

Proposals in response to the recommendations of the Review of Strategic Partnerships

Recommendation 1: The Alliance Board should review and re-state its purpose, priorities, and outcomes, to (1) ensure it fulfils its role in respect of the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and Comprehensive Area Assessment; (2) define one or two major strategic social policy issues which impact on the whole community and in which all partners are involved and (3) act more overtly as the Borough's 'Social Policy Board', a major catalyst for change. It should communicate these priorities and this intent widely across the partners and their respective decision-making bodies.

Proposal

That the role of the Southwark Alliance Board is focused on:-

- Articulating a shared vision and priorities for the borough through producing and reviewing a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and steering the production of the Local Development Framework.
- Exercising a leadership and governing role by developing knowledge and understanding of the needs and aspirations of local communities, recognising patterns of population change and promoting social cohesion and active citizenship.
- Acting as a major catalyst for change by specifying and overseeing the delivery of a small number of specific programmes of strategic, cross-cutting work in support of the high level objectives of the SCS (people, place, services)
- Orchestrating resources for the locality in order to achieve more effective commissioning and ultimately better outcomes (through an executive sub-committee)
- Responding to the demands of area assessment, agreeing, reviewing and monitoring performance of the LAA (through an executive sub-committee)
- Responding to specific requests from government or external agencies to e.g. agree funding bids (through an executive sub-committee)

That the Board specifically ceases to:-

- Ratify strategies and plans that have been debated and agreed by the relevant Thematic Partnership of the Alliance.

Implications

A new obligation will be placed on individual members of the Board to champion agreed workstreams within their own organisations and networks of influence.

An acknowledgement that the thematic partnerships (TPs) exercise both strategic and executive functions, and that a plan or strategy agreed by a TP has been agreed by the Alliance. It will be the responsibility of the relevant TP to ensure that everyone necessary has been involved in developing and agreeing the strategy or plan.

The Board will need to specify a work programme. A proposed outline programme is attached as **Appendix 1**. This includes a workstream around better understanding how people interact with public services, in order to explore opportunities for service redesign that promotes self reliance and reduces demand and dependency (people/services), a workstream around mapping the public sector estate, in order to

explore opportunities for rationalisation and service improvement (place/services), plus a full scale mid-term review and refresh of the SCS from Summer 2010. Further workstreams are likely to emerge from an evaluation of the 13 Total Place pilots, which are due to report in March 2010, and legislation that, if passed, will place a new duty on local authorities to produce an anti-poverty strategy. The proposed work programme will form the basis for discussions at an awayday for the Board planned for early in the new year.

Recommendation 2: The Southwark Alliance should identify funding to oversee a 'total place' analysis of all public expenditure coming into Southwark, with a view to influencing the establishment of joint efficiency projects with partners, identifying how it can influence the re-direction of expenditure into areas consistent with its goals, and using this analysis to develop shared service commissioning between the partners.

Proposal

To defer further specific consideration of this recommendation until the Total Place pilot authorities report in March 2010, in order to benefit from any learning they may have to offer. To note that the two specific workstreams proposed above are very much within the spirit of Total Place.

Implications

None

Recommendation 3: The Alliance should simplify its structure by merging some of the Thematic Partnerships to strengthen the focus on cross-cutting work and outcomes. The most favoured combinations are to merge Employment and Skills with Enterprise, Stronger Communities into the LSP, and Healthy Southwark with Independence and Well-Being. It should agree guidelines with the resultant Thematic Partnerships as to the number of sub-groups within each, with the aim of reducing these.

Proposal

To simplify the structure of the Alliance into the Board plus the following six Thematic Partnerships or Groups:-

- Young Southwark (taking oversight of the Safeguarding Children Board)
- Safer Southwark (as is)
- Southwark Sustainable Environment (as is)
- Housing Strategic Partnership (as is)
- An Adult Health and Well-Being group (covering the current remit of Healthy Southwark and Independence and Wellbeing)
- A Local Economy group (covering the current remit of Enterprise and Employment and Skills)

Implications

The Stronger Communities TP will cease and the Board will assume its role of promoting community engagement, community cohesion and active citizenship.

The Safeguarding Adults Board will report into the Health and Social Care Board, outside the framework of the Alliance.

The relevant existing TPs will need to consider how best to come together within the new Adult Health and Well-Being and Economic groups.

The question of Board membership is addressed below.

Recommendation 4: The Alliance should consider whether to appoint an Executive Member as Chair of each of the smaller number of Thematic Partnerships.

Proposal

Two TPs are already chaired by an Executive Member of the Council and no change is proposed to this:

- Young Southwark – Executive Member for Children
- Southwark Sustainable Environment – Executive Member for Environment

Safer Southwark is currently chaired by the Borough Commander of the Metropolitan Police and no change is proposed to this.

The Housing Strategic Partnership is currently chaired by a member independent of the Council, the Regional Director of Family Mosaic, representing Southwark Housing Associations Group, and no change is proposed to this.

The proposed new Adult Health and Well-Being group includes partnerships currently chaired by the Chief Executive of the PCT and the Executive Member for Health and Social Care. It is proposed that the group is represented on the Board by the Executive Member for Health and Social Care, with the local Health sector also fully represented (see below).

The proposed new Local Economy group includes partnerships currently chaired by the CEO of Better Bankside and the External Relations Manager of Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth JCP. It is proposed that the group is represented on the Board by the External Relations Manager of the JCP, with the private business sector also represented on the Board by a nominee from this group, currently the CEO of Better Bankside (see below).

The proposed membership of the Board is based on the following principles:

- All sectors key to fulfilling the purpose of the Board and delivering its work programme are represented, whilst keeping numbers to an essential minimum.
- All sectors that should be represented at Board level according to statutory and best practice guidance are represented.
- The increased status (in agreeing their own strategies and plans on behalf of the Alliance) and broader remit proposed for the Thematic Partnerships and Groups reduces the need for some organisations to be represented at Board level.
- Board membership is not used as a substitute for more effective engagement by other means with any particular sector or interest group.
- The Council should lead without dominating the Alliance at all levels; in particular, total membership of the Board needs to be appropriately balanced between the Council and other partners.

Implications

The proposed membership is contained in **Appendix 2**. It is proposed that a representative of general practitioners should be added to the membership of the Board, if an appropriate network of GPs is established. It is also proposed that the place for the leader of the opposition of Southwark Council be reviewed following the local elections in 2010.

Recommendation 5: The Board should consider meeting quarterly and how to strengthen informal partnership working between meetings.

Proposal

To move to quarterly meetings of the Board and strengthen informal partnership working between meetings. In particular:

- to hold a Board awayday early in the new year to strengthen relationships and agree how best to enhance informal partnership working, as well as agree a work programme
- for all new workstreams overseen by the Board to be sponsored explicitly by a member of the Board
- for every member of the Board to nominate a deputy, who is kept fully briefed and who is empowered to act and make decisions in that member's absence, both at and between meetings.
- for the proposals relating to programme management below to be implemented.

Implications

Meeting agendas will have to be managed strictly according to the priorities of the Board.

Partners will have to make time and organisational resources available to support the agreed Board work programme.

Programme management will need to be effective and partners responsive to it.

Recommendation 6: The Alliance should consider whether, in the light of Standing Orders, to issue further guidance to partners and the Thematic Partnerships, re-confirming their respective roles and responsibilities with regard to the delivery of agreed outcomes.

Proposal

To clarify the governance arrangements of the Alliance, recognising that the Board will perform a strategic role (and an executive role through its sub-committee) and the TPs similarly perform both strategic and executive roles. The specific accountabilities of the new Thematic Partnerships and Groups to the Board will need to be set out, to include following the strategic direction set by the Board through the SCS and its work programme and delivering against LAA targets.

Implications

Protocols will need to be drawn up.

Recommendation 7: The Alliance should consider establishing a small number of sub-committees below Board level to enable it to simplify its agenda and expedite formal business.

Proposal

To establish an executive sub-committee, chaired by the Leader of the Council. Proposed membership is contained in **Appendix 3**.

Implications

Protocols will need to be drawn up.

Recommendation 8: The Alliance should strengthen the functions of the existing Secretariat, by introducing Programme Management Office (PMO) disciplines of project management, tracking, risk management, and performance management. Consideration should be given to joint funding by all the partners.

Proposal

To introduce programme management disciplines to the management of the business of the Alliance, both for the Board and Thematic Partnerships and Groups, as detailed in **Appendix 4**.

Implications

A skills audit will be required and any gaps identified filled, as part of the organisational review of the Council's Corporate Strategy and Strategic Partnerships Division. Current support arrangements for TPs may also need to be reviewed.

Recommendation 9: The Alliance should develop a communications strategy to re-invigorate the 'narrative of Southwark', strengthen its engagement with, and accountability to, its partners; improve links with Community Councils and develop consultation with them as to their role in the delivery chain; and empower members of the Community to participate more fully in its work.

Proposal

To defer further detailed consideration of this recommendation until the planned awayday for the Board early next year but to note the following principles:

- An inclusive approach to policy and strategy development
- Open and accessible communications
- A positive engagement with the voluntary sector through the representational structures supported by Community Action Southwark
- Make full use of the opportunities afforded by modern technology and the Internet

Implications

None