

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Audit Committee

15th January 2010

Report of the: Strategic Director (Resources)

Title: Partnerships - Specific Governance Arrangements

Ward: Citywide

Officer presenting report: Richard Powell, Chief Internal Auditor

Contact telephone number: 0117 92 22448

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee reviews the partnership assurance checklists for the Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board and the Prosperous & Ambitious Partnership Board, and comments accordingly on the strength of the resultant assurance on their governance arrangements.

Summary

The report provides brief information about the governance arrangements for two of the Bristol Partnership's Partnership Boards.

Policy

1. The Council's Corporate Plan states: 'Working in Partnership: Our City's priorities cannot be delivered by the council alone... major issues need to be tackled in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders'.

Consultation

2. None necessary.

Background

3. Working in partnership is important to local authorities, to maximise the effectiveness with which resources are used to achieve outcomes. The government's expectation is that local authorities will increasingly act as community leaders, taking a leading role in identifying and articulating the needs of communities and then having oversight of the

planning and alignment of resources to achieve more effective and efficient commissioning and better outcomes.

4. This is reflected in recent statutory guidance on the role of local authorities in Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP). It is also a major element of the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA), to replace the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) framework.
5. The CAA organisational assessment builds on the current Use of Resources assessment, and the assessment framework includes a number of key lines of enquiry that explicitly refer to partnership working e.g. whether the organisation produces relevant and reliable data and works with partners to ensure the quality of partnership data; applies the principles and values of good governance to its partnership working; has effective risk management which covers partnership working; works with partners and community groups to maximise the use of its assets for the benefit of the local community.

Partnership checklist

6. In view of past experience, government guidance and best practice elsewhere, the Strategic Leadership Team has adopted a partnership assurance checklist to be used by the Council lead director for each partnership in providing assurance to the Council about partnership governance. Further advice, particularly in relation to risk management, is provided on the Council's intranet. In the first instance, this checklist is being used for the Bristol Partnership (and Partnership Boards).

Current Situation

7. At the Committee's September 2008 meeting an overall report on partnerships was considered and it was agreed that at future meetings, Council lead directors for the Bristol Partnership and the Partnership Boards would attend and explain how the performance and delivery, governance and finance issues are being managed for these partnerships.
8. The completed partnership assurance checklists for the Prosperous & Ambitious and Health & Wellbeing Partnerships are submitted for the Committee's consideration. A senior lead officer from each of the partnerships will be available to answer Member's questions.

Legal and Resources Implications

Legal - none sought

Resources - none arising directly from this report.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Health & Wellbeing Partnership Assurance Checklist

Appendix B - Prosperous & Ambitious Partnership Assurance Checklist

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Background Papers:

Audit Commission Consultation Paper: Comprehensive Area Assessments
Statutory Guidance: Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities

Partnership Board records.

APPENDIX A

PARTNERSHIP CHECKLIST

NAME OF PARTNERSHIP Health and Wellbeing

Requirement	Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date	
PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY					
Strategy					
1	Does the partnership have clear goals and a clear strategy, based on a credible evidence base?	HWPB adopted its original partnership agreement in January 09. It is currently discussing amending its terms of reference to include a strategic commissioning role.	New terms of reference to be developed and agreed.	Cathy Morgan/Hugh Annett	January 2010
2	Do these strategy/goals and objectives focus on achieving better outcomes for local people?	Yes - the purpose is to ensure that commissioning strategies for adult care and public health are fit for purpose and have been subject to appropriate consultation.	Discussion and agreement by key partners.	Cathy Morgan/Hugh Annett	January 2010
3	When was the strategy last reviewed?	Currently underway.	Complete review.	Cathy Morgan/Hugh Annett	January 2010
4	How were the community and other stakeholders engaged in the review?	The Board has representation from partner organisations, including public sector agencies, equalities partnership, primary care, voluntary and community sector and local	Complete review.	Cathy Morgan/Hugh Annett	January 2010

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
		health centres.			
5	Do the partnership objectives contribute to the Council's priorities?	Yes - promoting health and wellbeing is a key objective for both the council and Bristol Partnership.	To ensure that the terms of reference and objectives of the revised Board deliver the Council and Partnership's strategic objectives.	Cathy Morgan/Hugh Annett	January 2010
6	Is there evidence that participation in the partnership provides effective outcomes and represents VFM for the council?	The work of the HWPB has not been evaluated for cost effectiveness but is in line with Council ambitions for partnership working.	None - the Council is only one partner in the partnership. The Council either does not fund or is only a part funder of most of the strategies and projects which the HWPB is responsible for.	Cathy Morgan/Hugh Annett	January 2010
7	Is there an exit strategy in place?	No. However, the partnership has agreed to annual review of its work, membership and chairing arrangements.	Annual review.	Hugh Annett	January 2010
Performance Management					
1	Are there action plans in place with SMART targets to deliver the strategy?	HWPB is responsible for performance managing LAA targets, all of which are signed off and agreed with Government Office.	None	Hugh Annett	January 2010
2	Are there performance monitoring and management	HWPB has a Performance Management Sub Group which	The Performance Management Sub Group's	Hugh Annett	January 2010

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
	systems in place, that can identify poor performance and allow timely remedial action to be taken?	is responsible for LAA targets.	role is being reviewed to see whether it can take on a broader remit than LAA.		
3	Has the partnership benchmarked performance against the performance of others, or independent measures of good practice?	The Core Cities Health Improvement Collaborative has been set up to allow core cities local authorities and PCTs to compare and share practice.	Continue contribution to Core Cities initiative.	Hugh Annett	ongoing
Capacity					
1	When did the partnership last consider whether it has access to the skills, knowledge and capacity to achieve its goals?	This is being considered as part of the current proposals for an expanded role in commissioning.	Additional members may need to be invited to join HWPB.	Cathy Morgan/Hugh Annett	January 2010
GOVERNANCE & FINANCE					
Formal Status					
1	Was a Business Case completed and approved prior to involvement in the partnership?	No.			
2	Are the Partnership details correct and up to date on the Partnership Register?	Yes but these may change as a result of new developments.	To be amended if necessary.	Hugh Annett	January 2010
3	Is the legal status of the partnership clear?	Yes but this is being reexamined as a result of current proposals.	Confirm new proposals have no implications for legal status.	Cathy Morgan/Hugh Annett	January 2010

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
4	Is there a signed Partnership Agreement, Constitution, Memorandum of Understanding or some other form of governance document?	Yes.	This may need to be revised as a result of proposed changes.	Hugh Annett	January 2010
5	Does this clearly define the roles and responsibilities, relationships, accountability, and decision making processes of the partnership and of the partners?	Yes.	None unless required.	Hugh Annett	January 2010
6	When was it last reviewed?	Currently underway.		Hugh Annett	January 2010
7	Does it define arrangements for meetings?	Yes.			
8	What are the arrangements for variations and amendments to the Agreement?	It was agreed that the partnership would review its arrangements during its first year of operation.	Currently underway.	Hugh Annett	January 2010
9	Is the Partnership Board responsible for good governance arrangements, delivery of outcomes and reporting of matters to all interested stakeholders and partners?	Yes.			
10	Are the Partnership Board responsible for ensuring	HWPB has bimonthly meetings. Performance information is	Any necessary revisions will be made as part of the	Hugh Annett	January 2010

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
	accountability through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic meetings. • Regular and accurately published performance information. • Annual accounts and reports. • Clear procedures for declarations of interest. • Service level agreements with key funders and agencies. • The public availability of appropriate documentation. 	produced quarterly. There are no annual accounts and reports as HWPB has no budget. There are no procedures for declaration of interest. There are no service level agreements. Information about HWPB will be published on the Bristol Partnership once this is up and running.	current review.		
11	Are voting rights clear, specifically where a partner is absent at a board meeting?	There are no voting rights.			
Auditing and Scrutiny Arrangements					
1	Are internal auditing arrangements for the partnership clear?	The Chair of HWPB reports to the Health and Care Scrutiny Commission twice a year.			
2	Is there an internal audit plan in place?	No.			
3	Are Scrutiny arrangements for	Yes.			

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
	the partnership clear?				
4	Does the partnership have any external review or monitoring mechanisms?	Not at present.			
Finance and Resources					
1	Does the Partnership have its own bank account?	No.			
2	Is there a clear process for approving the budget?	There is no budget.			
3	Is there clear accountability for spending/managing partnership funds, including pooled budgets?	N/A			
4	Is the spending within budget?	N/A			
5	Are there clear arrangements in place for financial administration, procurement and asset management?	N/A			
Risk Assessment and Management					
1	Is there a risk register in place for the partnership? Is it reviewed and updated regularly?	In development.	Due to go to Audit Committee in January 2010.	Hugh Annett	January 2010
2	Are risks explicitly considered in setting priorities, policy making,				

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
	financial planning and performance management?				
3	Are business continuity plans in place?	N/A			
4	Are the risks associated with participation in the partnership also considered in the Council's risk management arrangements?				
Programme and Project Management					
1	Are defined project and programme management standards in place, to guide and manage all partnership programmes and projects?	HWPB has a rolling programme for all partnership strategy groups to report their progress annually.	None		
Conduct and Behaviour					
1	Is there a Code of Conduct in place and operational for Board Members and Staff (even where not employed by BCC), covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● declarations of interest ● gifts and hospitality 	N/A			
2	Are declarations of interest regularly updated, especially those in posts at higher risk of conflict, such as procurement?	N/A			

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
3	Are there clear counter fraud and corruption arrangements in place for the partnership? Are these arrangements made clear to those involved in the Partnership?	N/A			
Staffing (BCC and non BCC employees)					
1	Are appropriate HR processes and procedures in place for all Partnership Staff ?	There are no partnership staff.			
2	Are Confidentiality agreements in place for all staff?	N/A			
Training & Development					
1	Is there a development plan for (a) staff, and (b) board/management committee members, to include key skills and competency development?	N/A			
2	Have all board members received training on roles and responsibilities?	No.	This is being discussed as part of the new proposals.	Hugh Annett	January 2010
Communication					
1	Is there a communication strategy/plan in place?	No - awaiting communication strategy for Bristol Partnership.	Bristol Partnership to advise.	Director of Bristol	January 2010

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
				Partnership	
2	Is information provided by/shared by the partnership in a timely manner?	Yes. There are strong working arrangements between partners.			
3	Are there effective procedures for resolving disputes , which are followed?	N/A			
Information & Data Sharing					
1	Is there a clear information/data sharing protocol in place?	The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is a statutory obligation on the Director of Public Health, Director of Children and Young People's Services and Director of Adult Care. HWPB, along with partner agencies, uses the JSNA to inform its priorities and work. The JSNA is published and regularly updated.	Update, publication and dissemination of new information.	Hugh Annett	ongoing
Conclusion on Partnerships 'Fitness for Purpose'					
1	Do the partnerships aims still contribute to the Council's objectives?	Yes	Further work will be undertaken to ensure the new Board (if agreed) delivers the objectives of the Council and City Strategy.	Hugh Annett	January 2010
2	Is the partnership still delivering	N/A			

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
	value for money?				
3	Is the partnership achieving its outputs as expected on commencing the partnership (ie. in the Business Case)?	Yes but now under review.	Complete review.	Hugh Annett	January 2010

Checklist completed by . Liz McDougall, Health Policy Coordinator..

Date.....3 November 2009..

Role in Partnership.....Support Officer to HWPB.....

PARTNERSHIP CHECKLIST

Appendix B

NAME OF PARTNERSHIP Bristol Partnershi p - Prosperous & Ambitious Board

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY					
Strategy					
1	Does the partnership have clear goals and a clear strategy, based on a credible evidence base?	Yes - terms of reference refreshed December 2009			
2	Do these strategy/goals and objectives focus on achieving better outcomes for local people?	Yes, explicitly relating to improving individual and collective prosperity and quality of life			
3	When was the strategy last reviewed?	December 2009			
4	How were the community and other stakeholders engaged in the review?	P&A Board includes representatives of a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, all of whom had the opportunity to contribute to the refresh.			
5	Do the partnership objectives contribute to the Council's priorities?	Direct fit with Sustainable Community Strategy - 20:20 Plan			
6	Is there evidence that participation in the partnership provides effective outcomes and represents VFM for the council?	Hard to prove VFM; Board is intended to lead to better outcomes through joint working between agencies; there is evidence of this happening through operational sub-			

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
		groups of Board.			
7	Is there an exit strategy in place?	No - Bristol Partnership is a statutory body			
Performance Management					
1	Are there action plans in place with SMART targets to deliver the strategy?	The Board is responsible for a number of LAA targets	Further work required to achieve correct balance between ownership of targets and inappropriate detail at meetings	KD	Mar 10
2	Are there performance monitoring and management systems in place, that can identify poor performance and allow timely remedial action to be taken?	Yes, through the Bristol Partnership performance management arrangements			
3	Has the partnership benchmarked performance against the performance of others, or independent measures of good practice?	The BCC officers responsible for the targets benchmark against similar authorities			
Capacity					
1	When did the partnership last consider whether it has access to the skills, knowledge and capacity to achieve its goals?	As part of refresh of terms of reference in December 2009; this is recognised as a risk on the Board's risk register, as the span of interest of the Board is so wide.			
GOVERNANCE & FINANCE					

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
Formal Status					
1	Was a Business Case completed and approved prior to involvement in the partnership?	Board set up as part of the redesign of Bristol Partnership in 2008/09			
2	Are the Partnership details correct and up to date on the Partnership Register?	Don't know	Check details are correct	KD	Jan 10
3	Is the legal status of the partnership clear?	Yes as part of Bristol Partnership			
4	Is there a signed Partnership Agreement, Constitution, Memorandum of Understanding or some other form of governance document?	Presumably covered by Bristol Partnership	Check status	KD	Jan 10
5	Does this clearly define the roles and responsibilities, relationships, accountability, and decision making processes of the partnership and of the partners?	As above			
6	When was it last reviewed?	2009			
7	Does it define arrangements for meetings?	Terms of reference do			
8	What are the arrangements for variations and amendments to the Agreement?	Would need agreement through Bristol Partnership Executive Board			

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
9	Is the Partnership Board responsible for good governance arrangements, delivery of outcomes and reporting of matters to all interested stakeholders and partners?	Yes, reporting upwards to Executive Board			
10	Are the Partnership Board responsible for ensuring accountability through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic meetings. • Regular and accurately published performance information. • Annual accounts and reports. • Clear procedures for declarations of interest. • Service level agreements with key funders and agencies. • The public availability of appropriate documentation. 	Largely not relevant, as the Board is not a delivery body and does not have any budgets allocated to it.			
11	Are voting rights clear, specifically where a partner is absent at a board meeting?	Covered by Bristol Partnership governance; members of Board may not be aware	Clarify and ensure all members are aware	KD	Jan 10
Auditing and Scrutiny Arrangements					
1	Are internal auditing arrangements for the partnership clear?	As part of Bristol Partnership			

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
2	Is there an internal audit plan in place?	Not aware of one			
3	Are Scrutiny arrangements for the partnership clear?	Reports to relevant Scrutiny commissions as determined by their work programmes			
4	Does the partnership have any external review or monitoring mechanisms?	CAA process			
Finance and Resources					
1	Does the Partnership have its own bank account?	No			
2	Is there a clear process for approving the budget?	N/A			
3	Is there clear accountability for spending/managing partnership funds, including pooled budgets?	N/A			
4	Is the spending within budget?	N/A			
5	Are there clear arrangements in place for financial administration, procurement and asset management?	N/A			
Risk Assessment and Management					
1	Is there a risk register in place for the partnership? Is it reviewed and	Yes - agreed by Board Dec 09			

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
	updated regularly?				
2	Are risks explicitly considered in setting priorities, policy making, financial planning and performance management?	Risk register only recently completed so has not yet occurred			
3	Are business continuity plans in place?	N/A - not a delivery body			
4	Are the risks associated with participation in the partnership also considered in the Council's risk management arrangements?	Yes as part of Bristol Partnership			
Programme and Project Management					
1	Are defined project and programme management standards in place, to guide and manage all partnership programmes and projects?	N/A			
Conduct and Behaviour					
1	Is there a Code of Conduct in place and operational for Board Members and Staff (even where not employed by BCC), covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● declarations of interest ● gifts and hospitality 	Presumably as part of Bristol Partnership for Board members; no staff employed	Check status and ensure all Board members are aware	KD	Jan 10
2	Are declarations of interest regularly updated, especially those in posts at	Not an issue so far			

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
	higher risk of conflict, such as procurement?				
3	Are there clear counter fraud and corruption arrangements in place for the partnership? Are these arrangements made clear to those involved in the Partnership?	Presumably as part of Bristol Partnership	Check status and make sure all Board members are aware	KD	Jan 10
Staffing (BCC and non BCC employees)					
1	Are appropriate HR processes and procedures in place for all Partnership Staff ?	N/A - no staff			
2	Are Confidentiality agreements in place for all staff?	N/A			
Training & Development					
1	Is there a development plan for (a) staff, and (b) board/management committee members, to include key skills and competency development?	(a) N/A (b) No			
2	Have all board members received training on roles and responsibilities?	No	Light touch solution needed	KD	Mar 10
Communication					
1	Is there a communication strategy/plan in place?	Yes as part of Bristol Partnership			

Requirement		Current Status	Actions Required	Responsible Officer	Target completion date
2	Is information provided by/shared by the partnership in a timely manner?	Yes when appropriate			
3	Are there effective procedures for resolving disputes , which are followed?	Unlikely to arise as not a delivery body			
Information & Data Sharing					
1	Is there a clear information/data sharing protocol in place?	Presumably as part of Bristol Partnership	Check status and ensure Board members are aware	KD	Jan 10
Conclusion on Partnerships 'Fitness for Purpose'					
1	Do the partnerships aims still contribute to the Council's objectives?	Yes			
2	Is the partnership still delivering value for money?	Evidence of useful outcomes through sub-groups			
3	Is the partnership achieving its outputs as expected on commencing the partnership (ie. in the Business Case)?	Still under regular review - breadth of remit leads to ongoing risk of loss of focus			

Checklist completed by Kate Davenport, Service Director, Economic & Cultural Development

Date 4 Jan 2010

Role in Partnership Support officer to Board

Prosperous & Ambitious Board
Draft Terms of Reference v4



1. Our aims and priorities (draft):

To deliver the Sustainable City Strategy, taking responsibility for the priorities set out below:

Connectivity: Putting in place world-class digital infrastructure and transport, linking people, neighbourhoods and industries.

Sustainability: To ensure that the cities development enhances healthy lifestyles, reduces inequalities, cuts energy use in buildings and transportation, creates low energy jobs, enhances local and ethical goods and services and supports local biodiversity.

We have committed to meet the targets set out in the Climate Change Act. We are therefore currently committed to reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 34% relative to 1990 levels by 2020 (21% relative to 2005) and to develop 5-yearly targets to the year 2050.

Designing an outstanding urban environment: Wherever and whenever possible, we need to make sure newly built or redeveloped areas of the city meet the highest standards of urban design and green technology.

Creativity: To build upon our top-class creative industry that provides the ideas and innovation to be world leaders, in areas such a green technology, urban design and media solutions. This means our schools must promote creative arts and culture as well as maths, languages and sciences and we must make best use of our colleges and Universities

2. Purpose of the board:

To achieve this by-

- a. Advising and commenting on developing policy and initiatives relevant to the objectives of the board
- b. Making connections between policies and developments and recommending synergies
- c. Delivering key delegated activities to ensure implementation of agreed goals
- d. Undertaking and supporting activities that attract inward investment to the city
- e. Providing advice for performance improvement in key areas
- f. Identifying areas for action by statutory agencies/other stakeholders to achieve the objectives

- g. Providing a forum for debate and challenge on key issues relevant to the objectives
- h. Contributing to the monitoring and measurement of achievement of the objectives through the LAA and CAA

3. Key Objectives:

Economic Activity:

- Successful economic activity enabled
- Investment attracted
- The future city usp (unique selling point) strengthened
- A sustainable and internationally competitive economy supported

Shared Prosperity:

- Deprivation reduced
- Worklessness reduced
- Disparity of prosperity and success across the city reduced
- Supporting people into work with skills they need

Accessibility & Connectivity:

- Key public transport and other movement networks enhanced
- Congestion reduced
- Communication network enhanced
-

Sustainable Communities:

- Jobs, homes, shops and other facilities all available locally as necessary
- Demographic growth accommodated without unnecessary urban expansion (in the context of Climate Change and Peak Oil)
- Civic pride and cohesion enhanced
- Failing communities regenerated

Housing Mix & Provision:

- Enough homes built, in the right place, to rent or buy, at affordable prices
- Quality of housing improved

Cultural Identity:

- A dynamic cultural offer consistent with Bristol's place as a leading European city
- Local facilities that contribute to social vibrancy within the city
- Successful 'place' marketing contributing to the success of the city

The Natural Environment:

- Minimised city contribution to climate change
- Improved green space provision
- Less landfill
- Cleaner air and less noise pollution

The Built Environment:

- Better quality new commercial development

Prosperous & Ambitious Board

Draft Terms of Reference v4



- Historic city protected
- Townscape standards improved
- Adaptation to the effects of climate change

3. Membership:

Representatives from the following sectors:

City council	Retail
Business West	Finance / banking
Built environment	Professional sports
Education	Health
Creative	Bristol Partnership team
Media	GOSW
Voluntary sector / social enterprise	RDA
Transport	Job Centre Plus
Environment	Trade Union
Environmental (green)	Homes and communities
Leisure	
Learning and skills	
Accountancy/Legal/Consultancy	

4. Admin:

Meetings will be held 5-7pm monthly for the first 6 months and then every two months.

Papers will be available 5 days before the meeting and minutes one week after the meeting.

5. Review:

These terms of reference will be reviewed annually

July 2009

