

Section 4- Effective Partnership Delivery

This section seeks to consider some of the critical success factors in partnerships achieving their goals.

4.1. Planning

4.1.1 **Vision** - All organisations require robust business planning to ensure they can deliver their goals. This starts with having a clear vision and mission which all partners agree to and that this is defined in the partnership agreement. A vision statement should be a clear and motivating message about what your organisation wants to look like in the future. The vision should be realistic yet ambitious and should provide detail as to the timescale for delivery. Values of the organisation can also be stated within the vision although are often listed in a separate document. The values should underpin the delivery and should describe the way a partnership works. Principles such as “equality”, “community involvement”, “sustainability” and “accountability” all identify what is important in how the partnership goes about delivering their objectives.

A mission statement provides a very brief description of what your organisation does and what it seeks to deliver and should clearly connect with the vision.

4.1.2 **Service Planning** – Systemised planning can support delivery by providing consistent methods of identifying the methodology to deliver work. Service plans should be clear as to how they feed into achieving the corporate or community strategy and should include a clear assessment as to current performance, objectives and needs, means of achieving the objectives and the methodology for measuring success. An evaluation of the challenges facing the service should be provided (for example, through using a SWOT analysis or risk assessment).

More detailed guidance on service planning can be found by following this link. <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/973256>. Issues to cover in service planning include:

4.1.3 **Need** – Projects should be planned based on a solid base of evidence to show that what is intended to be delivered is the correct response to a problem. One of the key sources of evidence is direct communication with stakeholders, both end beneficiaries and other organisations working in the same field. Consultation with beneficiaries should ensure a representative sample of the community has been asked about their needs and, where possible, to keep the community engaged in delivering the project. Other

organisations working in the same field should also be consulted to ensure the partnership will be adding value to existing services.

Setting the context in which the project or service will fit is also important. Stating the nature of the problem, how many potential beneficiaries there are, and who else is trying to tackle the problem help explain why there is a need to carry out the work.

4.1.4 Outcomes & Indicators - The high level vision and strategy should be able to be translated into a series of measurable outcomes. Outcomes should describe the difference made to people and communities. Indicators are a series of initiatives that are used to show whether the outcome is being achieved. Both outcomes and indicators should be SMART, that is:

Specific (Objectives should specify what they want to achieve)

Measurable (You should be able to measure whether you are meeting the objectives or not.)

Achievable (Are the objectives you set, achievable and attainable?)

Realistic (Can you realistically achieve the objectives with the resources you have?)

Time (When do you want to achieve the set objectives?)

4.1.5 Actions – Each indicator will require a number of actions in order to be delivered and these should be described in the planning process.

4.1.6 Resources - With Partnerships, there is opportunity to rely on a wider range of resources and planning expertise and all partners should be involved in ensuring optimum use of resources. Service plans should detail, where possible, the likely resource requirement and who will provide this.

4.2 Performance Management

4.2.1 Any service requires robust means of measuring the difference it makes in order to provide accountability for public funds.

4.2.1.1 Monitoring - Integral to any planning process, in particular when considering the objectives, is the methodology for monitoring the delivery of the project. Baseline data needs to be obtained before project delivery commences as this will enable the difference the project makes to be measured. Each indicator should have a robust measurement process and calculation methods should be recorded and stored to ensure results can be replicated by non project staff.

4.2.1.2 Evaluation – In the same way that monitoring systems need to be identified at the beginning, consideration of evaluation should also take place before project delivery starts. Evaluation is usually undertaken at set intervals (for example, at the end of each project year or at the end of a project). The use of external evaluation can be

expensive but is often useful when testing new ways of working and can increase the perception of validity of the results.

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4.3 Equal Opportunities

4.3.1 Equalities with regard to staffing and the Equalities Duty have been covered in Section 3.2.3. However, equalities implications for service delivery should be considered throughout the business planning process. Access needs of different communities needs to be considered when planning means of delivery. For example, ensuring promotional literature is clear, that physical access to the project has been considered and that all reasonable efforts been made to make the project accessible to all have been taken. Equalities issues should also be considered when designing monitoring systems, in particular at recording beneficiary types to ensure access to the services has been open to all it has been designed for.

4.4 Decision Making

4.4.1 Decisions implemented by the Board or Management Team should be followed to ensure the possibility of judging whether or not these decisions have lead to an improvement in service delivery. It is important to establish transparent decision making process which provides accountability to stakeholders and is democratic (for more information, please see <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/NATIONAL-REPORT.asp?CategoryID=&ProdID=1CDA0FEF-E610-463c-B3F3-220F607B1A2C&SectionID=sect24#>)