

Code of Practice on Partnerships

1. Definition

A partnership is usually defined as an arrangement involving Public Sector agencies working together with the Private, Voluntary or Community Sectors where a commitment is given to achieving a common purpose.

2. Aims

- To promote awareness and build knowledge and understanding between sectors about working in partnership.
- To establish a framework for partners to work together more effectively to achieve common goals, to develop and deliver services and to build strong, cohesive and self-determining communities.

3. Commitments

1. Recognise that partnership working should be based upon an understanding of accountability, representation and methods of participation clearly defined by, and appropriate to, each partner agency.
2. Fairness, equality, accessibility and inclusion must underpin all aspects of partnership working, and should be reflected in policies and the way that everyone involved participates.
3. Partnership activities should have clear and agreed purposes and a variety of methods to achieve these purposes appropriate to the needs of participants.
4. All participants should be given the opportunity to develop and share their skills and knowledge in order to: ensure practice of equalities principles; share ownership of the agenda; and enable all viewpoints to be reflected.
5. Ensure that representatives involved with partnerships maintain a continuing dialogue with those they represent, share information with them and have legitimacy and authority to take decisions and actions on their behalf.
6. Ensure that relationships between partners are based on trust and mutual respect, valuing what each brings to the partnership and supported by leadership that enables rather than controls.
7. Identify joint objectives whilst recognising the distinct but complementary roles and operational autonomy of partners.
8. Commit to the accurate and timely dissemination and presentation of information in appropriate formats. This must include ways in which the results of partnership activities are fed back to the wider community and agencies affected.
9. Recognise that partnership working needs to be properly resourced and supported with administrative arrangements, joint training and continuing local Compact development to enable it to work.
10. Create a context in which differences of perspective can be aired and discussed freely.

Partnerships Checklist

This checklist guidance aims to promote and develop effective partnership working.

Initiating partnership working

- Key partners are identified and the representative for each partner is offered the support they need in order to participate effectively in partnership activities
- The purposes of the partnership activities are clear, agreed by all representatives and documented.
- Care is taken to identify any other existing partnerships and whether the proposed activity duplicates that of any other partnership
- Measurable objectives for the partnership activities are identified and appropriate methods for achieving these objectives are agreed
- Enough resources and administrative support are allocated for the partnership activities
- Any barriers to involvement are identified and attempts are made to overcome them

Partnership working in practice

- Each representative is given the opportunity to contribute to the agenda for partnership activities
- Fairness, equality and inclusion underpin all aspects of partnership working and activities
- The relationship between partners is based on mutual trust and respect; all representatives can share skills and knowledge and discuss freely any differences of perspective
- Each representative maintains a continual dialogue with those they represent and has the authority to take decisions and actions
- The independence and operational autonomy of partners is recognised and respected
- Partnership activities are supported by leadership that enables rather than controls

Improving partnership working

- If any specific issues are highlighted during the partnership activities, training is discussed as a possibility for all partners and organised if necessary
- Information resulting from partnership working is communicated in good time and conveyed accurately and in an appropriate format
- There is a commitment to continually improving the quality of partnership working by learning from experience, building on good practice and developing a consistent approach across all partners