

PARTNERSHIP REVIEW AND STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Cath Giel
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WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS

A review of our engagement and participation in strategic and operational partnership activity will enable the council to best use its resources to deliver an integrated package of services with a range of partners for our residents and communities of interest in Copeland.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE?

(eg Key Decision, Policy recommendation for Full Council, at request of Council,etc.)

This is the first of two reports to complete the review of partnership activity by the Council. The report highlights recent activity on strategic partnership activity in West Cumbria, lists out our partnership profile at a range of levels and sets out the activity to be undertaken to strategically assess our cost benefit against our Council Plan mission to offer recommendations on continued strategic partnership activity by the Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

Executive are requested to:

- a) note progress in reviewing and improving the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership landscape as an early part of this project activity;
- b) endorse the template, developed from the Cipfa best practice, detailed at appendix 2 to undertake a strategic assessment on the partnership activity;
- d) note the timetable for Executive to receive the analysis and set of recommendations, including any changes to our existing protocol, in a report in June 2011 on partnership activity, participation and resource allocation in line with our new Council Plan priorities.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We are preparing to undertake a partnership review in response to the Executive request to understand the Council's partnership activity and strategically assess the significance, value for money and corporate benefits of our continued engagement with strategic and operational partnerships.
- 1.2 An early task was to develop a baseline of existing partnership activity in and this is largely complete.
- 1.3 The decision by the Council and resulting activity to progress a full review and dismantling of previous West Cumbria LSP and associated package of partnership structures was the first phase of implementing the Copeland strategic partnership review. The current baseline of our partnership activity has significantly changed since this time last year.
- 1.4 Our strategic partnership review activity over the past year has focused on working with partners to deliver a rationalised fit for purpose Copeland Partnership framework building on Copeland's emerging localities developments. We have been assisted by a Local Improvement Adviser in this activity. Copeland Council has taken a lead role in much of this activity which has ensured partners have worked together to assess and restructure partnership activity in West Cumbria keeping partnership arrangements that work and winding up other structures that are no longer relevant. This activity was undertaken within the context of a parallel review of the Cumbria Strategic Partnership.
- 1.5 The Council has also taken a strong community leadership role with its partners in reviewing the economic development partnership activity in West Cumbria. This activity is ongoing but has at its core an intention to enable changes to partnership activities to meet the challenges of rapidly changing resources and policy.
- 1.6 Copeland Borough Council has a partnership protocol offering guidance and quality management to our partnership working.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 The Council has in the past year restructured the strategic partnership framework in West Cumbria and Copeland. This has been a successful early phase in our partnership evaluation and improvements to ensure best value for the Council. Staff and member resources have been released as a result.

- 2.2 The Council is now in a position to refocus attention on continuing an evaluation and full review of our remaining partnership activity in line with our new Corporate Strategy and Council Plan and challenging reductions in corporate resources. The Council's ability to meet these challenges requires effective partnership arrangements.
- 2.3 Cipfa offer a best practice toolkit to assess the significance and value of partnership activity which has been adapted to meet Copeland analysis requirements and is reproduced at Appendix A. All council participants, member and officer, in a partnership will be asked to complete a Copeland Partnership Score Card and collated to analyse the significance and value of each partnership.
- 2.5 These strategic assessments will lead to recommendation development by Corporate Leadership Team.

3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 Completing the full partnership review is timely and supportive of the corporate changes to meet the challenges facing the Council. The review will enable the Council to evidence the significance and value of continuing with a range of partnership activity or not.
- 3.2 The Council will gain best value from adopting an annual review process using this score card methodology and analysis reported to Executive along with any recommendations from Corporate Leadership Team.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Continuing our current partnership activity using the best practice informed toolkit at appendix A offers information to Corporate Leadership Team and the Executive to better understand the partnership activity value and significance to deliver corporate priorities and inform resource allocation.

5. WHAT ARE THE LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS?

- 5.1 The review will be undertaken within existing resources and will involve liaison and advise with any of these areas as relevant. Implications of recommendations arising will be dealt with in the review outcome report.

6. HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE PROJECT MANAGED AND HOW ARE THE RISKS GOING TO BE MANAGED?

- 6.1 A small officer working group will facilitate the key tasks to gather evaluation evidence, analyse the data gathered and identify key messages and opportunities into a report to Corporate Leadership Team.
- 6.2 A range of engagement and liaison routes will be used to ensure that relevant input is gained to enable quality evidence is available to provide a robust analysis and recommendations.

7. WHAT MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS REPORT?

- 7.1 The report will lead to a progression to the full partnership review of our remaining partnerships. The outcomes expected from this review will be:
 - a) An improvement plan for 2011/12 to implement recommendations with a strategy to disengage as needed;
 - b) Update partnership protocol and toolkit to ensure relevant management systems are strengthened including risk register for partnerships;
 - c) An increased value on the role and Quarterly monitoring of strategic partnership activity as part of service plans;
 - d) Annual partnership reviews.

List of Appendices

Appendix A - Partnership Significant Assessment Score Card

List of Background Documents:

West Cumbria LSP review file, Partnership review development papers

Appendix A PARTNERSHIP SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT SCORE CARD

Partnership Name: _____

Please enter the score in the last column which most closely represents the Partnership.
Answer all applicable questions, using scores of 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5.

No.	Description	Insignificant (Score "1")	Minor Significance (Score "2")	Moderate Significance (Score "3")	Major Significance (Score "4")	Highly Significant (Score "5")	Score
1	Partnership costs: the Council directly contributes money to the Partnership, contributes resources (officer time/work done), or money is directed through the Council's accounts.						
2	Relationship to the Corporate Priorities: to what extent is the Partnership's success critical to the achievement of a corporate priority?						
3	What are the consequences (financial/reputational/liability/political) for the Council of failures within the Partnership?						
4	The Partnership takes decisions on behalf of or which						

No.	Description	Insignificant (Score "1")	Minor Significance (Score "2")	Moderate Significance (Score "3")	Major Significance (Score "4")	Highly Significant (Score "5")	Score
	are binding on the Council						
5	Statutory or Regulatory Context: is the Council required to set up the Partnership by law or is the Council required to set up the Partnership in order to receive additional funding / meet a requirement of the assessment regime / statutory guidance.						
6	Risk: The Partnership contributes to the management of risks identified on corporate or departmental risk registers.						
7	Are there any local factors that should be taken into account when evaluating the Partnership? Please explain.						
	TOTALS						