

**REPORT TO THE SCRUTINY PANEL RESOURCE AND PERFORMANCE
MEETING ON 16th January 2014**

Status: For discussion
Title: Partnership Register and Policy
Originator: Ann Marie Hawkins, Head of Policy, Performance & Partnerships
Where from: Scrutiny Commission
Where to next: Executive

Objective: For Scrutiny to consider and discuss the Partnership Register and the recommendations to increase, review or reduce resources into partnerships. To consider the Partnership Policy.

1. Outcome sought from Panel
 - 1.1 Consideration of the Partnership Register and associated recommendations and the Council's Partnership Policy for onward approval by the Executive.
2. Background
 - 2.1 Phase 1 of the Transformation Programme identified that the Council is involved in a 'broad and complex range of partnerships' and emphasised the importance of establishing a co-ordinated approach to partnerships across the Council.
 - 2.2 Arising from the review, two recommendations were agreed:
 - Recommendation 30: Continue to refine the Partnership Register
 - Recommendation 31: To design and implement a knowledge network
 - 2.3 Prior to this, an internal audit report written in 2010 identified that a formal strategic approach to partnerships had yet to be developed by the Council, and that some work on managing partnership risks should be undertaken.
 - 2.4 The Partnership Register has been reviewed and updated. It will help us to understand areas where we need to increase or decrease our involvement to better deliver our priorities and Critical Activities, and ensure that we are able to influence appropriately by having the appropriate officer and member representation.
 - 2.5 A review of the Partnership Policy has been undertaken alongside this.

- 2.6 An audit of Partnership Governance is also currently being undertaken and the outcome will be fed into the Partnership Policy.
- 2.7 The Partnership Register identifies a total of 80 partnerships (excluding networks which are to be removed from the Register) that the Council is involved with. Guidance notes which outline all of the information captured in the Partnership Register and partnership risk and value assessment criteria can be found in the Partnership Policy at Appendix B of this report.
- 2.8 The majority of the Leicestershire Together partnerships eg. Leicestershire Together Commissioning Board and Leicestershire Together Commissioning Executive, Environment Board, Leicestershire Health & Wellbeing Board, Supporting Leicestershire Families Commissioning Board and Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board, have been assessed as being of importance to Harborough District Council to deliver its corporate priorities. Actions have been identified by Corporate Management Team to ensure that Harborough District Council is appropriately represented. These are included in the recommendations. A review of the Leicestershire Together Partnership and Governance Structure is currently underway, led by Leicestershire County Council. The findings from this will inform future partnership working arrangements.
- 2.9 The Leicestershire Together Boards below have no direct officer or Member representation from HDC, as other districts take the lead:
- Leicestershire Children & Young People Board
 - Strategic Partnership Board (Community Safety City and County)
 - Leicestershire Health and Wellbeing Board
 - Leicestershire Rural Partnership Management Board
 - Leicestershire Stronger Communities Board
 - Leicester & Leicestershire Economic Partnership Board (Councillor Pain attends in his LCC portfolio role.) Strictly speaking this is not part of the Leicestershire Together Partnership, but is of considerable importance to the district and County.
- 2.10 Given the increasing influence of many of the Leicestershire Together Partnerships (and the related boards), actions have been identified by CMT to ensure that HDC is able to influence policy making and decision making, and that HDC is interacting with the district lead officers and Members effectively where the Council has no direct representation. These are included in the recommendations.
- 2.11 There are no partnerships that HDC attends dedicated to Older People-though this is included in the work of the Harborough Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

- 2.12 Mechanisms for managing the flow of knowledge into and out of partnerships to the relevant officers and Members within the Council needs to be more robust. Work on this will be undertaken as part of Phase 2 of the Partnership Register Transformation Project.
- 2.13 Some 'partnerships' have been removed from the register as they are operational/ tactical groups and networks. A number of 'networks' have been identified and are to be removed from the register.

3 Points for discussion

- 3.1 Discussion of the recommendations outlined below in this report. Further details of these recommendations are available in the Partnership Register document at Appendix A. (Note that this is an excerpt which captures the key headings from the full Partnership Register. Guidance notes which contain information on all of the headings included in the full Partnership Register are appended as part of the Partnership Policy at Appendix B.)
- 3.2 Discussion of the Partnership Policy attached at Appendix B, which sets out the Council's approach to partnership working.

4 Summary of Key Recommendations

Recommendations to increase current resource input into partnerships

- 4.1 In view of the increasing importance of the Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Partnership (LLEP) HDC should review its resources input into the partnership and its associated partnerships. A significant number of officer hours and budget is already being contributed to the LLEP and its associated groups, and this may need to increase in line with the increasing role and financial power of the LLEP and the development and implementation of the Council's 'Open for Business' Action Plan. The Chief Executive has established a cross-officer Economic Prosperity Board to increase capacity to support Economic Prosperity. The vacant post of Business Manager is currently under recruitment.

	Officer Hours per month* (including preparation, meeting time & follow up)	Financial Contribution
Leicester & Leicestershire Economic Partnership Board	0	£8,000
LLEP Private Sector Growth Group	40	0
Better Business Partnership (Planning Partnership & Regulatory Services Partnership)	4	0
Broadband Leicestershire Programme	40	£530,000

Board		
Housing Planning & Infrastructure Group	20	0
TOTAL	104	£538,000

*Rough estimate

- 4.2 HDC is not currently represented at the Leicestershire Rural Partnership. HDC should identify a member of the Executive to attend the Leicestershire Rural Partnership and a member of CMT / SMT to attend in support. A review of the effectiveness of attending this partnership should be undertaken after 6 months. Attendance at this partnership will be important if the LEADER bid is successful.
- 4.3 In relation to the Leicestershire Environment Board there are potentially large savings and shared cost/resilience through workstreams such as the joint waste contract and the joint records centre. In view of this, it should be a priority for the Environmental Co-ordinator to support the lead officer (The Chief Executive) and Portfolio Holder for this partnership.

Recommendations to reduce resource input into partnerships

- 4.4 All of the Welland Partnerships, with the exception of the Welland Audit Partnership, have been assessed as low value. It is therefore recommended that HDC should therefore withdraw from the Welland Partnerships and formally from the Welland Market Towns Group. It is recommended that HDC remain in the Welland Audit Partnership whilst it remains value for money. HDC also utilise the Welland Independent Remuneration Panel, which reviews members allowances. Every Council is currently required to have an independent panel, therefore further consideration will need to be given to HDC's involvement and this will be addressed in any future report.
- 4.5 The Director of Community Services currently represents the Council on the Leicestershire Together Housing Partnership Group. It is recommended that this is delegated to the Strategic Planning Services Manager.
- 4.6 The Director of Community Services currently represents the Council on the Leicestershire Parking Partnership Board. It is recommended that this should be delegated to the Regulatory Services Manager.

Key recommendations to review current resource input into partnerships

- 4.7 Leicestershire County Council (LCC) are creating a Children and Families Service. As a result of this, LCC will be reviewing the Children & Young Peoples Board and the sub partnership governance and partnership arrangements. HDC will need to review its representation when the outcome of the review is known.

- 4.8 The five year Rural Youth Voice Project ends in January 2015. It is recommended that the Cultural Services Manager supports the development of a partnership exit strategy.
- 4.9 A review of Harborough Improvement Team has been undertaken and the outcome reported to the HIT Steering Group. A report regarding future options will be submitted to the Executive on 13th January 2014.
- 4.10 HDC should explore how the Harborough Innovation Centre can become a key deliverer for 'Open for Business'.
- 4.11 Work should also be undertaken to ascertain how Harborough Tourism Partnership can help to support delivery of the Council's Open for Business Action Plan. Depending on the outcomes of this work, HDC may want to increase resources to this partnership.
- 4.12 To date, HDC has not been represented on the Sustainable Harborough partnership. This is a five year Lottery funded project which aims to build strong locally focused projects in the areas of food and energy with the aim of supporting and establishing local enterprises. The Director of Communities attended the partnership in October and it is now considered that there should be representation on the Board to support the Council's work in relation to sustainability. It is recommended that attendance and benefits of this partnership are reviewed after 6 months.
- 4.13 The Leicestershire Voluntary Sector Strategy Group is currently under review. It is recommended that the Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships attends the next two Strategy Group meetings and then reviews whether attendance is required at the group or whether this should be on an ad-hoc basis subject to assessment of the agenda.
- 4.14 It is recommended that the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Environment and Corporate Services, should review involvement with the Stepping Stones Partnership to ascertain whether HDC should continue to engage with this partnership and contribute £4,000 per annum.
- 4.15 The next steps of the project will be to develop a knowledge network to disseminate partnership information, implement the recommendations arising from the audit of Partnership Governance, and to develop an action plan from the recommendations relating to the Partnerships Register that are approved by the Executive.

4 Equality Impact Assessment Implications/Outcomes (attach completed EIA)

- 4.1 None directly associated with this report.

5 Impact on Communities

5.1 A robust approach to partnership working, and involvement with the right partnerships will ensure that Council resources are focused to deliver HDC priorities, and ultimately achieve value for money and better outcomes for residents.

6 Legal Issues

6.1 There may be legal issues associated with joining or exiting a partnership. The Partnership Policy sets out key governance arrangements for partnership working.

7 Resource Issues

7.1 The Partnership Register and Partnership Policy aim to ensure that the Council is involved with partnerships that will deliver HDC priorities, and that resources are deployed effectively. The recommendations included within this report have resource implications for the Council in terms of officer time and, in some cases, finance.

8 Community Safety Implications

8.1 None directly associated with this report.

9 Carbon Management Implications

9.1 None directly associated with this report.

10 Risk Management Implications

10.1 Each partnership has been assessed according to whether it is of high, medium or low risk to the Council (attached to the Partnership Policy at Appendix B). This assessment has been taken into consideration to form the recommendations contained within this report.

10.2 The Partnership Policy sets out governance for the Council's approach to partnership working. This also incorporates Risk Management.

11 Consultation

11.1 The Partnership Register has been compiled in consultation with members of Senior Management Team and Corporate Management Team.

12 Background Papers

12.1 Not Applicable.

Previous report(s):

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: No

Appendices:

- A. Partnership Register**
- B. Partnership Policy**