

# **BUDGET & PERFORMANCE PANEL**

## **Partnership Mapping & Evaluation 2009/2010**

**30 March 2010**

**Corporate Director (Finance & Performance)**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide members with an overview of the work undertaken during 2009/10 to evaluate the partnerships that the council is involved in and to establish a framework for partnership performance and governance. The report also sets out a proposed work programme for 2010/11

This report is public

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That members consider the review of the work undertaken and lessons learned from the evaluation of partnerships during 2009/10 and the ongoing development of a framework for partnership performance and governance
2. That the proposed work programme for 2010/11 be endorsed.
3. That the Panel note that the future responsibility for partnership evaluations will be with the new Community Engagement Service

#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Members are aware that partnership working is an integral part of the council's future policy development and service delivery aspirations and as such over recent years the council has increased its use of partnerships to deliver community benefits for the district and to help achieve its approved priorities and efficiency targets.
- 1.2 In recognising the importance of our partnerships since the beginning of 2009 officers have been working hard to develop our understanding of what makes a successful partnership and to improve on our own effectiveness when working in partnership with others.
- 1.3 Towards the end of 2008/09 a detailed 'mapping' exercise was completed of all the council's partnerships which identified their purpose, type and importance to the delivery of council priorities and objectives.
- 1.4 This exercise formed the basis of a work programme, approved by Budget and Performance Panel in February 2009, for the completion of two partnership assessments underway at the time, and the evaluation of a further eight of the council's major partnerships.
- 1.5 This report provides an overview of the work carried out during 2009/10 together with the main issues arising and sets out matters for consideration and agreement with a view to the ongoing work to be undertaken during 2010/11.

#### **2 Overview of 2009/10**

- 2.1 In line with the Terms of Reference of the Budget and Performance Panel relating to the performance and scrutiny of the council's partnerships members have been kept informed throughout the year on progress against the planned work programme; outcomes from completed evaluations and any issues arising from the ongoing development of the framework for partnership performance management and governance.

- 2.2 Overall, the use of the *Partnership Development and Evaluation Toolkit* to facilitate the evaluations has successfully helped to provide a consistent means of assessing the impact and effectiveness of working with individual partnerships and the council's contributions to them, although a number of practical lessons have also been learned.
- 2.3 Designed in two parts for completion by partners (Part 1) and officers/members involved in the partnership (Part 2), the toolkit has provided essential information on the main purpose/function, current funding, risk management, governance and value for money arrangements for each partnership. It has also afforded an opportunity for the partnership to assess itself against criteria covering key aspects of partnership working and for the council to evaluate its role and contribution within the partnership and the risks and opportunities of being involved.
- 2.4 The approach taken by individual partnerships undertaking the evaluation has largely been left to their discretion as experience has shown that no one approach fits all with the evaluation being equally successful when completed on behalf of the partnership by a small group of partners for subsequent consultation and agreement with the partnership as a whole, or through a series of workshops involving all partners.
- 2.5 As evaluations have been completed the outcomes and action plans arising have been reported to Budget and Performance and in all cases the evaluations have had a considerable impact in helping both individual partnerships and the council to identify strengths, address weaknesses and recognise risks and opportunities in service planning and delivery arrangements.

#### **Progress Against Work Programme**

- 2.6 Progress against the work programme has also been reported to the Budget and Performance Panel throughout the year as summarised in the following table:

<b>Partnership</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Reported</b>
Museums Partnership	Evaluation completed - outcomes and action plan reported	14 July 2009
Community Safety Partnership	Evaluation completed - outcomes and action plan reported	14 July 2009
CCTV	Evaluation completed - outcomes and action plan reported	20 Oct 2009
Key Cultural Partnership	Evaluation completed - outcomes and action plan reported	20 Oct 2009
West End Partnership	Withdrawn from programme - no longer administered by the council	20 Oct 2009
Lancs Economic Partnership	Withdrawn from programme - evaluation being undertaken NWDA	20 Oct 2009
Lancs Supporting People	Evaluation deferred to future work programme due to changes in officer responsibility	20 Oct 2009
Luneside East Partnership	Evaluation deferred as second stage of the project has been delayed due to the economic downturn	20 Oct 2009
Shoreline Mgt Partnership (SMP)	Evaluation deferred pending the outcome of the extensive consultation on the Shoreline Management Plan	20 Oct 2009
Lancashire Waste Partnership	Evaluation completed - outcomes currently being assessed	-

## **Lessons Learnt**

- 2.7 Experience from the completed evaluations has confirmed the view that the toolkit is most effective when evaluating those partnerships involving the delivery of common objectives and priorities arising from the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan, rather than 'partnering' arrangements involving contractual obligations, such as the Luneside East project, where other performance management systems are more appropriate.
- 2.8 As reported to Budget and Performance Panel last October taking this approach enables resources to be concentrated on the evaluation of key partnerships - which potentially have the highest risks and opportunities – to be built into the council's business planning process and their action planning and performance to be monitored through existing performance management arrangements.
- 2.9 In terms of developing overall governance arrangements relating to partnerships the evaluations have informed the ongoing work of officers and as a result progress has been made to:
- Encourage partnerships to be underpinned by a common vision of their work that is understood and agreed by all partners;
  - Determine how value for money is to be measured and to make sure that the council and its key partnerships have the information needed to review value for money and performance effectively;
  - Ensure that partners are clear about their roles and responsibilities both individually and collectively in relation to the partnership and to the council; there is clarity about the legal status of the partnership and partners understand and are committed to good governance principles, including protocols to ensure that standards of conduct between the council and its partners is defined and communicated;
  - Ensure that risk management processes specifically consider risks in relation to significant partnerships and provide for assurances to be obtained about the management of those risks.
- 2.10 From experience and the completed evaluations so far it is, however, clear that overall governance arrangements within partnerships are underdeveloped and/or inconsistently applied. With this in mind, the Code of Practice for Working in Partnership, as outlined in the report to Budget and Performance Panel in October, has now been drafted. A summary of the detailed guidance is attached at Appendix A. The Code of Practice has yet to be published and mainstreamed into the council's overall partnership working arrangements.
- 2.11 Throughout 2009/10, support and advice both to partners and officers of the council in undertaking the evaluations has been provided by a team of officers under the direction of the Corporate Director (Finance and Performance). A large proportion of this support has been provided by Financial Services and in particular, the Principal Auditor but this is not sustainable in the future. Consequently, arrangements for continuing the future work programmes and support for the evaluation of the council's partnerships will be addressed by the Assistant Head (Partnerships) in the new Community Engagement Service during 2010/11 who will take responsibility for partnerships evaluations.

## **3 Work Programme 2010/11**

- 3.1 Taking into account the lessons learned from the first year of partnership evaluations, the need to firmly establish and mainstream the partnership performance management and governance framework, and with the introduction of the new Community Engagement Service, a reduced programme of evaluations for 2010/11 is proposed covering the following partnerships:
- LDLSP Health and Wellbeing Thematic Group
  - Children's Trust (incorporating LDLSP Children & Young People Thematic Group)

- Vision Board
- Arnside/Silverdale AONB

3.2 Members are asked to consider and comment on the planned work for 2010/11, subject to which a detailed work programme for the year will be drawn up.

**RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Effective partnership working and the Council's responsibility to provide vision and leadership to local partnerships is a key component of the Council's corporate plan. Strengthening performance management of partnerships is a corporate priority for the Council.

**CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None identified arising from this report

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None as a direct result of this report, although as work progresses there will be a need to develop effective links with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and supporting processes to ensure that key financial implications and risks arising from service delivery through working in partnership are reflected and addressed within the Council's existing financial planning arrangements.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Deputy Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

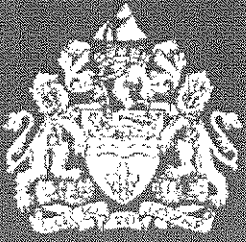
**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Partnership Mapping and Evaluation Team project documentation

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**LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL**  
*Promoting City, Coast & Countryside*

# **Summary Guidance to the Code of Practice for Working in Partnerships (Version 0.01)**

## DOCUMENT HISTORY

**Reference:** Summary Guide – Code of Practice for Working in Partnerships

**Version:** 0.01

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### Document History

Document Title	Version	Reference/Date	Comments
Summary Guidance - Code of Practice for Working in Partnership	0.01	01/12/09	First Draft sent for review by Partnership Mapping & Evaluation Project Management Team

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Summary Guide sets out the key elements that together should lead to a successful partnership. This guide supplements the more detailed *Code of Practice for Working in Partnerships* (the Code) which sets out detailed guidance to ensure good governance and the proper management of partnership risks as well as proper arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of individual partnerships. The Code **MUST** be referred to when assessing the need for a partnership arrangement and seeking approval to enter into a formal partnership.

## 2. Definition and types of partnership

- 2.1 Section 2 of the Code sets out the council's adopted definition of a partnership as:

**'Those agreed methods of working as an integrated and co-ordinated team to achieve common objectives and shared benefits'**

- 2.2 The following are the types of partnership that are encompassed by the adopted definition:

1. **Partnership arrangements to deliver joint objectives but no formal contract**
2. **Partnership arrangements to deliver key relationships**
3. **Partnerships that involve contractual arrangements**

The Code is only concerned with the first two of these, with the third type of partnership often referred to as 'partnering', being underpinned by the Council's Procurement Strategy and Contract Procedure Rules and specific guidance known as the '*Procurement Through Partnering Guidelines*'

## 3. What makes a successful partnership?

- 3.1 Section 3 of the Code sets out key elements that can help to achieve good working relationships and lead to successful delivery of the partnerships objectives. These are:

- **Agree a clear vision**
- **Set objectives/outcomes** – where possible these need to be SMARTER<sup>1</sup>
- **Think strategically and have a clear management structure**
- **Have an agreed action plan or business plan** to help retain momentum
- **Introduce effective performance management arrangements**<sup>2</sup>
- **Review the partnerships performance** on a regular basis
- **Report the findings of any review** to keep all partners informed of progress

## 4. Assessing the need for a partnership arrangement

- 4.1 Section 4 of the Code builds on the elements in Section 3 and provides a checklist at Appendix A of matters that need to be thoroughly tested to assess that a partnership arrangement is the right course of action and, if it is, to ensure its success.

- 4.2 This Section also refers to Appendix B<sup>3</sup> of the Code which sets out a flowchart of the steps to be take to obtain approval for entering into a partnership and a checklist of the consultation and advice received in determining the need for a partnership arrangement.

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<sup>1</sup> Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound, Effective and Resourced

<sup>2</sup> Include clear standard, milestones, outcomes, performance indicators and delivery dates

<sup>3</sup> Appendix B(i) Partnership Approval Procedure and B(ii) Partnership Consultation Procedure



## 5. Partnership Agreements

5.1 Section 5 of the Code requires that:

**All partnerships must have a written signed agreement between all partners before any commitments/liabilities are entered into**

5.2 The Code makes it the responsibility of the Director/Service Head to ensure that such an agreement is in place, with advice/guidance being sought from the Head of Financial Services and the Head of Legal and Human Resources and other officers as necessary.

5.3 Appendix C to the Code sets out the key aspects that should be included within a partnership agreement including its vision/purpose, objectives, governance, financial and other agreed arrangements to ensure the proper running of the partnership, as well as the arrangements for the dissolution of the partnership.

## 6. Partnership Monitoring and Evaluation

6.1 Section 6 of the Code sets out the work undertaken to identify the council's partnerships and to determine their level of significance (Limited/Moderate/Major) towards the achievement of local priorities and objectives. The Code also explains the work that is currently underway to assess the effectiveness of the council's major partnerships over a three year period (commencing 2009/10) using a *Partnership Development and Evaluation Toolkit*.

6.2 As a development tool, the toolkit enables existing partnerships to take stock of how effective their partnership working arrangements are and help those experiencing difficulties to identify areas where remedial action can be taken. As an evaluation tool, it gives partnerships an opportunity to assess themselves in a consistent way against a set of criteria covering key aspects of working in partnership and provide essential information on their membership, funding, risk and performance management, governance and value for money arrangements.

6.3 With a separate Section dedicated to the effectiveness of the council's own involvement in the partnership, the toolkit provides a useful means of assessing the cost, risks and opportunities arising from our ongoing contribution and participation in individual partnerships. Appendix D of the Code sets out possible risks to consider under different risk categories.

6.4 This Section of the Code also sets out the arrangements being made to develop a framework for the monitoring and review of partnership performance including the development of a register/database of new and existing partnerships and a requirement that all the council's major partnerships complete an Annual Assurance Statement/Report on their activities and achievements during the previous year.

## 7. Other Partnership Matters

7.1 Section 7 of the Code covers assigning responsibility for the management and sharing of information within the partnership and the need for agreed arrangements to be documented in a Protocol deigned for that purpose, or within the agreed partnership agreement.

7.2 It also outlines the need to establish clear ground rules for publishing partnership material and dealing with the media, and the need to agree arrangements for communicating within the partnership and to the wider community/stakeholders.

7.3 Finally, the Code outlines the importance of having an exit strategy in place for the planned - or unplanned – cessation of the partnership