

A Partnership Evaluation Tool

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To seek approval for the Partnership Evaluation tool and note the timescale for the review of the Council's partnership with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

2. Recommendations

It is **RECOMMENDED** that

- 2.1. **Members agree the use of the Partnership Evaluation Tool to inform the evaluation of Council partnerships.**
- 2.2. **Members note the timescale for the evaluation of the Council's partnership with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.**

3. Links to the Corporate Business Plan

- 3.1. The Council's priority of Partnerships also highlights the development and delivery of community based projects arising from the community planning process that could support the delivery of other Council Priorities including Housing, Equalities and Diversity and Healthy Lifestyles.

4. General Background Information

- 4.1. At the meeting of the Executive on 1 December 2005 Members resolved the following;

E127 - Outcome of the Audit Commission Review and Council's Approach to Partnership Working

Resolved that

- (1) The Audit Commission report 'Review of Service Level Agreements with Partners' and the proposed matrix for evaluating partnership working be noted.
- (2) The position of North Wiltshire District Council against the key recommendations in the Governing Partnerships report be noted.
- (3) The development of an evaluation tool for improving partnership working, using the proposed matrix and the position against the key recommendations in Governing Partnerships as the basis for this tool, be agreed.
- (4) It be noted that it is proposed that this tool be used to evaluate Wiltshire Wildlife Trust as a key partner, the outcome to be reported to the Executive in January 2006.

5. Discussion

- 5.1. The Partnership Development Officer has developed the Partnership Evaluation Tool attached as Appendix One informed by the proposed matrix from the Audit Commission Report and the key recommendations from the Governing Partnerships report. The tool is structured around testing four key areas of partnership working;
- Need - the basis for partnership funding
 - Framework - ensuring a structured approach
 - Process - effective management of the partnership
 - Outcomes - demonstrating achievement and impact
- 5.2. The criteria for the tests for each key area of partnership working require the production of evidence to support an assessment score.
- 5.3. It is proposed that this tool be used for a wider programme of review with a number of the Council's key partners. The tool is based on a partnership approach and requires the participation of partners throughout the evaluation in order for a full review to be undertaken. Involving partners in the evaluation using the key indicators will provide a full picture of the partnership and the outcomes it delivers. By doing this will enable the partners to agree future milestones and ensure that there is continuous improvement.
- 5.4. It is proposed that this tool be used by the Council not only to evaluate existing partnerships but to inform the appropriateness of new or emerging partnerships that the Council may enter into. This approach would support the Council's commitment to the Countywide Compact that sets out how public sector organisations will work with the community and voluntary sector.
- 5.5. It is considered appropriate by Officers and the Lead member that the newly developed tool be tested on a partnership evaluation so that any necessary modifications or improvements can be made before wider use.

6. Evaluation of the Council's Partnership with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

- 6.1. Wiltshire Wildlife Trust were one of two existing partnerships that were examined by the Audit Commission as a part of their consideration of the Council's approach to partnership working. This approach was designed to facilitate a genuine picture of existing partnerships to use to compare to good practice nationally.
- 6.2. In order to undertake an appropriate review and evaluation of the Council's partnership with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust using the new evaluation tool it will be necessary to undertake a number of review meetings including meeting with representatives from Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. It will take until February 2006 to complete this work.

6.3. The following activities will be undertaken in order to meet the deadline:

December 05	January 06	February 06	March 06
Relevant officers to meet and agree key tasks to be undertaken	Meeting between Officers and the WWT to agree tasks to be undertaken and information required.	Meeting between Officers and WWT to discuss the outcomes of the tests based on the evaluation indicators.	Final outcomes of the review to be reported to the Executive.
Initial meeting with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) to discuss the scope of the review and how the proposed tool will be used.	Officers and WWT to gather information based on the evaluation indicators from the tool. Partnership Development Officer to co-ordinate responses.	Recommendations to be developed and fed into budget planning process.	

6.4. The findings and outcomes of the evaluation will be reported to the 9th March 2006 meeting of the Executive.

7. Community and Environmental Implications

7.1. Partnership working offers opportunities for the Council to strengthen communities and service delivery. This in turn can help to ensure that community needs and priorities are addressed in a way that maximises the use of available resources for local people. The Compact and associated codes of practice will foster more effective ways of working, alongside greater transparency and openness.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Equal Opportunities Implications

9.1. The Council's approach to partnership working and consultation aims to be as inclusive as possible; The Compact and the associated codes of practice will consolidate and reinforce this approach.

10. Human Resources Implications

10.1. Support for the development of improving partnership working and evaluating the Council's approach to SLAs is currently provided for within the Corporate Business Plan and the Community and Environment Business Plan. The contents and recommendations of this report do not result in any direct Human Resource Implications.

**REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC MANAGER
TO THE EXECUTIVE – 5th JANUARY 2006**

Documents used in the preparation of Report

Review of Service Level Agreements with Partners NWDC, Audit Commission 2004/2005
Governing Partnerships, Audit Commission 2005
Wiltshire Compact

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