

PAPER NO.1

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE MEETING OF 23rd JANUARY 2012

Status: For Decision
Title: Partnership Policy
Originator: Head of Customer and Community Services
Where from: Scrutiny People Panel, 24th November 2011
Where to next: Council

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To set out a clear policy outlining the Council's approach to working in partnership.

2 Recommendations:

2.1 **The Executive adopts the Partnership Policy, as set out in Appendix A.**

2.2 **The Executive adopt a log/register, to include all of the Council's existing Partnership arrangements, as set out in this report. The log/register should be made available via the Council's website for public consumption.**

2.3 **The Executive notes the work of current and past Members involved in reviewing the Councils partnership arrangements and bringing forward this Policy for adoption.**

3 Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

3.1 To strengthen the Councils management of its partnership work by having a consistent approach that is linked firmly to Council priorities.

3.2 To have a clear understanding from the start of the risks and rewards involved in partnership work so as to be able to make an informed decision on involvement and resource commitment.

3.3 To manage partnerships in a transparent and accountable way by ensuring a partnership register is kept and is available to staff and the public.

4 Impact on Communities

- 4.1 The Council is involved to differing levels in a number of partnerships that impact on communities. Having a Policy in place to be able to assess the effectiveness of these partnerships will enable the council to make informed choices on which partnerships to support as they benefit the community and are in line with the Councils vision and priorities and which are not.

5 Key Facts

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Commission resolved on the 17th June 2010 to examine, comment and make recommendations on existing and future partnership working arrangements. It was agreed that this report be brought in two parts, and that Part One be concerned with existing arrangements and Part Two with developing a more consistent approach to partnerships.
- 5.2 The Welland Internal Audit Consortium conducted an Audit titled 'Managing Partnerships' in April 2010. The opinion of the Auditor was that partnership management by Harborough District Council is "Sound" but that three recommendations would strengthen the Councils approach to working in partnership. These were;
- To develop a Partnership Strategy defining the conditions under which partnership working would be considered and key stages in the approval of a new partnership.
 - To set out a programme for the formalisation of all outstanding partnership documents e.g. ensure Terms of Reference are agreed.
 - To produce a schedule of the Council"s key partnerships and an assessment of the risk associated with each.
- 5.3 On 7th October 2010 the Scrutiny Places Panel recommended that:
- "A Harborough District Council Partnership Working Protocol be devised for implementation to enable a consistent approach to future Partnership arrangements.
 - A log/register be created to include all of the Council's existing Partnership arrangements. This should be updated and maintained as new partnerships are established. The notes of Partnership Meetings should be included in this register. The register should include an annual activity summary.
 - An analysis of specific Partnerships' performance be undertaken on an individual basis as required, by the appropriate Scrutiny Panel, subject to the agreement of the Scrutiny Commission."
- 5.4 On 24th November 2011 the Scrutiny People Panel discussed the draft Partnership Policy before making the recommendations set out in this report.

6 Legal Issues

- 6.1 The Policy will provide a clearer framework on potential liabilities involved when the Council works in partnership.

7 Resource Issues

- 7.1 There is an Officer time resource implication in implementing this policy, which is being considered in the review of the Community Partnerships Team as part of the Councils Transformation.
- 7.2 Having a Policy to guide partnership working will improve the use of Council resources (both Officer and budget) by ensuring this is coordinated towards partnerships that clearly further Council priorities and that these partnerships are adequately resourced.

8 Equality Impact Assessment Implications/Outcomes

- 8.1 The Policy improves equality outcomes as it includes a Checklist that must be completed before the Council enters any new partnership. This contains a question asking if an EIA will be undertaken on the partnership actions. This information will then be considered by Management Board who may decide not to enter the partnership if an EIA is not completed.

9 Impact on the Organisation

- 9.1 A Policy and Register will improve the organisations ability to manage its partnerships.

10 Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 The Community Safety Partnership will be covered by this Policy but this will have no implications.

11. Carbon Management Implications

- 11.1 *NA*

12. Risk Management Implications

- 12.1 The Council currently has no appropriate governance framework within which to engage with partners. This may lead to; Inconsistent approach to different partnership opportunities; possible reputational risk; possible risk to Council resources; possible failures to take opportunities to deliver corporate priorities.

13 Consultation

- 13.1 Internal consultation carried out with Management Board, Places Scrutiny Panel, People Scrutiny Panel.

14 Options Considered

- 14.1 Do nothing as the Council has been rated as 'Sound' in how it manages partnerships. However, given the further increase in the need to work in partnership through funding reductions and agendas such as 'Troubled

Families' and the 'Big Society', not having a Policy and register will exacerbate Risk Management Implications identified above.

15 Background Papers

15.1 *Add text here, may be more paragraphs*

Previous report(s): Partnership Working (Part Two), Report to the People Scrutiny Panel, 24th November 2011.

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: No

Ward Members Notified: No

Appendices: *list any appendices here including title and filename in brackets (e.g. Performance Data 2010 (perfddata.doc)).*

A. Partnership Policy Document

B. Partnership Policy Equality Impact Assessment