

GOVERNANCE WORKSHOP – 22 FEBRUARY 2007
RESULTS OF GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Group 1 – Strategic arrangements at the County level

Q1. Should there be an Annual Conference as well as the Wiltshire Assembly meet?

- Need to define the role of the Conference – what will it add to Assembly role?
- Cannot join up partnership working – unrealistic.

Q2. How often should the Assembly meet?

- If networking only, could meet once a year.

Q3. Are we agreed on the LAA Board role being taken on by the Management Group?

- Yes.

Q4. Do we need an Executive Board as well as a Management Group? Or, could these functions be combined?

- Combined! – if needed, officers could turn up early for preparing business (Members may do the same).
- Structure agenda – strategic/performance/operational delivery.

Q5. In light of the White Paper, who should be on the Executive and Management Boards?

- Joint – Leaders and Chief Executives.
- Chair of PCT.
- Chief Constable.
- Learning and Skills Council, etc.
- Representatives from Voluntary Sector.
- Chair of Business Forum/Economic Partnership Forum.
- Need greater clarity on roles of individual representatives, so clear about why they are there. These roles may be different.
- What will be the outcome of meeting decisions?
- Need delegated authority to achieve executive decisions.
- Could function 'Stronger' Executive (including Block lead) to join things up – not separate stronger group.

Q6. How should the Chairs of groups be decided?

- By vote of combined group.
- Query members and officers.

Group Two – Wiltshire Partnerships and client group partnerships

Q1. Are we agreed skills and learning will be covered by the Economic Partnership?

- Yes!

Q2. Is a county-wide Transport Partnership required?

- Yes (first group)
- No (second group)
- More understanding needed to resolve.
- Where would the money/power come from?
- Where will the money be delegated?

Q3. Can Transport be brought within the Economic Partnership or Environment Partnership?

- No – big enough to stand on its own.

Q4. Should there be an overarching Environmental Alliance?

- Too big.
- Too diverse interests.
- No interest in doing this.

Q5. Are we agreed there is no need for a county Housing Partnership in addition to what already exists?

- Yes – use existing group.

Q6. Are we agreed with the proposal to create a county Cultural Partnership?

- Yes.

Q7. Can any of these partnerships be merged? E.g. Culture in the Economic Block.

- No (but LAA guidance 19/02).
- Felt that partnerships would need to be brought together to produce future LAA block, but no merger.

Group 3 – Cross-cutting partnerships and networks (including arrangements for 'Stronger').

Q1. Are we agreed with the proposal to create a Voluntary Sector Forum?

- Consortium – 10 organisers creating districts, so process itself is already there.
- Effective voice.
- More engagement.
- Yes.

Q2. How should the Stronger LAA Block be managed in the new arrangements without a Stronger Partnership?

- Concerns it will get lost. How to feed back in.
- Terms of reference for Stronger – is it feasible for all the responsibilities to be covered in other partnerships and terms of reference.
- Suggestion of a paid officer/Member champion.
- Do feel that should be a separate partnership.

- Will it be given equal importance if merged with other partnerships?
- Possibly beef up O&S and scrutinise if cross-cutting issues are being covered.
- In proposed slide 12, so many different partnerships looking at aspects. How do you tie it all in.
- Feel that there is strength in LAA Block.
- Possible Executive Group looking at this? But, again, how to put it all together?
- Feel most important block because it does link to all other partnerships.
- Members attend all other blocks and feed back to each other.
- Would lose something, but it is so big and diverse currently.
- Wiltshire Management Group – monitoring stronger block issues or CAPs Forum as monitoring role and informing the block.

Q3. How do we ensure that cross-cutting issues in the structure are dealt with effectively and that we do not get stalled in silos?

- Performance management framework. How is this to be set up?
- How to ensure accuracy of reporting Membership of cross-cutting areas to link.

Q4. How does the Rural Executive fit into the picture?

- Scrutiny, rural proofing, monitoring and supporting.
- Needs assessment, risk management.
- Critical friend.

Q5. How does the Social Inclusion Partnership fit into the picture?

- Scrutiny, Social Proofing, monitoring.
- Needs assessment, risk management.
- Could social inclusion Partnership and Rural Executive be merged into one partnership?

Group 4 – Arrangements at a District level

Q1. Is the proposed role for District LSPs agreed?

- Need confidence in the ability of County Strategy - would be able to encourage lower level plans or separate community strategies – unclear in role.
- General agreement in role, but ‘devils in the detail’ – needs fleshing out.
- Local LSP will need to determine some of their own relationships and work e.g. Sports, community safety, etc.
- What changes from current role? Seems to encapsulate what we do now.
- Nothing about resources – “clarity over what for” for delivery.
- Membership needs to reflect role.
- Bid question of ensuring Boards are fit for purpose.
- Mandate in which both come to the table.
- Identifying opportunities for local joint working.
- Still seen as hierarchical in roles.

- Directing and delivering services – some doubts on this.
- Do less well.
- Should there be a framework for working at CAP level?

Q2. The report does not propose to be prescriptive about district arrangements – is this approach agreed?

- Balance between recognised supported roles, LSPs working in the same way with shared key tasks, but some freedom, so that is not too “top down”.
- Pick up strategy guidance – no duplication.

Q3. What issues can be uniquely addressed at a District LSP level?

- Neighbourhood working
- Specific variants that need appropriate response within agreed strategic framework – addressing local nuances.
- Closer links with LDF – therefore, more direction for spatial strategy, regeneration, etc.

What level can this/should this be done?

Q4. Is the role in relation to monitoring delivery of the housing agenda agreed?

- Yes
 - better communicated at County level – higher profile
 - areas are different and need to be addressed individually.

Q5. Is the role in relation to influencing the Transport agenda agreed?

- Difficult, as transport is a county function.
- Access to services is more important.
 - Need stronger links – take more account of local issues
 - Room for county-wide Transport Group
 - Recognition that transport is cross-cutting and not sure that segregating it would be helpful.

Group 5 – Arrangements at a Community level

Q1. How does the Wiltshire Forum of Community Partnerships fit into the picture?

- Sharing community plans.
- Share best practice – cut down on duplication and save money that way.
- Fits as a networking opportunity – good practice and difficulties.
- Links with subgroups, i.e. Transport, in different areas.
- Capacity building.
- Training – development.
- Planning into LDF.

Q2. What issues can be uniquely addressed at a Community Partnership level?

- Those local issues that affect locally.

- Resources are critical.
- Taking over local assets.
- Where there is no other body to take a lead.

Q3. Are Community Partnerships well places to take an overview of all issues in their geographic area? Are they able to influence other partnerships to take these issues into account?

- a) Yes, is that their aim?
- Salisbury? South Wilts? Voice to Choice.
 - Differing structures across the county
- b) Yes - Empower through training.

Q4. Can Community Partnerships effectively deliver community and neighbourhood engagement?

- Yes – they are uniquely placed to bring together agencies who have not come together in a forum before.
- But – they need resources!

Group 6 – Process issues

Q1. What role should Overview & Scrutiny play? Which option is preferred – county, district or LSP, or a combination?

Create a new partnership-wide overview and scrutiny with clear legitimacy for what is being delivered by the partnerships.

Q2. Where should decisions be taken in partnerships - by referring back or by delegating authority? Which model is appropriate for Wiltshire?

- Yes – agree to delegation.
- Pooled funding and partner contributions will need to be treated differently.
- Delegation should be given to the appropriate vehicle or partnership.

Q3. What are people's views on the resources currently available to support partnerships?

- The quality of a partnership is dependent on the level and quality of support that it is given.
- Partnerships are not really organic – they need to be much more organised.
- Partner organisations must commit resources – money, time and people in order for partnerships to succeed.
- Recognising that this cannot all be done on top off the day job – it is a day job.
- A lack of resources is a real risk to delivery in the voluntary sector. There may not be the resources to do this. The centre may need to fund to achieve the outcome.

Q4. What feedback is there from partnerships about the proposed standard term of reference? What can partnerships agree to in relation to financial oversight?

- Concerns re. Financial responsibility.
- Concerns of terminology of “poor performance”.
- Government expectations about terms of reference may not fit with local circumstances.

Q5. What ideas do people have about improving linkages, relationships and communication between the partnerships on the chart through e.g. Membership, communication channels, etc?

- Huge question – move around partnership.
- Wiltshire Management Group link to Stronger group.
- What about the citizens of Wiltshire? How will this work for the public?

Q6. How do we ensure the right people attend the right meetings?

- Timely, not too many people.
- Action towards agreed outcomes – no taking shop.
- Be clear about the roles of the meeting – what level.
- Networking is key – doing business outside the meeting.
- Making sure those present have the delegated authority to take the decisions to move forward, commit their organisation to a course of action or resource.