

Strengthening Partnership Governance
Report to Public Service Commissioners Co-ordinating Board
15th September 2009

1. Introduction

1.1 Local context

The conclusion of LAA negotiations and the production of the Community Strategy presented an opportunity to revisit partnership governance and performance management arrangements to ensure they are able to coordinate delivery of the Community Strategy, and are not over focused on the indicators within the LAA.

1.2 National Context

In April 2009 the Audit Commission published *Working Better Together: Managing local strategic partnerships*, which summarised the findings of a national survey of LSPs and detailed case study work, and made a series of recommendations on areas where strategic partnerships need to develop.

Of potential relevance to Stockport the report found that:

- i. Performance management and influence has developed unevenly across LSP activities, weakening joint working and crowding out some objectives.
- ii. Most LSPs lack mechanisms for assigning mainstream resources towards achieving the goals of the sustainable community strategy (SCS) and the local area agreement (LAA).

The report recommended that local authorities and their partners:

- iii. Critically assess the costs and benefits of joint working
- iv. Ensure local governance arrangements support strategic, executive and operational layers of partnership working
- v. Review progress, make decisions and challenge one another based on performance and resource information.

These recommendations supported the areas for review and development which had been identified locally.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

Over the course of the summer dialogue was undertaken with both the LAA Core Group and the PSCCB to identify potential developments to Partnership governance.

This report details the proposed developments to LAA governance for this Board's endorsement, updates the Board on developments being considered by the PSCCB, and considers where further development could strengthen the Partnership.

2. LAA Governance

Following the conclusion of LAA negotiations the Core Group at the meeting of 3rd August considered how the group could maximise the value they added to the Partnership beyond the performance management of specific LAA indicators. The Group agreed that there was scope and value in extending their remit and proposed:

- Performance against partnership priorities including those set out in the LAA and Community Strategy be managed by the group
- increase focus on use of intelligence and understanding cross cutting issues such as inequalities

- The group lead on the identification of partnership risks through the LAA and support the development of the partnership to address these risks
- They be renamed Partnership Co-ordinating Group
- The following organisations be invited to join the group: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service; Stockport Homes; and Stockport Sports Trust

The Core Group also considered the role of the LAA negotiating block groups and agreed that where appropriate these groups would take on a wider performance management role in support of the relevant partnership, subject to the individual and differing requirements of each partnership.

The revised terms of reference for the Core Group, membership and partnership structure can be found at appendix 1.

The Group also supported the development of a partnership performance management framework which will be worked up with thematic partnerships for implementation in 2010/11.

3. Further Development

3.1 Public Services Commissioners Co-ordinating Board (PSCCB)

Revisions to the LAA governance arrangements will enhance Partnership performance management. The challenge of aligning performance and resource management, and influencing the allocation of mainstream resources to support the delivery of the Community Strategy (and LAA) remains a priority.

At the meeting of 2nd September the PSCCB considered how they could respond to this challenge and committed to a review of the PSCCB to identify what the Board could do differently to direct use of resources.

A proposal is now being developed for consideration at the November meeting of the PSCCB.

3.2 Accountability

As part of the governance review Community Strategy priorities, LAA indicators, and issues emerging as a result of performance monitoring of the impact of the recession were mapped against thematic partnerships to ensure clear lines of accountability existed for all Stockport priorities.

This exercise identified 4 key outcomes where accountability does not rest with a specific thematic partnership. It should be stressed that good progress is being made to achieve these outcomes, in some cases by a number of partnerships, in others by partners organisations but outside of the partnership remit.

What is not clear is the extent to which these issues are being addressed in a co-ordinated strategic way, utilising the capacity of all relevant partners in a cohesive way. The Board are asked to consider the current arrangements detailed below and whether the developments proposed would add value to the delivery of the identified outcomes:

Community Strategy outcome	Issues or related LAA indicators	Current arrangements	Potential Development
Good Connections	<p>NI 167: Congestion - average journey time per mile during the morning peak (mins per mile) on key routes</p> <p>NI 175: Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling - as measured by percentage of population within specified time range of 7 key facilities * i)</p> <p>NI 168 Principal roads where maintenance should be considered*</p>	Transport was excluded from the Environment Partnership when established in 2008 and is co-ordinated by Stockport Council with sub-regional partners	That these arrangements are kept under review and this Board retain oversight for transport issues
Unique built environment	<p>NI 155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) *</p> <p>NI 170 Percentage of previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years *</p>	Issues cut across a number of thematic partnerships	Consider whether existing partnerships including the Economic Alliance, Environment, Stronger Communities and Housing Partnerships have the capacity to lead on these issues and whether a more co-ordinated partnership approach is desirable.
Community Cohesion	<p>The percent of people who believe Stockport is a place where different people get on well together, a key indicator of cohesion, remains one of highest in the country but saw a small decline between 2006 and 2008.</p> <p>Work related to supporting cohesive communities has to date focused on ethnicity, faith and inter-generational outcomes. These remain a priority as the ethnic, faith and age profile of the borough has become increasingly diverse over the last 10 years and this is set to continue.</p> <p>Social and economic inclusion are also emerging as key drivers for cohesion and are central to achieving our ambition of ensuring everyone has similar life opportunities.</p>	Cross cutting issues, overseen by the Stockport Partnership Board but delivered through the work of a number of thematic partnership including the Stronger Communities Partnership	That the Stronger Communities Partnership supported by the Stockport Council Policy Unit take the lead in delivering and embedding community cohesion in Stockport with regard to ethnicity, faith, inter-generational and social inclusion outcomes.
Worklessness including Youth Unemployment 19 – 24 yrs.	<p>Unemployment in Stockport remains second lowest in Greater Manchester but has risen substantially in the 12 months to Jun 09 from 1.9% to 3.7%, 6,345 people.</p> <p>Approximately 27% of people made unemployed as a result of the recession are aged 16-24yrs old. Meaning 1,900 young people are now not in education, employment or</p>	The Learning and Skills Partnership has addressed the worklessness agenda with a focus on engaging residents in learning to enhance employability	Learning and Skills Partnership to take a more strategic lead on these issues and focus on all aspects of employability from intensive pre-employment support to formal learning

	training. In addition 11,400 people are claiming Incapacity Benefit		
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4. Recommendations

That the Board:

- endorse the proposed revision to LAA governance arrangements outlined
- support and contribute to a review of the PSCCB
- consider whether current arrangements for the four issues not currently owned by a thematic partnership remain appropriate

Jo Foskett
Stockport Partnership Manager
September 2009

Appendix 1

The Stockport Partnership Coordinating Group (SPCG)

Previously the LAA Core Group

Draft Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Group

To coordinate the operational delivery of the Community Strategy on behalf of the Stockport Partnership, facilitate cross partnership working on cross-cutting issues and provide re-assurance and challenge to the Stockport Partnership Board (SPB) and thematic partnerships.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Members should be in a position within their organisation to:

- Inform alignment of budgets in support of the Community Strategy
- Influence delivery of services in support of the Community Strategy

Members will be responsible for:

- Taking oversight of intelligence to ensure the Community Strategy remains relevant
- Identifying and responding to cross cutting issues for the partnership including tackling inequalities
- Making recommendations to PSCCB on allocation of resources, including PRG
- Negotiating and refreshing the Local Area Agreement targets
- Monitoring delivery of the LAA
- Managing Partnership Risk register
- Informing the Partnership Board's agenda and work programme
- Informing partnership performance management arrangements
- Contributing to the Partnerships response to CAA
- Communicating the priorities, achievements and risks to delivery of the Community Strategy across the relevant organisation(s) and thematic partnership(s)
- Supporting the ongoing development of partnership working in Stockport

In addition Partnership Lead Officers will:

- Chair Partnership Performance Groups
- Cascade information from this Coordinating Group to the Performance Groups, and feedback from these Groups
- Brief relevant thematic partnership chairs and lead Councillors

Relationships/ Accountability:

The SPSG will make recommendations to and receive direction from:

- The SPB on areas of exceptional and underperformance, and risks to delivery.
- The PSCCB on resource implications

The SPSG will receive recommendations and give direction to:

- Performance Groups
- Thematic Partnerships

Reporting:

- Quarterly to the SPB
- Quarterly from the Performance Groups

Meetings:

Quarterly 1 month after q end (May, August, November, February)

Membership:

Organisations	Officers TBA
SMBC Director (Chair)	
SMBC Policy	
SMBC Performance	
Economic and Learning Lead	
Safer Lead	
Healthy and Well Being Lead	
Stronger Communities Lead	
Children's Lead	
Environment Lead	
SMBC finance/ Partnership Resource Officer	
PCT	
GMP	
SCVS	
JC+	
LSC	
Organisations to be invited to join the group	
Stockport Homes	
Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service	
Sports Trust	
Supported by: SMBC Partnership Office	

Partnership Governance Diagram

Partnership Governance Arrangements



