

Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny (External)**

Date: **29 September 2015**

Title: **Partnership Review**

Portfolio Area: **Customer Services**

Wards Affected: **All**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: **Overview and Scrutiny**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: **NA**
(e.g. referral on of recommendation or implementation of substantive decision)

Authors **Ross Kennerley** Roles: **Lead Specialist – Place and Strategy**

Contact: **01803 861379** | Ross.Kennerley@swdevon.gov.uk

Recommendations:

- (1) That Members note the background information on Partnerships**
- (2) That a task and finish group be established in conjunction with South Hams District Council and up to four Members be nominated to the Group**
- (3) That Terms of Reference be established for the group**
- (4) That the group report back to Overview and Scrutiny**

1. Executive summary

The Council has longed recognised the benefits of partnership working and, in particular, the key role that the charitable and voluntary sector can play in supporting communities and individuals. Over the years the Council has entered into a range of partnerships to deliver and enhance local services.

There is merit in undertaking a comprehensive review of the principles for partnerships – primarily to review purpose and effectiveness along with a

review of individual partnerships. The review will also consider where there may be opportunities for efficiencies between the partners and with other organisations – and whether other elements of Council work are suited to partnership working.

South Hams District Council is looking to undertake a parallel exercise and given that a number of the partnerships have direct overlap then establishing a joint Task and Finish Group is proposed.

2. Background

The Council has a long established approach to Partnerships. This includes the following

- Appendix 1. Partnership Policy
- Appendix 2. Partnership Guidance
- Appendix 3. Partnership Register (noting that this is based on previous organisation structure)

In combination these demonstrate a clear approach to partnership working and, subject to review, give a strong foundation for future working.

3. What outcomes are required?

Members are invited to agree to detailed work, through the Task and finish group, which will focus on ensuring partnerships are effective and achieving strong outcomes for communities and value for money. The onus on the review should be on what the Council requires from its partnerships.

The initial focus will need to be on reviewing the Policy and Guidance and ensuring this is well aligned to the new ways of working – and then to focus in on the partnerships themselves. SHDC Overview and Scrutiny has already agreed to the establishment of a Task and Finish Group with a view to working alongside WDBC. South Hams Members have initially identified a focus on CAB, CVS and CSP – all of which have been before the South Hams O & S in recent months.

The work needs to consider carefully budget implications and take a longer term view (e.g. the Budget 2017/18 and beyond) alongside considering short term issues for next years' Budget.

4. What are the options?

Appendix 3 shows the range of current partnerships. There is an obvious opportunity to review the policy and guidance for partnerships and then look afresh at how the Council can best deliver services and support to its local communities bearing in mind the new way of working. The new structure, in particular the Locality working, may alter the manner in which we work with local communities and allow the Task and Finish Group to explore

- What outcomes does the Council want to achieve
- What is the best way of delivering these outcomes

It may well be that partnerships continue to provide the best approach – indeed as public sector funding diminishes then partnerships with the charitable and voluntary sector may provide a more resilient long term approach. However this needs to be considered carefully both as a general principle and in relation to the specific outcomes the Council is seeking to achieve from each partnership.

There is also an opportunity to look at whether other Council work could be delivered effectively through partnership working.

5. Summary and conclusions

Partnerships are an effective way of delivering services and support to local communities. They provide direct outcomes and in many cases harness the willingness of local residents and volunteers. Strong partnerships multiply the Council's input and provide long term resilience for local communities.

The proposed review of the approach to partnership working, the effectiveness of individual partnerships and the scope for further partnership working will provide a strong basis for future working.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	Localism Act 2011 (Section 1 – Powers of General Competence). Addresses O&S Terms of Reference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider and focus on the impact the Council and partners are making on our customers and communities • 2.3. Partnership arrangements • 2.4 Establish joint T&F working with SHDC
Financial	Y	Will need to identify budget costs and opportunities and feed these into formal monitoring and budget setting
Risk	Y	A failure to review partnership principles, partnership arrangements and partnership opportunities could lead to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective use of WDBC funds • Poor quality service to those in need of support • Inequality of delivery across the Borough

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knock on resource pressures direct to WDBC <p>These risks are mitigated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Partnership Policy and Guidance • Review of individual partnership arrangements • Scope of opportunities for efficiencies through joint approach with SHDC • Scope of opportunities for other work to be delivered efficiently through partnership
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	Y	The services provided by partnerships promote equal opportunities and help prevent discrimination in our communities.
Safeguarding	Y	Partners are required to operate to adopted Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policies where appropriate
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	Y	Partnerships should provide advice and volunteering opportunities which reduce the potential for anti-social behaviour.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Y	Partnerships include consideration of health implications where appropriate
Other implications		None identified

Supporting Information - Appendices:

- Appendix 1. Partnership Policy
- Appendix 2. Partnership Guidance
- Appendix 3. Partnership Register (noting that this is based on previous organisation structure)

Background Papers: None

Process checklist	Completed
Portfolio Holder briefed	Yes
SLT Rep briefed	Yes
Relevant Exec Director sign off (draft)	Yes
Data protection issues considered	Yes
If exempt information, public (part 1) report also drafted. (Committee/Scrutiny)	No