

Standards of Excellence in Partnership Working

The County Council recently agreed a programme to achieve 'excellence' in partnership working, with the focus on benefiting our communities. These are the standards which the County Council undertakes to work towards in its work in partnerships.

[Standard One: The Council proactively develops relevant partnerships in order to meet its strategic objectives.](#)

Actions:

- The Council is fully aware of how partnerships or other organisations and initiatives can help achieve its objectives.
- All partnerships are well thought through and directly effective in meeting the aims and objectives of the Council.
- Outcomes demonstrate that the Council's contribution to partnership working has benefited the community and service users.
- The relevance of partnerships and their work is communicated, understood and actively advocated in the organisation.

[Standard Two: The Council can demonstrate a clear understanding of the principles of partnership working.](#)

Actions:

- There is clear evidence that the principles of partnership working are embedded in the Council and achieve definable outcomes.
- Partnership working is fully embedded in the Council's policies and practices and everyone accepts the need for it.
- The Council has a track record of utilising alternative methods of delivering services to achieve its objectives.
- The Council works effectively with its partnerships and is confident to devolve decision making to them.

[Standard Three: The Council is able to demonstrate the value of all its partnership arrangements and differentiate between them, and partners share these views.](#)

Actions:

- The Council is able to demonstrate the rationale and value of all its partnership arrangements and differentiates between them in outcome terms.
- Councillors and officers involved with any particular partnership are able to clearly identify and articulate the value of the partnership to the Council and act as advocates both internally and externally for the partnership.

- There is a track record of internal structures operating which regularly discuss and assess the implications of partnership arrangements that inform policy decisions.
- There is clear consistency between the views of councillors and relevant officers about the value of particular partnerships in terms of outcomes and these coincide with the views of most partners.

Standard Four: The implications and impact on partnership arrangements are transparently taken into account when taking budget and policy decisions.

Actions:

- The partnership arrangements are regularly appraised in order to establish their value to the achievement of organisational objectives and resource decisions are based on these assessments.
- The implications and impact of budget decisions on partnership arrangements are transparently taken into account within the annual budget and service planning process, and are taken into account prior to the formation and endorsement of relevant policies and decisions.

Standard Five: People within the organisation clearly understand the rationale for the partnership arrangement and their roles and responsibilities within them.

Actions:

- People working within partnerships are clear and confident about their role and responsibilities to the partnership and the Council and have been empowered to take decisions at the partnership on behalf of the Council.
- People have been adequately trained and briefed and can demonstrate a clear understanding of how the partnership helps the Council achieve its objectives.

Standard Six: The Council is committed to continuously reviewing and modifying its involvement with any partnership arrangement.

Actions:

- There is regular and effective monitoring and evaluation of the ongoing benefits to the Council of its involvement in partnerships and the Council is clear about what is being achieved.
- The Council has its partnership arrangements under constant review and regularly evaluates the status of them. The Council has a track record of taking effective action to ensure that it is not wasting resources in partnerships that do not meet its objectives.