

Partnership Scrutiny Committee**Brief for a review of partnership working across the authority****Background**

The Council has a large number of partners. For example Spatial Planning has 95 and Social Services has 71 with voluntary organisation alone. There are many more.

The nature of the partnerships varies markedly. In some the County Council works alongside other agencies - for example within the area of community safety - either as equal partners or with one of the partners leading. Other partnerships may involve the Council in funding a voluntary body to provide a service - for example Red Cross Day Centres where a service is provided for elderly citizens. These are more of a contractual relationship. A further variation on the theme would see an organisation being provided with financial assistance in order to help them work with or provide a service to a particular group or groups. Examples of this are Aylesbury/Wycombe Women's Aid and Thames Valley Adventure Playgrounds.

Clearly there are major differences between these three types of partnership and there are still further variations. For example there are statutory partnerships such as with health or other partners and Local Strategic Partnerships. Also a number of umbrella groups are funded by the County Council and then redistribute the funds to other organisations. For example the Priory Centre in Wycombe and Bucks Community Action.

Clearly for any non-statutory partnership to be worth entering into there should be demonstrable benefits for the County Council and the citizens of Buckinghamshire. What value does the partnership add? This question should form the basis for the review

Desired outcome of the review

The Council will know that partnerships are providing useful and cost effective benefits for the citizens of Buckinghamshire

Objectives of the review:

1. To identify the number and different categories of partnerships with which the County Council is involved
2. To obtain information on the histories of a sample of the partnerships (how they were set up, why, what have been the benefits, have there been any problems etc)
3. To produce evaluation criteria for measuring the success of partnerships and a process for monitoring the progress of partnerships
4. To produce criteria for evaluating new partnerships, to measure the value of one partnership against another and to enable decisions to be taken on whether to retain existing partnerships
5. To decide on recommendations to be put before the Cabinet. For example on whether a complete review of all partnerships should be recommended. If it is, to set a timescale for the review