

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 1 SEPTEMBER 2004

PARTNERSHIP MAPPING

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Commission of progress regarding the partnership mapping exercise.

Background

2. Members may recall that following the difficulties experienced with the Early Years and Childcare Partnership, the Commission requested officers to undertake a review of the County Council's involvement in partnerships. Earlier reports to the Commission and Scrutiny Reference Group provided an initial analysis of the County Council's involvement in partnerships and draft advice and guidance prepared for managers involved in partnership working aimed at reducing risks associated specifically with working in partnership.
3. The second stage of this exercise was to identify all the partnerships operating in the county, their purpose and membership, identify the main public strategies and policies and to consider the extent of duplication and conformity between both partnerships and strategy documents.

Current Position

4. 'Leicestershire Together' the Leicestershire Local Strategic Partnership has identified rationalisation of partnership as a key priority.
5. Best practice in other parts of the Country suggests that:
 - (a) attempts at 'top down' rationalisation can be difficult and counter-productive;
 - (b) more successful approaches place the emphasis on partnerships to self assess both their own performance and their continued relevance in an increasingly complex partnership environment.
6. 'Leicestershire Together' has no authority to require partnerships to follow the proposals below, they are merely suggested as a way of beginning to address an identified area of LSP activity and one highlighted as a priority during interviews conducted as part of the Strategic Assessment of Service Delivery. Their successful implementation will depend on Board members influencing the partnerships that their organisations are members of.

Proposal

7. The 'Leicestershire Together' Board has successfully applied a performance management framework to its own processes. This has resulted in the action plan. The framework was prepared using best practice examples developed by and for LSP's. It has been further modified to make it more generally applicable to partnerships (see Appendix 1). It should assist in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of partnerships across the County that use it, by enabling them to identify area of strengths weakness. Questions on the continued relevance of the partnership in the context of other partnerships working in the same area have been added. These should lead to partnerships questioning their continued role with consequent change including some merging of partnerships.
8. The Board has proposed that county and sub regional wide partnerships be requested to complete a self-assessment using the performance framework and to record the results on the Leicestershire Together web-site by January 2005.
9. The Board recognised that some partnerships may already use a performance management framework and may wish or be required to continue to use that rather than framework attached, although it is important that these should contain the questions regarding continued role and relationships to other partnerships.
10. A further element has been added for the County Council's use (Appendix 2). This is intended to ascertain the appropriateness or otherwise of a particular partnership to the County Council's objectives. It is also aimed at assessing involvement of County Council officers in partnership activity.

Recommendation

11. That the progress regarding the partnership mapping exercise be noted.

Equal Opportunities

12. None specifically.

Background Papers

Report to the 'Leicestershire Together' Board on 21 June 2004.

Officer to Contact

Andy Robinson Tel: 0116 265 701
 Email: arobinson@leics.gov.uk