	    • Cabinet needs to approve involvement in any partnership which will result in the Council incurring significant expenditure or making significant savings, or which is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area which covers more than one electoral division.
	    • However, decisions may be devolved to Strategic Director level.	

11	**EQUALITY**	
	The Council is bound by the statutory Equality Duty and therefore must promote equality through the actions of all the partnerships it is part of. It is therefore recommended that each partnership develops and adopts an equality strategy in consultation with the Diversity Forum.	Appropriate advice can be sought from the Office of the Chief Executive
11.1	The Council is bound by statutory duties on equality. The Council must promote equality through the actions of all partnerships it is part of. It is therefore recommended that each partnership develops and adopts an equality strategy. In order to ensure that the partnership has adequately addressed equality issues, consider to what extent the following criteria have been met.	

11.2	Criteria - aims and principles
	    • Equality is reflected in the partnership's broader aims, values or vision
	    • A commitment to equality is evident through all parts of the partnership	

11.3	Carrying out an audit
	    • The partnership has collated and analysed all partners' equality statements and other relevant policies, and has identified and prioritised relevant functions.
	    • The partnership has carried out an exercise to build a picture of local communities' needs and desired outcomes, using census and other information supplemented with local knowledge.	

11.4	Community involvement and consultation • The partnership's structure allows all communities to have access to and be involved with the partnership	

Comments

11.5	Equality strategy • All partners were involved in and have agreed the priorities of the partnership's equality strategy and what it aims to achieve • The partnership has set clear objectives for promoting equality and linked these to its desired outcomes • The partnership has produced a detailed strategy and action plan, which clearly indicates roles and responsibilities	
11.6	Putting the strategy into action • The partnership has put adequate resources into its equality activities • All partners are clear about their roles and responsibilities in promoting equality	
11.7	Monitoring and evaluation • The partnership has included equality indicators in its monitoring and evaluation procedures (*e.g.* performance management framework). • The partnership collects data on age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion/belief and disability. • The partnership has achieved its desired outcomes • The partnership makes targeted interventions where monitoring indicates there is an adverse impact on some groups • The partnership uses a range of mechanisms to gauge levels of satisfaction with its services among different groups, which includes a robust complaints procedure • The partnership reports regularly on its monitoring and assessment framework	
12	**RISKS**	
	Business Continuity Management is a key part of the Council's Corporate Risk Management Strategy which sets out the framework within which the Council manages its strategic and operational risks.	
12.1	What are the potential risks associated with the Council's involvement in the partnership? • Risks may be strategic or operational – examples include political, financial, legal, competitive and environmental risk. Also the business continuity arrangements of the partnership need to be considered. • You should consider risks using the agreed risk methodology for the Council. If you identify any significant risks, you might need to undertake a formal risk assessment. Identified partnership risks should be recorded on the Corporate Risk Registers and managed accordingly. Detailed definitions and a risk assessment protocol can be found on the intranet.	

Comments

		Remember there may also be risks if the Council does not get involved in the partnership.	
12.2	Has the viability of all partners been reviewed?		
12.3	What would happen if the partnership collapsed? • Does the partnership need exit strategy?		

APPENDIX 1

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS
Different partnerships have different roles and responsibilities – linked to legislation and regulations – so one size will not always fit all in terms of what is needed to ensure transparent, effective and well governed partnership working.

Partnerships are based upon agreement and like any other agreement, a partnership agreement is best written down so that what is agreed is clear, not just to the partners, but to the public as well.

Whether legally binding or not, when it comes to the preparation of partnership agreements, assistance must be sought from Corporate Services and Governance, who will undertake the drafting of suitable documentation or advise on the suitability of any agreement produced by a prospective partner organisation.

The following elements should be considered for inclusion in all partnership agreements, whether they are in the form of documents for the formation of a company, an agreement to set up a joint committee, a strategic partnering contract, a constitution, a memorandum of understanding, or a simple term of reference:

1. The aims, outcomes and targets the partnership is intended to achieve.

   Ensure the council is clear about the strategies that key partnerships are required to produce; and the strategies the partnerships are choosing to produce; and the timescales for these. This may also include assessments such as the JSNA.

2. The partner organisations – who needs to be involved to achieve those aims.

3. What powers, flexibilities, and pooled budget arrangements are being used to set up the partnership, and what statutory duties are being satisfied (if any).

4. The powers delegated by the partners to the partnership (if any).

5. The resources each partner is committing to the partnership (if any) (consider the requirement for an asset register – see below).

6. The partnership's decision-making structure.

7. Who will represent each partner.

8. How a Chair will be selected.

9. How decisions will be made.

10. How the partnership will be serviced.

11. How performance will be monitored and managed.

12. How risk will be identified, monitored and managed.

13. Code of conduct.

14. How publicity and complaints will be dealt with.

15. Accounting and audit arrangements.

16. Information sharing, data protection and confidentiality provisions.

17. Review of suitability of structure and need for partnership to continue.

18. Variation, withdrawal, and termination provisions (has the partnership got an Exit Strategy – see below).

19. Dispute resolution.

20. Execution/signature by each partner.

21. Date of agreement.

22. Date when partnership is intended to start and the duration of the arrangement.

Two areas require specific attention:

ASSET REGISTER
To help facilitate an orderly termination a full asset register should be maintained which will include all relevant land, buildings and equipment utilised by the Partnership. The ownership status of each should be made clear and, if possible, provision made for the transfer of ownership or responsibility on termination.

EXIT ARRANGEMENTS
Partners will need to consider the mechanism for terminating any agreement or arrangement and also the consequences of the partnership coming to an end. The scale and complexity of this will depend on the size and nature of the partnership and provisions for termination should be proportionate and may need to cover such matters as:

- Vesting of partnership property and assets
- Intellectual property rights and software licences
- Responsibility for liabilities and ongoing contracts
- Transfer or redundancy of staff and pension issues; and
- Transfer of data and assets.

APPENDIX 2

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP REGISTER
The Corporate Partnership Register is currently an excel document that is populated with the following information:

Partnership Register category	Guidance to complete register section
Partnership Name	Title of the partnership
Type	This is a drop-down list which relates to the definition of "partnership" section of the guide
Strategic Director	There is a drop-down list to select from
Lead Officer	This should be the main partnership coordinator/administrator
Who was the creation of Partnership approved by?	A record of which body or officer approved the partnership and the date of this. Where possible please provide a link to any reports of approval.
Purpose of Partnership	What are the aims and objectives of the partnership? The self-assessment provides guidance on the purpose of the partnership
Partners	A list of the organisations or officers involved, and any Roles and responsibilities e.g. lead partner, Chair
Partnership start date	Date the partnership commenced
Expected lifespan	If the partnership is time limited please provide this date or year.
Are there GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS in place?	Is there a partnership agreement whether legally binding or not? It could simply be a Terms of reference. Assistance must be sought from Corporate Services and Governance (see Appendix 1)
Have you considered EXIT ARRANGEMENTS? (if applicable)	Partners need to consider the mechanism for terminating any agreement or arrangement and also the consequences of the partnership coming to an end (see Appendix 1)
Is there an AGREED BUDGET?	The resource invested in the partnership needs to be considered, especially any Financial management
Is there an ASSETS REGISTER?	To help facilitate an orderly termination a full asset register should be maintained which will include all relevant land, buildings and equipment utilised by the Partnership.

Is the Service Risk register complete?	Strategic and Service Directors are to regularly consider the risks of the partnership and are responsible for completing the Council's operational risk register to prevent or minimise the impact of events that could affect the delivery of its services and outcomes, including those delivered in partnership with other agencies. This should include and follow the business continuity planning policy.
Last Review of Partnership (date)	The date when you last completed the self-assessment or reviewed the partnership through other means (OSC, to reflect legislation changes).
Last Audited	Internal Audit undertake periodic reviews of partnerships for which the Council is the accountable body. The date of the last audit (internal or external) should be included here.
End Date	This is the date when the partnership ceases to exist. The partnership should then be copied onto the Archive tab within the Excel document.
Comments	Record any information you wish to expand on or simply have recorded
Webpage	Is there a link to a webpage for the partnership which contains information and/or the governance documents.