



South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council

Partnership Guidance May 2016

Introduction

This Partnership Guidance supports the Partnership Policy (2016).

This document provides details about how partnerships will be established, monitored and evaluated and provides further detail and templates to support the application of the policy.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Partnership Register which details all partnerships.

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1. Considering New Partnerships

The Councils may identify the opportunity to establish a partnership to deliver, or enhance, a service. Equally the Council may be approached directly by an organisation seeking to establish a partnership.

The Lead Officer proposing the partnership will use the flow chart – *Identifying Partnerships* (Appendix 1) and the Partnership Consideration Checklist (Appendix 4), to identify if a proposed partnership could be established.

In considering establishment of a partnership the Contract Procedure Rules must be given full consideration not least requirements that

8.2.1 Collaborative and partnership arrangements are subject to all UK and EU procurement legislation and must follow these contract procedure rules (Rule 3). If in doubt, Officers must seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer and the Corporate Procurement Officer.

Application of the Guidance Criteria, set out in Appendix 2, will establish if the proposed partnership should be classified as a **significant** or a **desirable** partnership.

If the proposed partnership is identified as a **desirable partnership** by the Partnership Specialist through consultation with Lead Member/s, the proposing Lead Officer will refer to Appendix 5 – Desirable Partnerships flowchart. The checklist (Appendix 4) requires completion.

If the proposed partnership is to be classified as a **significant partnership** then the proposing Lead Officer will need to refer to Significant Partnerships flowchart, which can be found at Appendix 3. The Partnership Specialist (in conjunction with appropriate Lead Officer) should use the checklist at Appendix 4 to work with the prospective partner and prepare a summary report. The checklist should be used as the basis for the report with the issues in the checklist addressed in the report. The checklist should be submitted to Hub or Executive with the summary report. The report will include consideration of the following matters.

- Who the partners are
- Aims, objectives and outcomes (with specific reference to Our Plan themes)
- How value for money has been identified
- How long the partnership is expected to last
- What geographical area the partnership will cover
- The role(s) of its Members/officers (including duties expected)
- If the Council is expected to contribute any funding or other resources
- Financial accountability
- Potential risks (terms of reputation, finance etc) and means of managing these

The Partnership specialist will produce a recommendation (including a detailed assessment of financial implications). This shall be submitted to the Portfolio/ Hub lead for consideration prior to submission to Hub/Executive.

For **All Partnerships** a summary budget should also be prepared showing proposed total income and expenditure for the partnership – and, in particular, the role the Council funding will play in the long term delivery of the partnership. If the partnership is part of a wider funding arrangement these wider details should be shown.

Where there is a budget already established and the Partnership demonstrates good value for money then the partnership can be established under delegation.

Where a budget bid will be required, or other matters are considered to require wider analysis (as with Significant Partnerships), the matter will be referred to Hub or Executive for consideration (and potentially a recommendation to Council). Overview and Scrutiny would retain the ability to call such a proposal for review.

2. Establishing a Partnership

Where any partnership arrangement has been approved this needs to be formalised and arrangements for the partnership need to be put in place. In some cases this might be relatively informal (for example a Strategic Partnership established by letter or concordat). In other cases, in particular where there is funding for service delivery, the arrangements may need to be more complex.

The Partnership Establishment Checklist at Appendix 6 should be used to guide the process of establishing the partnership. This should be led by the Partnership Specialist (in conjunction with Lead Specialist who manages the Partnership.)

At this stage the Partnership will

- Be entered onto the Partnership Register
- Have an agreed form of operation including Terms of Reference (see 4 below).
- Be identified as a “Significant” or “Desirable” partnership
- Have identified monitoring arrangements
- Have an identified Lead Specialist

3. Information Sharing

Information is an asset of the Council and it is important that information sharing is appropriately controlled and monitored within partnership arrangements. Sharing information is however vital to the success of partnerships and there should be

maximum information exchange subject only to legal requirements.

It will be expected that partners will be willing to make their information public under the Freedom of Information Act where it relates to those areas covered by the Partnership regardless of whether or not they are a public body covered by the Act. All information and records should be stored in accordance with the Council's current records management and retention policies.

Information Sharing Protocols

- It may be necessary to agree an information sharing protocol for the partnership, especially where information is likely to be shared relating to individuals;
- Working protocols will need to be specific to the operational requirements arising from the client group concerned and should be developed with the support of relevant professionals and representatives of the client group;
- The person or group responsible for developing the protocol should consult with all partners and stakeholders;
- A common format and common or integrated procedures should be adopted;
- Similar protocols developed elsewhere or by partners should be used where possible (don't reinvent the wheel) as long as they can be appropriately adapted to meet the requirements of the partnership;
- Issues to be addressed in any protocol include:
 - Purpose of and reasons for sharing data
 - Disclosure of data
 - Request for data
 - Responding to requests
 - Transfer of data
 - Receiving data
 - Storing data
 - Review procedures
 - Professional codes of conduct
 - Relevant applicable legislation

4. Terms of Reference

In drawing up the Partnership agreement the following matters and format should be used as the default.

Introduction/Purpose

- Who/what the partnership is
- Background
- Purpose

Vision and Objectives

- Partnership vision
- Partnership objectives (ensure objectives are Specific Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Specific (SMART). Focus on outcomes and results. Think about what the partnership is going to achieve not how it will achieve it. Identify clear links and outcomes to Our Plan themes and objectives.

Membership, Governance and Operation

- Who are the group members/ representatives of which organisations and why
- Partnership structure
- Lead partner/organisation
- Accountability
- Partner roles, duties and responsibilities
- Role of elected Members
- Decision-making
- Chairing arrangements
- Secretariat functions
- Frequency of meetings
- Information/data sharing protocols
- Other protocols

Resources

- Partners Financial commitment(revenue/capital)
- Officer/Partner time commitment
- Asset commitment and ownership of assets
- Other resource commitments

Evaluation and Monitoring

- Reporting mechanisms - who, how often and on what. Default expectation that the “Annual Partnership Report” (appendix 7) will be submitted.
- Performance Management – how will outcomes against performance be assessed – what measures/indicators will be used (qualitative i.e. case studies, satisfaction, reputation, and quantitative i.e. numbers).
- How is the partnership achieving value for money for partners and the public

Special Circumstances (if appropriate)

- Dealing with complaints
- Resolving disputes
- Dealing with media/communications issues
- Risk assessment
- Procedures for whistle-blowing/fraud
- Dealing with breaches of protocol

- Expelling a partner

Dissolution/ Termination

- How and when the partnership can be terminated/ dissolved. Consider issues such as informing funders, stakeholders and clients
- Final reporting arrangements
- Exit strategy for partners wishing to leave the partnership

Review

- How often the partnership and agreement will be reviewed and by whom
- How revisions to the partnership and agreement will be approved/ agreed

5. Evaluation and Review

Monitoring of partnerships should be proportionate to their significance, and their governance. The following approach should be adopted

Type of Partnership	Performance reports	Annual Report from lead partner	Annual Review by lead specialist	Monitoring Report to Overview and Scrutiny	Budget or other recommendations to Council
Desirable	NA	By End July	By end August	Autumn	Autumn
Significant	Quarterly				

The submission of quarterly performance reports may not be applicable to all Significant Partnerships (i.e may be appropriate for CAB but not the LEP). This quarterly requirement will be established in the partnership agreement where needed)

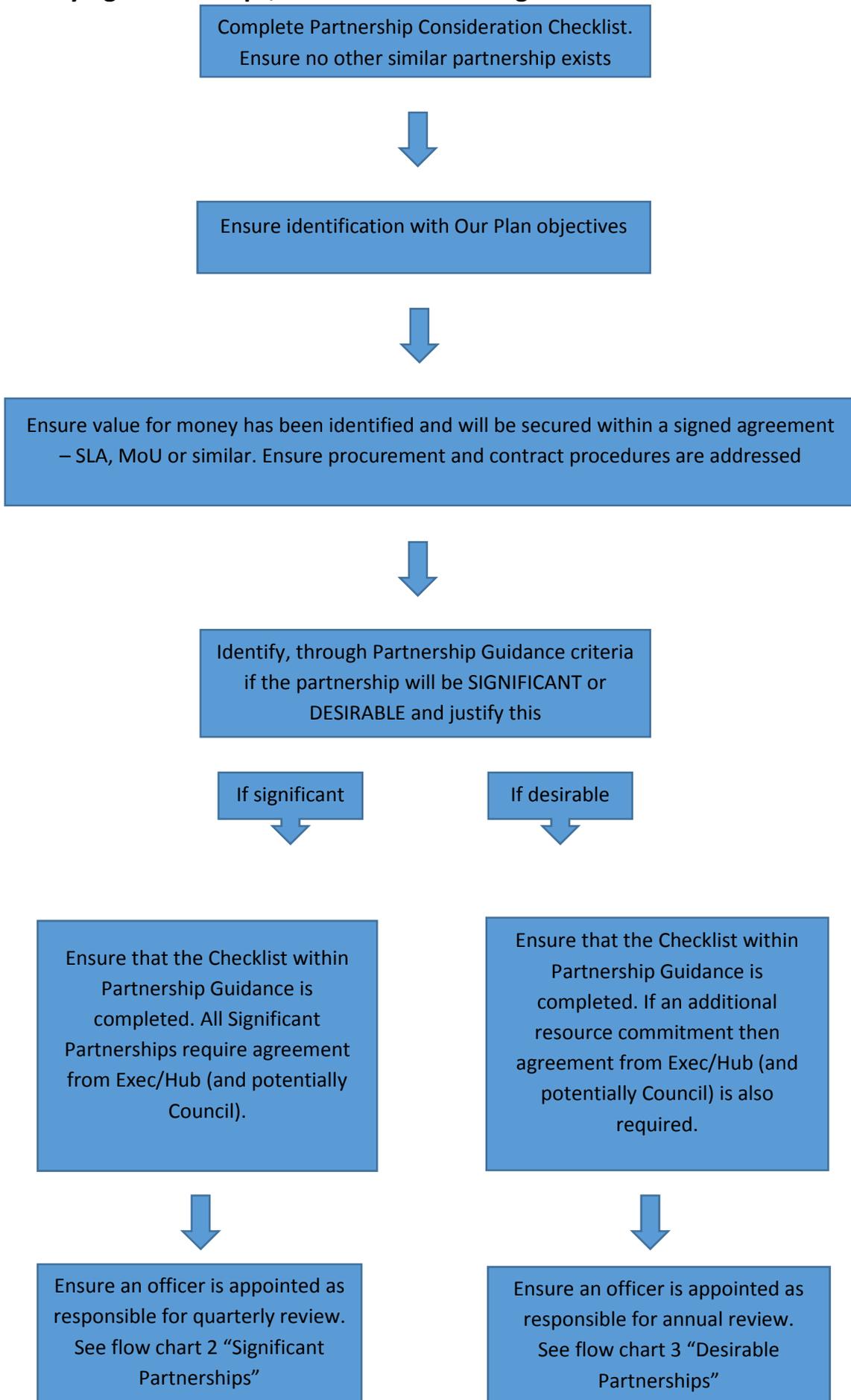
Each partnership will be reviewed on an annual basis as soon as possible after the end of the financial year. This responsibility will rest with the Council's lead officer for the partnership, who must as a minimum review:

- Whether the partnership has met its objectives and delivered agreed outcomes for the previous year and is likely to continue to do so;
- Whether the partnership still meets local needs and priorities;
- Any financial and resource commitment and that value for money is being achieved;
- Whether any changes are required to the terms of reference

To ensure adequate monitoring the Lead Specialist will be required to seek submission of an Annual Report (Appendix 7) and complete an Annual Review (Appendix 8) and then report to Overview and Scrutiny.

Appendix 1

Identifying Partnerships, flow chart for Managers



Appendix 2

Guidance Criteria

As identified in the Partnerships Policy document 2016, page 2.

Definition and scope

The Audit Commission defines a partnership as:

“...an agreement between two or more independent bodies to work collectively to achieve an objective.”

South Hams and West Devon Councils will use this definition to underpin partnership arrangements, monitoring and review.

The Councils recognise that some partnerships carry greater commitment from the Councils than others. South Hams and West Devon Councils will identify those partnerships that carry greater risk and ensure that these “significant” partnerships are subject to enhanced assessment and monitoring.

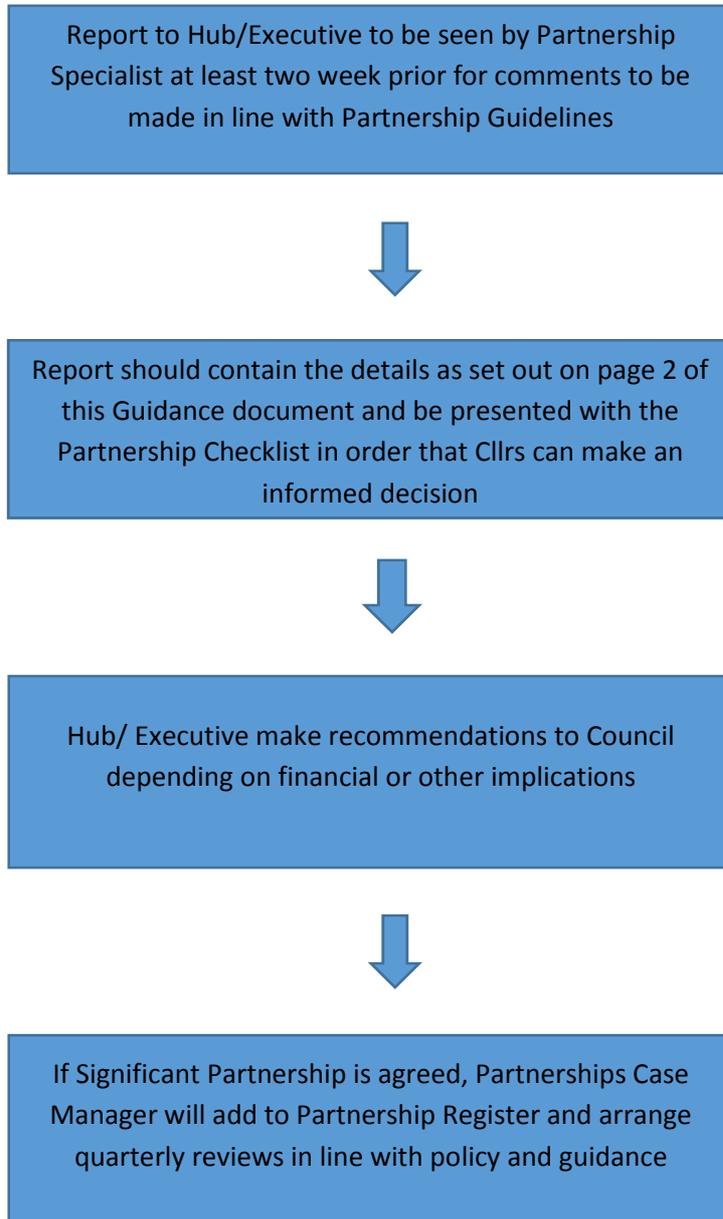
“Significant” Partnerships are defined as those where there is:

- A resource threshold of £10,000 or more per Council per annum (including direct financial contributions and officer time) and /or
- More than 4 days staff time per month and/or
- Potential for significant reputational, political, legal or operational risk taking into account whether the partnership has a
 - high influence on Council or Partnership spending or provides an opportunity to access a significant level of funding;
 - high impact on service delivery;
 - high impact on strategic policy development;
 - significant role in meeting identified local needs and priorities;
 - potential to save considerable funds and provide a high level of “value for money” compared to partners acting independently;
 - high public profile and is involved in significant strategic work that affects the public
- Statutory requirement

Other Partnerships are described as “Desirable” and reflect the reduced financial, statutory or risk involved in the partnership. .

Appendix 3

Establishing a Significant Partnership

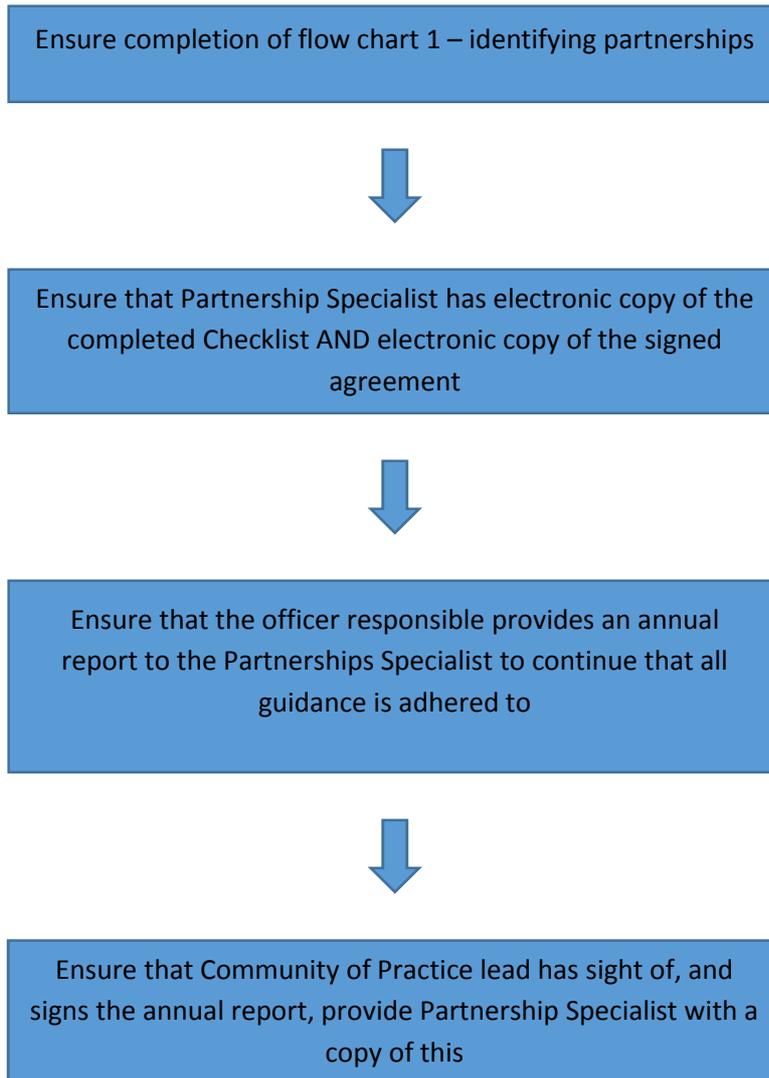


Appendix 4 Partnership Consideration Checklist

Name of Prospective Partnership:		
Prospective Partner		
Organisation Name : Contact Name: Contact Details:		
Details of supporting documents/Reports:		
Completed by (Partnership specialist):		
Supported by (Lead Specialist):		
Date		
Checklist Questions	Yes	No
Is there a simple summary of the proposed purpose of the partnership with key objectives and outcomes related to Our Plan themes?		
Which of the Our Plan themes will be addressed through the partnership? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy - Creating places for enterprise to thrive and business to grow • Homes - Enabling homes that meet the needs of all • Infrastructure - Securing the services and facilities that meet the needs of our communities • Communities - Empowering residents to create strong communities • Wellbeing - Supporting positive, safe and healthy lifestyles • Environment - Protecting, conserving and enhancing our built and natural environment • Heritage - Celebrating our past and protecting our heritage for the future • Resources - Promoting energy efficiency and more effective use of our natural resources 		

Is there a partnership already in place which has a similar remit and which could take on this work?		
Has the added value that the prospective partnership will bring been identified?		
Will the prospective partnership contribute to streamlining existing partnerships?		
Will the anticipated benefits outweigh the likely costs (direct and indirect) of a partnership?		
Could all the benefits be achieved in a simpler or more cost-effective way? Would in house delivery be effective?		
Are all the prospective partners willing to participate and commit resources needed to make the partnership succeed?		
Does the prospective partnership have clear, realistic and measurable objectives which are accepted by all prospective partners?		
Does the prospective partnership have agreed terms of reference?		
Does the prospective partnership require procurement in line with Contract Procedures?		
Are all partners clear about their roles and the resources they will need to commit?		
Is there a commitment to evaluating the performance of the partnership and clear identification of outcomes?		
Will the prospective partnership require a financial commitment from the Council and/or all partners?		
Are there clear procedures for making decisions and resolving conflict?		
Is the partnership time limited or set up on a task and finish basis?		
Is there a clear exit strategy?		
Would this be a "Significant" Partnership? (refer to details in Policy)		
What type of partnership would this be? (refer to details in Policy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic • Service Improvement • Community Liaison • Community Delivery 		

Appendix 5. Establishing a Desirable Partnership



Appendix 6 Partnership Establishment Checklist

Name of Partnership:		
Organisation Name : Contact Name: Contact Details:		
Details of supporting documents/Reports:		
Completed by (Partnership specialist):		
Supported by (Lead Specialist):		
Date		
	Yes/ NA	Comments
Has the partnership been approved?		
Are the governance arrangements for the partnership set out?		
Have clear objectives and outcomes been identified against Our Plan themes?		
Is this a "Significant" or "Desirable" partnership?		
What type of Partnership is this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic • Service Improvement • Community Liaison • Community Delivery 		
Is there a partnership agreement in place?		
Does the partnership have a constitution?		
Are responsibilities and accountabilities clearly defined and allocated?		
Is there a lead partner or accountable body?		

Have partners nominated members of the governing body?		
Are nominees mandated to exercise their role for employers?		
Are governing body nominees sufficiently experienced for the role?		
Does the partnership have audit arrangements?		
Does the governance document provide an arbitration process?		
Are there escalation procedures within the arbitration process?		
Is there an exit strategy for all partners?		
Is there a formal process for withdrawal by partners?		
In the event of a partner withdrawing, is there a contingency plan?		
Is there an annual review of the partnership?		
Does the partnership have an approach to lessons learned?		
Does the partnership report financial matters?		
Does the partnership have arrangements to ensure legal compliance?		
Does the partnership have arrangements to meet obligations with respect to human resources?		
Does the partnership have asset management arrangements in place?		
Does the partnership have a code of conduct?		
Does the partnership have a training and development plan?		
Does the partnership have a communications plan?		
Is performance management monitored and reported in particular outcomes?		
Does the partnership have arrangements for reporting and assurance?		
Are responsibilities for insurance cover defined?		

To be completed for all Partnerships on an annual basis.

To be completed by partners and submitted by 31st July each year to the Partnership Specialist

<p>Annual Partnership Monitoring Report.</p> <p>This form should be completed on behalf of the Partner and returned to louisa.daley@swdevon.gov.uk by 31st July</p>
<p>Name of Partnership:</p>
<p>Organisation Name : Contact Name: Contact Details:</p>
<p>Details of any supporting documents/Reports:</p>
<p>Date</p>
<p><i>Please review the aims and objectives of the partnership along an evaluation of how they align with the Council's Our Plan themes and objectives.</i></p>
<p>Aims and objectives.</p> <p>Which Our Plan Themes do these objectives support? Please tick.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy - Creating places for enterprise to thrive and business to grow • Homes - Enabling homes that meet the needs of all • Infrastructure - Securing the services and facilities that meet the needs of our communities • Communities -Empowering residents to create strong communities • Wellbeing - Supporting positive, safe and healthy lifestyles • Environment - Protecting, conserving and enhancing our built and natural environment • Heritage - Celebrating our past and protecting our heritage for the future • Resources - Promoting energy efficiency and more effective use of our natural resources

<i>Please restate the Key outputs identified for the partnership and report /achievements over the past twelve months</i>
<i>Key challenges over the past twelve months and how these were addressed</i>
<i>An appraisal of the financial commitment/resource input on an annual basis and whether you consider the partnership continues to provide value for money for the Council</i>
<i>Is there a signed partnership agreement in place? Does this need amending?</i>
<i>What are the risks presented by the partnership and how are these mitigated?</i>
<i>What are the opportunities/benefits of the partnership and how have these been maximised?</i>
<i>Overall Conclusion and summary of issues and opportunities for future development of the partnership</i>

To be completed by the Lead Specialist by 31st August to inform O&S, budget setting and future arrangements.

Name of Partnership:		
Type of Partnership:		
Lead Specialist:		
1	Objectives and Outcomes	
	a	Has the partnership met its objectives and outcomes? State which have been met and how and which have not been met and why.
	b	What performance information is available to support the above? Summarise performance.
	c	Is the partnership still meeting local priorities and needs? Examples.
	d	Can outcomes and objectives be delivered in a better way? What can the partnership do to improve performance?
2	Finance and Resources	
	a	How has the partnership provided value for money in the previous year?

	b	How will the partnership continue to provide value for money going forward?
	c	How and to whom do you report on the value the partnership provides and how funds are spent?
	d	Should the Council continue or is it able to provide the same level of financial support and/or resources? Please explain.
3	Terms of Reference	
	a	Are any changes required to the terms of reference? What are these and why are they required.
	b	When will the changes be made and how will they be agreed?
4	Challenges, Risks and opportunities	
	a	What challenges were identified during the year and how were these resolved? If not resolved, why?
	b	Did any new risks emerge during the year? What were they and what action has been taken to mitigate?
	c	Were any new opportunities identified during the year? What were they and how have these been incorporated into the partnership?
5	Conclusion	
	a	Should the partnership continue and why?
	b	What monitoring measures and reporting are required?