

### IMPROVING PARTNERSHIP WORKING

#### Progress Report for Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board 22 September 2009

##### 1.0 Introduction

The catalyst for this project was the 2008/09 Annual Partnership Report considered by the Executive on 16 March 2009. The Executive agreed a number of recommendations to improve partnership working. Since then a number of issues about what we can expect from partnerships and the level of resources we should commit, how we can best monitor the performance of partnerships, and how we determine what are significant partnerships have been added to these concerns. The outcomes of the project are below. These are set out under the recommendations of the Executive report.

The Executive 3 March 2008 agreed a protocol for partnership working. The recommendations in this report do not supplant the protocol but rather add detail to areas of practice in the light of experience of involvement in partnerships and wider performance management.

An Internal Audit Report on partnership working in 2008/09 was published in August 2009 and made a number of recommendations to improve partnership working. Many of the recommendations have already been addressed, some will be considered through this project and the rest completed this year. The action plan is shown in Attachment C.

This project is particularly timely as partnership working is growing and likely to continue to grow as many difficult social issues require cross-organisation working and we have to find more efficient and cost effective ways of working. With this growth has also come awareness that there are a number of significant management issues we have to address if we are to achieve the same standards of performance from partnerships as we expect from the delivery of our own services.

The current phase of the review of the Council's constitution is updating the position regarding representation on outside bodies. An outcome of this will be a detailed advice note for councillors serving on outside bodies. This is the context for the statement of roles and responsibilities proposed in 6. below.

##### 2.0 Outcomes

###### **Executive Recommendation 4a. Improve the service delivery and value for money from Cherwell's significant partnerships.**

The Executive asked officers to bring forward proposals to improve the performance of the 10 significant partnerships whose delivery of value for

money was only rated as fair. To complete this exercise all lead officers were interviewed about the performance of their partnership, how it could deliver better value for money, and any wider observations about improving the performance of the partnership. The responses are in Attachment A. A number of wider issues were raised about improving the performance of partnerships. These are:

For all outside bodies, and in particular the significant partnerships because of the commitment of resources involved, the Council needs to be clear about the reason for its involvement and the level of commitment this involves. A simple example of this is the number of meetings involved which can tend to proliferate as the partnership is established.

To achieve the best value for money the management of partnerships should be integrated fully into the service planning and performance management processes. In this way the same rigour will be applied to partnerships as to other areas of service delivery. This is particularly important given the increased use of partnerships (and indeed contractors) as the means of delivering our objectives. As with all service areas there is a judgement to be made about the level of monitoring and reporting required. Underlying this are the following principles:

- The same standards of performance are to be expected of partnerships as of our own services. The management of partnerships should be fully integrated into the Council's service planning and performance management processes. It is acknowledged there are particular issues relating to managing partnerships and these should be addressed corporately through the lead officer for partnership working.
- The role of partnerships and the resources involved in delivering our objectives will be clarified through the Service and Financial Planning process. At this stage any risks associated with delivering these objectives will be identified as part of the work plan of the partnership and included on the council's risk register.
- The actual performance on delivering objectives will be monitored and reviewed through the Council's Performance Management Framework. The significant partnerships will be monitored at the highest level and performance reported to the Executive every quarter. Below that partnerships will be monitored at Directorate and service level, and dealt with at that level unless serious issues emerge (as is the case with most of the detailed actions and targets contained in the individual service plans) or there are successes or emerging issues to report.
- From 2010/11 all partnerships will have an internal regime of performance management that includes having agreed objectives, a process for monitoring and reviewing performance, and produce an annual statement of performance. The extent of this regime will have to be proportionate to the size of the organisation and in most cases a light touch approach will suffice.

- In the Council's annual performance report there will be a report on the performance of the significant partnerships. It is proposed that this is supplemented with an overall value for money assessment of each of the significant partnerships and a wider commentary on the overall management of partnerships. This will replace the current partnerships annual report.
- Scrutiny will have the option to review the performance of individual partnerships or wider management issues. The Performance Scrutiny Working Group will continue to consider the quarterly performance reports and any issue with the significant partnerships may be recommended for more detailed consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.
- The internal audit process should be used to assess the performance of individual partnerships (using the Use of Resources KLOES will link this into the wider inspection and audit regime).
- The performance of individual partnerships can be included in the Value for Money review programme when an in depth review of performance is required.
- We need to be clearer about the purpose of the partnership and the reason for our involvement. From the commentary in Attachment A it can be seen that a main benefit of many partnerships is the opportunity for liaison, communication and consultation. This has not been fully reflected in our judgement of value for money. It also poses questions of how to measure the effectiveness of a partnership when it does not have clearly defined objectives around service delivery. This is considered further in section 3.

**Executive Recommendation 4b. Seek out opportunities for new partnership arrangements to improve service delivery and value for money.**

This is being developed through the Service and Financial Planning process for 2010/11, the 2009/10 Value for Money review programme, and consideration of developing wider strategic partnerships for the Council into the future. The development of Sustainable Community Strategy, and the new terms of reference of the Local Strategic Partnership, provides an opportunity to review the existing partnerships and identify new opportunities for joint working and collaboration.

**Executive Recommendation 4c. Continue to strengthen governance and accountability arrangements, especially around information and data sharing arrangements.**

The Council's partnership protocol includes arrangements for information and data sharing.

**Executive Recommendation 4d. With West Oxfordshire District Council, continue to jointly lead the countywide review of the structure and governance arrangements of countywide partnerships.**

The county wide review of partnerships governance and structure, led by Cherwell and West Oxfordshire District Councils, has now been completed. There are new arrangements for countywide thematic partnerships in place to deliver the Local Area agreement and the Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy. The over arching structure, role and membership of these partnerships has been agreed by the Oxfordshire Partnership Board and the detailed working arrangements for each partnership are being developed.

**Executive Recommendation 4e. As part of this countywide review, achieve agreement on the significant partnerships common to all the local authorities across Oxfordshire and focus resources accordingly.**

County wide significant partnerships are those that include the Local Strategic Partnership and the supporting thematic partnerships as identified in the county wide governance review. These are:

1. The Oxfordshire Partnership
2. The Public Service Board
3. Children's Trust
4. Environment and Waste Partnership
5. Health and Well Being Partnership
6. Oxfordshire Economic Partnership
7. Safer Communities Partnership
8. Spatial Planning and Infrastructure
9. Stronger Communities Partnership.

Local Authorities (i.e. the county or other Oxfordshire districts) may also consider other local partnerships in their areas to be significant (an example of this may include a partnership like Bicester Vision). These are unlikely to be county wide and are likely to be locally specific (reflecting local priorities). For this reason it is unlikely that any additional county wide significant partnerships will be identified.

**Executive Recommendation 4f. Strengthen the support for elected Members involved in partnerships on the Council's behalf through the Member Training and Development Programme.**

See 6 below.

**Executive Recommendation 4g. Strengthen the links between the Council's partnerships and Executive Members, to be considered as part of the Council's current review of its Constitution.**

The Local Strategic Partnership for Cherwell has already reviewed its terms of reference and strengthened Member representation. This work will be

developed further over the next year as the new Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership develops and improves its governance arrangements.

The role of member representatives on outside bodies and the wider role of Executive Portfolio Holders in these bodies will be set out in part 111 of the review of the constitution.

As part of the county wide review there are now clear roles for elected members on the Oxfordshire Partnership, The Public Service Board and all thematic partnerships.

**Executive Recommendation 4h. Consider hosting a Cherwell Partnerships Conference to celebrate achievements, consider future partnership opportunities, share knowledge and best practice.**

The revised terms of reference for the Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership includes a reference group that brings together a wide range of local stakeholders and partners. This group will act as a forum to share best practice, celebrate and challenge achievement. Along with the Local Strategic Partnership Board the reference group may also initiate new partnership activities, projects or initiatives where existing partnerships or delivery arrangements are not already in place.

In early 2010 the first meeting of the reference group will be held. This will be for Council members, officers, stakeholders and representatives from partner organisations who wish to attend. The overall aim of the conference will be to share information on the framework for managing partnerships and how to achieve the best outcomes from the partnerships we are involved in. We will also share examples of good practice and success that have made a difference in Cherwell.

**Executive Recommendation 4i. Include significant partnerships in the Council's performance management framework and include in the quarterly performance report to the Executive.**

For 2009/10 the performance of the seventeen significant partnerships is being monitored through the performance management framework. The performance of the partnerships is included in the quarterly performance report to the Executive. In 2009/10 the report is in the form of a commentary by the lead officer for the partnership on the performance achieved and any issues arising. The reason this approach was adopted is because of the work still required in a number of these partnerships to agree objectives through which performance can be judged. In 2010/11 this issue will have been resolved and performance monitored against the agreed objectives of the partnership.

**Executive Recommendation 5. That the Annual Partnerships Report be referred to Overview and Scrutiny as part of their future programme of work on the evaluation of partnerships.**

The report was considered by the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board and they agreed to include scrutiny reviews of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and Cherwell Safer Community Partnership in the work programme for 2009/10. The Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board commented on the terms of reference of this project and the draft recommendations arising. Also the Performance Scrutiny Working Group reviews the Council's quarterly performance report and through that the performance of the significant partnerships.

**Executive Recommendation 6. That the Executive receive a report setting out how the Council will effectively support member representatives on partnerships and all outside bodies, including providing appropriate training, strengthening staff support for members, advice on council policy with regard to issues within the remit of partnerships and outside bodies and providing feedback mechanisms from issues raised on partnerships on outside bodies.**

Councillors have queried if there is a difference between an outside body and a partnership. In simple terms an outside body is any organisation which is constitutionally separate from the Council (but which is of interest to us because we have a relationship or active involvement with that body). Within that a partnership is where there is an agreement to work together to achieve shared objectives, often supported by some pooling of resources. The Executive 16 March 2009 agreed a definition of partnerships which is consistent with the Audit Commission's advice on best practice in managing partnerships. This is:

'Partnerships are arrangements with one or more organisations, from any sector, who share the responsibility for agreeing and/or then delivering a set of planned actions or outcomes.

Most such partnerships will share risks and resources to some extent, and their work will have an identifiable impact on the Council's services and corporate priorities.

Purely contractual arrangements with another party to provide goods and/or services will not be a partnership for the purposes of this review, even when that party is a public or voluntary sector body.'

In response to the specific issues raised by the Executive the following is proposed:

- Democratic Services will produce a 'statement of roles and responsibilities' for Councillors representing the Council on partnerships or other outside bodies, see Attachment B.
- All Councillor representatives will have a named support officer.

- Democratic Services will maintain a register of all the outside bodies on which the Council is represented. For each body there will be summary information on: the lead member, the portfolio holder, the lead officer, the purpose of the body, what it expects to achieve in the year ahead, and what has been achieved in the past year. More detailed information on the performance of individual partnerships will be maintained through the corporate Performance Management Framework. Democratic Service and Corporate and Community Planning will work together to ensure there is consistency and compatibility between the two sets of information.
- There will be a single process for deciding Councillor representation on partnerships and outside bodies. This to be made by the Leader of the Council as a portfolio holder decision (which may be subject to call in under the Council's constitution). The information provided on the outside bodies register (and the Performance Management Framework if required) will help inform this decision.
- The support required by the Councillor, background information, briefings on current issues, substitute attendance for example, will be agreed between the Councillor and lead officer. The support required will range from the negligible where the Council's commitment is not significant to substantial where major resources and service delivery is involved.
- Training for Councillors involved in partnerships and representing the Council on other bodies will be available through the Member Development Programme which is co-ordinated by Democratic services. In advance of 2010/11 briefing on partnership working and the representational role will be available to Councillors. The Partnership Conference, see previous, will cover wider issues on the effective management of partnerships.
- Members will agree the significant partnerships whose performance will be monitored through the Performance Management Framework and reported to the Executive quarterly. This will be done through the end of year performance report for the previous year. Other partnerships and outside bodies will be monitored at directorate or service level as appropriate.
- In advance of 2010/11 the Deputy Leader of the Council will conduct a review of the current councillor representation on outside bodies to establish if this is an appropriate level of commitment and a good use of resources.

### **3.0 Other Issues**

#### **How do we define a significant partnership and what are the significant partnerships for 2010/11?**

For 2009/10 the Council identified seventeen significant partnerships. As a result their performance was highlighted in the 2008/09 Annual Partnership

Report and their performance monitored and reported through the corporate Performance Management Framework in 2009/10. The decision was made using criteria recommended by the Audit Commission and CIPFA. These criteria are helpful but the final decision has to also involve an understanding of local circumstances and priorities. For 2010/11 the following is proposed:

- The Sustainable Community Strategy and the corporate priorities that come from this will provide the context for agreeing the significant partnerships.
- For performance management to be manageable there should be no more than twenty significant partnerships. As nine cross-county significant partnerships have been identified (see 4e) this leave a maximum of eleven Cherwell specific partnerships to be agreed.
- The criteria for judging if a partnership is significant are:
  - The contribution to delivering corporate priorities.
  - The costs and financial benefits.
  - The consequences of failure.
  - Does the partnership take significant decisions?
  - Is it a statutory body or responsible for regulatory functions?
  - The scale of the benefits delivered.
  - The level of risk involved.
- The benefits realised can be both tangible and intangible. To manage performance effectively we do need hard performance targets. However the benefits of many current partnerships are seen as softer in terms of maintaining good communication and liaison and hence relations with key local organisations. A lesson from 2009/10 is the Council needs to be clearer about why we are involved in partnerships, what we expect them to deliver, and how we will measure their success. This will need to be addressed as part of the above process.
- The significant partnerships proposed for 2010/11 will be included in the report to the Executive on the content of the corporate Performance Management Framework for 2010/11.

## SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIPS - VALUE FOR MONEY

### Introduction

The Executive asked officers to bring forward proposals to improve the performance of the 10 significant partnerships whose delivery of value for money was only rated as fair. To complete this exercise all lead officers were interviewed about the performance of their partnership, how it could deliver better value for money, and any wider observations about improving the performance of the partnerships. A summary of the responses is below.

### OXFORDSHIRE-WIDE

#### Supporting People

The County Council is the lead agency for Supporting People and receives the grant from Central Government to disburse for housing related support for vulnerable people. Within this framework District Councils will seek to influence overall policy and bid for resources for local projects. The clear benefit is that we secure cash from the County Council to provide services in Cherwell. All the Cherwell projects are based on a needs analysis and all contracts are subject to strict monitoring. Reflecting changes in local circumstances the priority in Cherwell is shifting towards supporting people with mental health problems.

The fair rating was given because of a perceived lack of information on the outcomes delivered. Lead officers dispute this on the basis that there is considerable evidence of improved outcomes, particularly facilities for young people and the significant reduction in the numbers in temporary accommodation. Currently the Council commits the equivalent of one full time equivalent member of staff to this partnership and in 2008/09 received back £2.5m in funding.

**Value for Money.** In advance of the credit crunch there was already a 15% reduction in the overall budget planned and within that a 20% reduction in the budget for young people. In the light of this CDC is already working on ways it can work smarter and more efficiently with the resources available. A major initiative is underway to re-commission services in order to achieve savings and respond to changing local needs and priorities. New governance arrangements will also be put in place to strengthen performance. There are concerns about the pooling of funding streams under the overall auspices of the Public Service Board and the possible impact this may have on Cherwell accessing funds for our local priorities.

#### Children and Young People's Partnership

This is a statutory body. Under the Childrens Act the County Council has to engage with District Councils and other partners to deliver a joined up approach to working with children and young people. Because the primary

purpose of the act is to safeguard children the County Council, and Social Services in particular, is the lead agency. Given this the Districts' are inevitably minor partners but play a crucial role in providing positive activities for children and young people. The only direct demand on CDC resources is the officer time to attend about eight meetings a year (the county-wide board and the area board). There is no pooling of budgets. The partnership has established three area boards to make it more responsive to local conditions and issues. The Partnership has recently agreed a new Childrens' Plan to cover the next three years.

**Value for Money.** The view of the lead officer is that our involvement in this partnership actually delivers good value for money. The relatively small commitment of officer time is easily outweighed by the resources received from the Partnership. This is in the order of £50/60k a year (the Council's Street Rangers are funded from this source). The Partnership facilitates a good flow of information between agencies, the coordination of activities, and allows us to influence wider policy issues. Areas for future improvement include developing the local agenda through the Area Boards and using the new Childrens Plan to develop more robust local performance targets.

#### **Oxfordshire Economic Partnership**

This is seen as an important strategic partnership particularly as it channels money from SEEDA and the county. CDC contributes £5k and has a councillor representative on the board. There are issues around its role and functions that need to be clarified if it is to operate most effectively. Also needs to be better understanding between the membership about what are the key issues to address. Current structure seen as unwieldy so to be restructured with a smaller board concentrating on strategic issues and a development group dealing with practical issues. Internal communication could be improved. CDC wants OEP to be clear about its role in: managing Oxon Business Enterprise; supporting the Jobs Clubs; and in encouraging inward investment (which may duplicate what CDC already does in this area).

**Value for Money.** Changes have to be delivered if vfm is to improve. Need to assess impact of structural changes at the year end and if there is a clear and shared agenda amongst the participating organisations. If Oxon Economic Partnership take on Oxon Business Enterprise then this may improve vfm for CDC, even though we will continue to host the service.

#### **Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership**

This is an important organisation in so far as it decides the allocation of funds allocated by the Home Office. Meets quarterly with chief executives representing the local authorities (though there is frequent use of substitutes). There are issues about its purpose beyond that, particularly as it may duplicate the statutory functions at the District level. Is most effective as a co-ordinating group and sharing information on best practice (the presentation of the use of public TV screens in Hastings for example). Problem if number of meetings involved expands to include Tactical Business Groups.

**Value for Money.** An important body as it provides access to funds and information on best practice. Most effective when focussed this limited agenda. Concerns about expansion beyond this, the additional meetings and other commitments and the return on the resources this involves. Need to review remit and functioning of this group. Review performance at the end of the year.

## **CHERWELL SPECIFIC**

### **Cherwell Community Planning Partnership**

This partnership is responsible for delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy (previously the Local Strategic Plan). Although it is not a statutory body it does have a central role coordinating the activities of the major public sector organisations. It is an important forum for deciding joint approaches to issues, initiating joint working and sharing information. Besides tangible service delivery the Partnership also offers intangible benefits around building cross organisation communication and cooperation and external reputation. There is no pooling of budgets but there is considerable joint working on individual projects. There have been issues raised about how to improve the operation of the Partnership to make it a more effective delivery body. This is reflected in the changes referred to below.

**Value for Money.** A number of improvements are planned to improve the performance of the Partnership. From November 2009 there will be a smaller board with increased member involvement. This will provide a clearer focus on delivering outcomes for the community. This will support the delivery of the new Sustainable Community Strategy and the 3 year delivery plan that will be launched in February 2010. There will also be more practical support available to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy as the Police and the Primary Care Trust match the resources provided by the Council. There is performance management of the partnership through the Council's PMF which is limited to a basket of National Indicators. This will be reviewed in advance of 2010/11. A review of the impact of these changes will be made at year end and that will inform whether the Partnership has improved its performance delivered better value for money. An issue for further consideration is the relationship between this partnership and other partnerships in the district and if the latter in some way should be accountable to the former.

### **Cherwell Safer Community Partnership**

Primary purpose is to allocate funding from Home Office (£130k) and the Police (£60k) for local projects and has been effective in doing that. Clear evidence that many initiatives successfully launched, more difficult to establish links between patterns of crime and the work of CSCP. Requires staff time to support and attend meetings. A post at CDC funded through the CSCP budget.

**Value for Money.** Lead officer believes this organisation provides good and not fair value for money. This is based on the number of projects delivered through the partnership and the relative low costs of our involvement. Review again at end of year.

#### **Cherwell M40 Investment Partnership**

This is a partnership between the Council and the private sector (particularly property owners). Set up 18 years ago to take advantage of the then newly constructed M40. Most valuable as a brand to attract companies to Cherwell. Cherwell contributes staff time to attend 4 meetings a year, £20/30k in funding for marketing, and supports the property search web site. Doubtful if any savings if partnership did not exist. Provides useful forum for meeting the private sector and via the web site a single point of contact for companies. Question if this is a 'significant' partnership.

**Value for Money.** The lead officer believes relative to the resources involved this partnership delivers good value for money. The communication between the Council and the private sector also delivers more intangible benefits through building and maintaining good relations and understanding between the parties involved.

#### **Kidlington Village Management Board**

This is primarily a liaison group between CDC, the Village Council, the County Council, the Police and local businesses and should be judged on that basis. Meets every 2/3 months and the only cost is staff time to support the meeting. The Board has no resources. It is a forum primarily to discuss CDC spending plans and priorities on the Village Centre and give feedback on work in progress. Some issues about sporadic attendance and ability to act on the issues raised (need to manage expectations).

**Value for Money.** As its primary purpose is liaison performance cannot be judged on what is physically delivered, as that is CDC expenditure but rather on local involvement in the decision making process about that expenditure and satisfaction with the process. Need to consider how best to measure the performance of the board as most of the deliverables are included in CDC service plans. Occasional issues about number of officers attending the meetings and possible duplication of meetings with the Chamber of Commerce.

#### **Banbury Town Centre Partnership**

This is primarily a liaison group between CDC, the Town Council the County Council, the Police and local businesses and should be judged on that basis. Meets every 2/3 months and the only cost is staff time to support the meeting. The Partnership has no resources. It is a forum primarily to discuss CDC spending plans and priorities in the Town Centre and give feedback on work in progress. Some issues about sporadic attendance and ability to act on the

issues raised (need to manage expectations).

**Value for Money.** As its primary purpose is liaison performance cannot be judged on what is physically delivered, as that is CDC expenditure but rather on local involvement in the decision making process about that expenditure and satisfaction with the process. Need to consider how best to measure the performance of the Partnership as most of the deliverables are included in CDC service plans. Occasional issues about number of officers attending the meetings and possible duplication of meetings with the Chamber of Commerce.

### **Central Oxfordshire Steering Group.**

This body has been disbanded and replaced, from 2009/10, by the Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership. This is a cross-Oxfordshire body and because it will act as the single point of contact with the Housing and Communities Agency it will have powers, influence and be an important means of accessing resources. It will also allocate LAA reward funds if they are available. Leadership of the partnership will rotate annually amongst the Oxon local authorities with Cherwell taking the lead in the first year. There is a proposal to employ a full time co-ordinator. Work is underway to agree the terms of reference for the partnership.

**Value for Money.** The new arrangement will provide a clear focus and remit to the partnership. Judgment about performance can only be made at year end.

**STATEMENT OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCILLORS INVOLVED IN OUTSIDE BODIES**

**Partnerships** are arrangements with one or more organisations, from any sector, who share the responsibility for agreeing and/or then delivering a set of planned actions or outcomes.

Most such partnerships will share risks and resources to some extent, and their work will have an identifiable impact on the Council's services and corporate priorities.

Purely contractual arrangements with another party to provide goods and/or services will not be a partnership for the purposes of this review, even when that party is a public or voluntary sector body.

**Outside Bodies** are bodies or organisations (other than partnerships) which the Council has agreed to appoint representatives to.

**Role of Representatives**

- The role and responsibilities of representatives on partnerships and outside bodies will be set out in the governance document of that body which you will be provided with when you are appointed.
- Representatives on partnerships and outside bodies shall at all times act in the best interests of the district and residents of the district.
- Representatives on partnerships and outside bodies shall act as a conduit in keeping the Council informed of the work of the body to which they are appointed and the outside body informed of the work of the council.
- Each body to which an appointment is made by the Council will have a designated Council contact officer.
- Councillor representatives on outside bodies and partnerships shall act in accordance with the advice note for elected members on bodies external to the Council as set out in the constitution.
- Unless expressly given the power in accordance with the constitution, representatives on partnerships and outside bodies may not commit the Council to any course of action or indicate the support of the authority for any policy or decision.

## INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT ON PARTNERSHIP WORKING IN 2008/09 – ACTION PLAN

| ISSUE  | RISK RATING | MANAGEMENT RESPONSE   |
|--|-------------|---|
| <p>1. Members are not aware of partnership activity. The Council has an Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee which is charged with overseeing partnership activities at a Council level. At present there are no periodic reports on partnerships submitted to The Committee, with the exception of the Annual Partnership Review. A reporting timetable should be produced to ensure that members receive regular information on the Council's partnerships and their performance.</p> | Medium      | <p>A selection of high risk partnerships was selected by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their last meeting for review. All partnerships will be reviewed on a rolling basis.</p> <p>Implemented</p>                           |
| <p>2. Those charged with governance may not be fully aware of partnership arrangements. Members involved in partnerships do not receive any training on the partnership protocol. Training needs for those members involved in partnerships should be addressed and training programmes implemented.</p>   | Low         | <p>A generic briefing on the partnership protocol will be produced for all members. Individual members will be briefed by relevant Heads of Service on specific arrangements. Claire Taylor and Heads of Service 1st October 2009</p> |
| <p>3. Board members may not be independent. Whilst all members involved in partnerships are covered by the Council's Code of Conduct, these are not tailored to the specifics of individual partnerships. In addition those not employed by Cherwell are not covered by these guidelines. Checks should be carried out to ensure the independence of all Board members. Each individual partnership should maintain a register of interests in respect of their Board members.</p>   | Medium      | <p>As part of the reorganisation of the Local Strategic Partnership, a large number of partnerships will require individual register of interests. Claire Taylor Ongoing from November 2009</p>                                       |

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| <p><b>4.</b> Risks may not be addressed and rectified on a timely basis. Risk registers are not maintained for individual partnerships. Risk registers should be drawn up to address risks specific to individual partnerships. This should be in addition to inclusion of partnerships on the Councils risk register.</p>  | <p>Medium</p> | <p>All partnerships should have individual risk registers. Heads of Service 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009.</p>  |
| <p><b>5.</b> Performance may not be monitored. As a consequence, Adverse performance may not be rectified and best practice identified. There are no performance indicators in place for Bicester vision. In addition, the partnership does not benchmark itself against similar schemes. Performance indicators for Bicester Vision should be designed and monitored on a periodic basis. Efforts should be made to identify similar schemes to allow benchmarking of performance.</p> | <p>Medium</p> | <p>The reorganised Local Strategic Partnership will sign off a delivery plan for Bicester Vision. This will require the inclusion of performance indicators. Claire Taylor 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.</p> |
| <p><b>6.</b> Insufficient governance arrangements. It was noted when reviewing the Councils partnership register that of the Councils 17 significant partnerships 8 have no member involvement. Efforts should be made to ensure that, where possible, Cherwell members are involved in all significant partnerships.</p>   | <p>Medium</p> | <p>The LSP Governance Improvement Program will ensure that all partnerships have member involvement from lead partners. Claire Taylor &amp; Heads of Service 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009.</p>             |
| <p><b>7.</b> Increased risk of fraud and corruption. The Council's anti-fraud and corruption policy makes no reference to partnerships. Amendments should be made to the Councils antifraud and corruption policy to ensure it addresses the roles and responsibilities of partnerships. All individual partnerships protocols should make reference to this document.</p>  | <p>Medium</p> | <p>The Partnership protocol will be reviewed to ensure inclusion of fraud and corruption protocols. Legal Services 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.</p>   |
| <p><b>8.</b> Inappropriate and unauthorised expenditure may be incurred. The Councils Standing Orders make no reference to the procedures for partnerships. The Council Standing Orders should be amended to make reference to expenditure incurred by partnerships. Standing orders should be communicated to all partners and expenditure should only be processed after sufficient authorisation.</p>  | <p>Medium</p> | <p>Review of the Councils Standing orders will be performed as part of the annual review. Karen Curtin 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.</p>   |
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| <p><b>9.</b> Partnership risks may be not be identified and rectified on a timely basis. In accordance with the Councils partnership protocol, all partnerships should have an entry on the Councils risk register. All partnerships should have an entry on the Councils risk register. In each case compensating controls should be documented to outline how risks will be mitigated.</p>                    | <p>Medium</p> | <p>All responsible officers will be reminded of the need to update Magique with relevant risks. Rosemary Watts, with Immediate Effect.</p>  |
| <p><b>10.</b> All the Value for Money ratings are not accurate. Each partnership is assessed on an annual basis for the level of Value for Money it secures.</p>  | <p>Low</p>    | <p>Value for Money will be reassessed as part of the Councils Improvement Project. Mike Carroll 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.</p>   |
| <p><b>11.</b> The Councils views may not be adequately represented. In accordance with the partnership protocol, each partnership should have a named lead officer from the Council. It was noted that this is not the case for the Councils Homelessness Partnership. Consideration should be given to appointing a lead officer on the Homelessness Partnership.</p>  | <p>Medium</p> | <p>A lead officer should be appointed and referenced in all partnership communication. Gillian Greaves 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009.</p>   |
| <p><b>12.</b> The Council may not receive adequate and fair media coverage. A media strategy was requested for those partnerships where a full audit was required (Bicester Vision and Homelessness). It was noted that neither had such a document in place as stipulated by the protocol. A media strategy should be developed for all Council partnerships and included within individual constitutions.</p> | <p>Low</p>    | <p>The partnership protocol will be amended to reflect that all significant partnerships should consider external communication as part of their constitutions. Claire Taylor 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.</p> |
| <p><b>13.</b> Members may not be fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. No evidence could be provided to confirm that the constitution for Bicester Vision has been approved. Evidence should be retained to validate the approval of all key documents.</p>  | <p>Low</p>    | <p>The reorganised Local Strategic Partnership will sign off a delivery plan for Bicester Vision. This will require the approval of their constitution. Clare Taylor 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.</p>          |