



Addressing Partnership Effectiveness- An Improvement Plan for Partnership Working in Warwickshire

October 2009

1. Introduction

Warwickshire Together is a partnership of councils, police, health, other public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations who are working together to deliver better services for the people of Warwickshire. All of these partners are represented at the Public Service Board Advisory Forum and it was at such a meeting, 29th June 2009, that all partners considered and approved a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Warwickshire in 2026. The SCS will set out the vision of what Warwickshire will look like in 2026 and what, through partnership working, needs to be done to achieve that Vision.

In agreeing the vision and outcomes for partnership working it was also felt opportune to examine the capacity of the partnership to deliver the SCS. This examination of partnership effectiveness sought to examine strengths and weaknesses and then identify actions which would improve the strength and capacity of the partnership to deliver. This document seeks to encapsulate both that examination and recent experiences and respond through an improvement plan for the forthcoming year. In keeping with Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), this document has been structured along the best practice partnership models as defined by the Audit Commission (i.e aspirational standards for partnerships). This in turn will provide the basis of CAA and will be reviewable annually to ascertain progress and currency.

Context

This document should be seen within the following context:

- Comprehensive Area Assessment
- IDeA Peer review (March 2010)
- Improvement activity funded through the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership
- Local Area Agreement and annual review and refresh processes through Government Office West Midlands

Next Steps

The improvement plan is an organic document that seeks to encapsulate key improvement areas for the Partnership to address. In recognising the maturity of the partnership this plan will wherever possible seek to:

- Capture all improvement areas in a headline fashion
- Ensure that actions to address improvement areas takes into account existing activity already underway
- That in monitoring and implementing the Plan we do not detract from the primary goal of the Partnership: the delivery of better outcomes for local communities in Warwickshire.

2. What currently works well and what should we stop doing?*

What Works Well?	What do we need to stop doing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spirit of partnership is generally very constructive, positive relationships in place, shared commitments to the objectives of the partnership, desire to continue to improve partnership working • Satisfactory progress on developing and bedding down of LAA delivery arrangements • Delivery planning & quality assurance process are examples of good practice as cited by GOWM • Approach to Narrowing the Gaps approved and buy-in on the concept of differential targetting • Overall management controls are generally good and there is comprehensive evidence that both governance and financial arrangements are well documented and embedded into council and partnering arrangements. • There is a strong infrastructure • Robust performance management framework with increased partner access to systems • Use of Evidence Base-particularly localities • Some good examples of local delivery and targetting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading our resources too thinly • Operating in silos • Sending conflicting messages to each other and the Public • Attending numerous meetings that do not make a difference or add value • Be pessimistic and lacking in ambition • Pretending that we hold each other to account • Avoiding the big questions and the big solutions on the grounds of short term expediency • Talk less and do more! • Working in isolation as a County and recognise the importance of the Sub-Region

* As identified by the Public Service Board Advisory Forum (29th June 2009)

3. What we need to do to Improve-An Improvement Plan for Warwickshire

A-Delivering Improved Outcomes

Key Characteristics - The partnership is successfully delivering improved outcomes against its priority areas; Life is improving for local citizens; The area has good levels of community cohesion and empowerment; The partnership has robust performance management arrangements in place; The partnership monitors the progress of delivery against its priorities; Performance against the partnership priorities is easily accessible by local residents; The partnership has mechanisms in place to promptly respond to areas of underperformance.

Ref	Area for Improvement	Action	Timescales
A1.	Delivering Agreed Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Embedding SCS and LAA within mainstream partner activity through incorporation within individual business plans ▪ Alignment of budget, planning and performance management cycles ▪ An agreed approach and commitment to Narrowing the Gaps, differential targeting & resource allocation ▪ Ensuring effective engagement of partners specifically Health in the delivery of agreed partnership objectives 	November 2009
A2.	Performance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce a common Performance Management Framework for strategic partnership working in Warwickshire which is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outcomes and impact focused ○ Uses differential local targets ○ Moves away from remedial action to finding innovative solutions ○ Ensures constructive challenge and ensures accountability ○ Communicates achievements and the difference that partnership working is making 	November 2009

B-Political and Managerial Leadership

Key Characteristics - Councillors have a clear vision for the area; Councillors facilitate dialogue and participation, ensuring local peoples views are heard in the decision making process; There are robust plans in place to support the delivery of the partnerships vision and priorities; Citizens from all parts of the community are encouraged and supported to feed their views into priority setting, decision making, service development and evaluation within and across the areas partnerships; Local priorities focus on what really matters for the local area and are flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances.

Ref	Area for Improvement	Action	Timescales
B1	Elected Member Support and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop a joint training programme for Elected Members across the Area to ensure their effective engagement in partnerships and to promote consistency of knowledge▪ Establish effective mechanisms of communication to ensure that members are able to share experiences and best practice	March 2010
B2	Culture and Trust of partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop a common Partnership Strategy that provides the framework for the culture, conduct and trust necessary for effective partnership working▪ Develop a core programme of staff/member training across organisations which provides a consistent message about partnership working and the roles that the respective organisations play	March 2010

C-Community Engagement and Communication

Robust community engagement arrangements are in place and provide an accurate understanding of the diverse needs and interest of all sections of the community, including those at risk of disadvantage or social exclusion; The partnership has a good understanding of the profile of its communities including those vulnerable and harder to reach groups; Local intelligence is robust enough to provide a solid base for future plans and accurately identify opportunities, risks and threats for the future well-being of the community; The partnership responds to any evidence of equality gaps or unequal outcomes; There are clear plans within the partnership to tackle inequality and disadvantage within the area; Engagement activities have resulted in the needs of citizens being more fully acted on; Local people are kept well informed of key issues regarding their areas, with communication being coordinated between partners; The partnership effectively manages the reputation of the area and local partner organisations

Ref	Area for Improvement	Action	Timescales
C1.	Public Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement, monitor and review the LAA Communications Framework ▪ Develop a shared approach to communications, consultation and customer engagement that reduces duplication, makes effective use of resources and ensures that consistent messages are transmitted to the Public 	Ongoing
C2.	Information sharing across the partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updating of Website to ensure information relevant to the partnership and delivery of improved outcomes is brought together in one place, is accessible and easy to use ▪ Ensure information sharing protocols are signed up to by all partners to implement where it will ensure joined up delivery 	November 2010
C3.	Understanding the profile of our communities and future needs and trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that mechanisms are in place to ensure that the partnership is responsive to local needs through engagement and evidence based planning 	March 2010

D-Governance and Risk Management

The partnership is aware of the risks and opportunities facing the area; Governance arrangements are fit for the purpose of achieving the outcomes for the area; The partnership is able to hold each other to account; Local partners support the Councils joint scrutiny function.

Ref	Area for Improvement	Action	Timescales
D1.	Streamlined governance arrangements that are transparent, fit for purpose and effective	<p>A Governance Review Sub-Group has been tasked with investigating the following areas of improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Functioning of countywide structures (PSB, PSB Advisory Forum, Blocks)▪ Links between the PSB, LSPs, county, district and locality arrangements▪ Joint Scrutiny and Accountability▪ Streamlining the way in which all groups operate	November 2009
D2.	Greater Awareness and Ownership of Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Updating of Risk Register and ownership by PSB▪ Embedding risk within LAA delivery plans	November 2009

E-Financial and Resource Capacity

Partners understand delivery chains for outcomes and align resources and overcome barriers; Partners recognise the extent to which spending in one sector could bring better value for money in another and lead to more effective overall resource use; Partners measure and manage efficiencies and exploit potential efficiency gains from working together; Partners understand the resources available to them and the extent to which they influence spending decisions, including to shift mainstream resources to deliver improved outcomes; Partners have a clear and common understanding of the mainstream public sector spending under their influence.

Ref	Area for Improvement	Action	Timescales
E1.	Use of Resources	<p>An LAA Medium term Financial Strategy is being developed which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Move away from reliance on 'new money' to create a partnership environment where innovative solutions to support the delivery of our priorities are supported with the flexibility to move resources accordingly ▪ Adopt Shared Service solutions are actively pursued across and between partners ▪ Seek to ensure that, where necessary, budgets are pooled where outcomes will be improved and added value will result. ▪ Ensure that effective linkages are made to Sub-Regional initiatives 	March 2010
E2.	Value for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop joint procurement arrangements ▪ Review the current use of accommodation used across the partnership to maximise efficiency and effectiveness 	March 2010

Timelines and Key Milestones


F- Responding to External assessments			
Ref	Area for Improvement	Action	Timescales
F1	CAA Organisational Assessment - Use of Resources 2009	Analysis of common and recurring themes identified across Use of Resources to be undertaken for common improvement activity where appropriate	4 th November – onwards (CAA Coordinating Group)
F2	CAA Organisational Assessment – Managing Performance 2009	Analysis of common and recurring themes identified across CAA Managing Performance (or equivalent) to be undertaken for common improvement activity where appropriate	4 th November – onwards (CAA Coordinating Group)
F3	CAA Area Assessment 2009	<p>The CAA Area Assessment judgment was received by the partnership in October and will be published on the Oneplace website on the 10th December.</p> <p>Appendix 1 highlights those areas that were identified as areas for improvement, but where existing improvement activity is not already underway. Please note that these areas for improvement will be addressed through delivery planning and prioritisation.</p>	

Appendix 1: Summary of CAA Issues and Areas for Improvement

SCS Theme	SCS outcome and key themes identified through CAA	Areas for Improvement (where existing responses are not already underway)
Places	<p>Our environment is clean, green and sustainable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing CO2 emissions - Waste - Flooding Response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health bodies such as hospitals are not tackling CO2 emissions to the extent required - Most organisations do not have accurate information about their CO2 emissions or how this is reducing. - Most organisations in the partnership are struggling to measure and reduce their CO2 emissions from transport. - More work is needed on understanding why emissions from the industrial sector vary across the County is needed.
	<p>Our housing is appropriate and affordable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable Housing - Older Peoples' Housing Needs - Accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller Communities - Demand for new Homes - Empty Homes - Social Housing - Homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The energy efficiency of council homes in Warwickshire does not compare well to other authorities nationally. This means some residents live in properties which are hard to heat and keep warm. This is an area which needs more focus across the County.
	<p>Our places are connected through transport, technology and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transport improvements - Public transport improvements - Cycle routes are improving - Making it easier to get advice - Library usage - Benefits take up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persuading more people to use other forms of transport is needed to reduce congestion and CO2 emissions. - The main area for improvement in Warwickshire's bus services is punctuality. - Community Transport remains an issue in Warwick District. The scheme of providing taxi tokens for older people living in rural areas does not help people with disabilities living in urban areas.
SCS Theme	SCS outcome and key themes identified through CAA	Areas for Improvement (where existing responses are not already underway)

<p>People</p>	<p>We belong to safe and strong communities where people get on together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crime levels are reducing across the County - Fewer people die or are seriously injured on the roads - Domestic abuse is not tolerated - Fire service and preventing fires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Fire and Rescue Improvement Plan has the potential to deliver much greater value for money by driving efficiency savings alongside really improving services – especially prevention work. To achieve this, the Authority will need to talk with its communities so that local people understand the value of its plans and be prepared to take and stick to tough decisions.
	<p>We live healthy, active and independent lives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy population living long lives - Ambulance services - Health inequalities - Obesity levels - Child obesity - Sexual health screening - Deaths from accidents - Teenage pregnancy - End of life care - Young people can get access to mental health and other health services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focused effort will be needed to get men especially, to seek medical advice from the new health centre that has just opened in Camp Hill. - There needs to be more coordinated work to target action where the evidence is proven to reduce deaths. Areas that need to be focused on in the next few months are cancer, heart disease and strokes, diabetes and helping keep older people fit in the winter period. - There is a need for better co-ordination by all partners on tobacco control, alcohol management and help to reduce obesity. - In order to help the right people, GPs need to record Body Mass Index when they see their patients but in Warwickshire this is not being done often enough. - Child obesity is an issue. - Sexual health screening for Chlamydia is very low, but there are some good ideas being implemented which should see an increase in screening. - Falls prevention work is not developed in the north of the County. - People are not always able to die at home (if they choose to) in the north of the County due to lack of community services to look after them. Although it recognises that plans are in place to improve this it will be important for there to be co-operation between hospitals, mental health services, councils and the PCT to achieve this for all.

	<p>We all have the opportunity to enjoy and achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational Attainment - Young people not in education, employment or training - Planning for the future of Warwickshire's schools - Children in foster care - Healthy eating in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While very few primary and secondary schools are judged to be inadequate, only half are judged as good or excellent. This needs to be higher to match standards in similar areas and is an area for further improvement.

SCS Theme	SCS outcome and key themes identified through CAA	Areas for Improvement (where existing responses are not already underway)
Prosperity	<p>Our economy is innovative, competitive and entrepreneurial</p> <p>Our workforce is diverse, trained and highly skilled</p> <p>Our economic well being is continuously improving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring all organisations improve the success and well-being of the people of Warwickshire - Improvement activity response - Sub-regional working - Diversifying Warwickshire's economy - Response to recession - Support to people with their money - Support for business - Regeneration 	<p> - To make a real difference the whole of the public sector needs to ensure it plays its part in making a difference to people's lives. Better outcomes could be achieved in Warwickshire on reducing health inequalities, reducing smoking and obesity levels. Work on tobacco control could be much better co-ordinated. Improving training for people, reducing CO2 emissions, ensuring strong investment in the County to create jobs and using every organisations purchasing power to get good value for money - these are all things that every partner should be thinking about and doing together. A number of recommendations have been made to the Warwickshire Partnership (the main decision making group) to improve the way they ensure that the NHS in particular is included in the decision making process. This will mean that NHS skills are used in developing and implementing plans in for job creation, training young people, supporting older people and procuring supplies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warwickshire's regeneration programme continues to focus on Nuneaton and Bedworth, but despite many millions invested in the area the gap between standards of living in the area and the more prosperous areas is growing.