

Title: Partnership Review

What is your request of the LSP Board?	The LSP Board is asked to: 1. Comment on the revised B&NES partnership model
What do you want from the Theme Delivery Partnerships?	To conduct a review of their terms or reference and governance arrangements to ensure an ongoing relevance and contribution to the aims and objectives of the partnership and delivery of the SCS
Background material	Appendix 1: Draft Proposal “Big Society Partnership” for Bath and North East Somerset

Main report

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to set out a revised partnership model for Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES). The new partnership model is streamlined, yet continues to provide partners with the space to collaborate and to deliver integrated services; saving valuable resources.

Why is change needed

New national and local policy, the abolition of Local Area Agreements (LAA) and a tough economic climate means that our local partnerships needs to adapt. In addition local feedback suggests that our LSP Board is struggling to find a place in partnership decision-making, agendas tend to be dominated by information updates, with the recent exception of the Performance Reward Grant (PRG), and there has been limited engagement with the voluntary sector and communities. In contrast our delivery partnerships have supported good partnership working, driving issue based action on local priorities such as the environment, crime and community safety.

The coalition government places less emphasis than the previous government on formalised local partnership arrangements however collaboration and joint working remain a key part of the local agenda. This legislative environment offers us the flexibility to change and develop a new partnership model that works for B&NES. Through the new model we will seek to demonstrate local leadership, better community engagement, joined up services and customer contact, integrated risk management and the coordination of the successful issue based delivery partnerships.

The Duty to prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is being repealed. The new partnership will still need a shared vision and a public commitment to work in partnership to deliver efficient and joined up services. It is proposed that a new SCS is developed that is more community focused. The new SCS will be consistent with the Council's Corporate Plan and the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The new partnership model

The new partnership model makes a number of changes, these are:

- Deletes the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Board, replacing it with an annual community assembly.

This change reflects feedback on the current Board and seeks to deliver more representative engagement with the community, as well as demonstrate local leadership through an annual community assembly (similar to the Wiltshire model).

The annual community assembly will facilitate active engagement offering a wide variety of people and communities from BME groups and women to rural groups a role in partnership decision-making.

- Creates a “Big Society” Partnership for Bath and North East Somerset

This partnership will be a new departure for B&NES. For the first time, it is proposed that a mechanism be put in place to unlock the potential of the area to deliver community projects outside of traditional public service funding streams and structures. The partnership would bring Council and public services together with other partners who can help to deliver change and support community initiatives. The purpose of the Partnership would be to act as a conduit for the aspirations of local communities to get things done in their area, unblocking “barriers” where possible, brokering solutions (for example by utilising the wide range of employee volunteering that takes place in our area) and attracting external funding.

A more detailed proposal regarding this Partnership is set out in Appendix One

- Introduction of the Health and Wellbeing Board

Following the Health and Social Care Bill the Partnership Board for Health and Wellbeing will change to the Health and Wellbeing Board (shadow until April 13). This new Board will have greater statutory responsibilities and an increased role across the partnership including the NHS. These new responsibilities and the legislative strength of this Board mean that it will not be responsible to an LSP hierarchy, although will become part of the partnership family.

The Health and Wellbeing Board will produce a Health and Wellbeing Strategy; a draft is expected in April 13. The Strategy is a statutory duty.

- Strengthens the Councils coordination and governance function

The partnership will be reliant on the Council to continue to provide a strong coordination and governance role; developing the partnerships shared vision (in partnership with local and statutory agencies), ensuring the join-up across the partnership family and monitoring delivery against the renewed Sustainable Community Strategy.

The LSP Executive will be deleted and replaced by a Public Services Board that will consist of the key local statutory agencies, including health. This Board will meet quarterly and provide leadership, strong partnership coordination, monitor the governance across the partnership family and monitor delivery against the renewed SCS.

Each delivery partnership will have its own governance arrangements. This will be defined by legislation for example the Health and Wellbeing Board or local partnership agreements. Regardless of the governance arrangements each partnership will be

responsible for delivering aspects of the Sustainable Community Strategy. Over the next few months Council officers will be conducting a review of the delivery partnerships terms of reference and governance arrangements; this will help us understand how each partnership will contribute to delivering the SCS.

- Review of the delivery partnerships

Each delivery partnership will be asked to conduct a review of their purpose (terms or reference) and ensure an ongoing relevance and contribution to the aims and objectives of the partnership and delivery of the SCS. A standard Terms of Reference template will be developed for each delivery partnership ensuring consistency of approach across the partnership family.

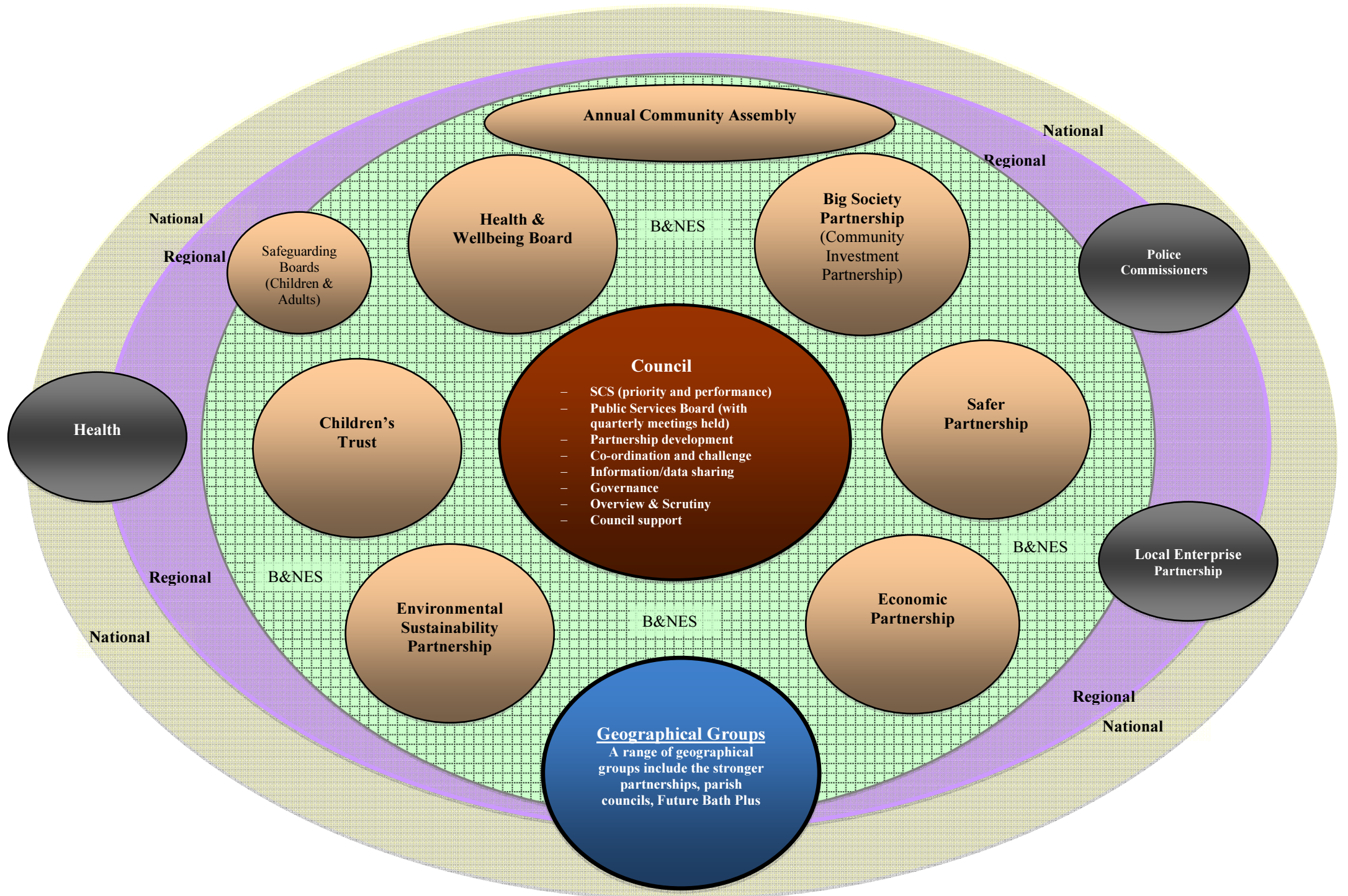
Council Officers will also be seeking to simplify the partnership language making it more accessible and easier to understand externally.

- Local geographical groups

There are a number of local geographical groups from the stronger partnerships to Parish Councils and plans. These groups play a key role in the partnership; ensuring the local voice is heard and acknowledged within the SCS. Over the next few months officers will be conducting a review of the local geographical groups to ensure that there is join-up where appropriate and that each group has appropriate access to partnership discussion and supports decision-making.

Decision-making

Following consultation with LSP Board the new partnership arrangements will go to Cabinet for discussion and decision. We hope to be in a position to implement the new partnership arrangements in April 12.



Draft Proposal “Big Society Partnership” for Bath and North East Somerset

Context

As financial resources tighten, local communities are increasingly being encouraged to address local issues and find solutions. Bath and North East Somerset is fortunate in having active and involved communities and a great number of projects have resulted locally as a result of this. In addition, the Council and public services have provided support for such projects and to new ways of working. Some examples are attached to this report. The Performance Reward Grant Fund is designed to further embed and sustain the capacity to deliver such initiatives.

However, it is recognised that in order for this “Big Society” approach to become fully embedded in Bath and North East Somerset, more work needs to be done to remove “barriers” to local communities taking the local initiative. In addition, the area will need to access some of the emerging investment streams linked to this new way of working.

Aims

The aim of our new Big Society Partnership is proposed to be

to protect and grow the capacity of Bath and North East Somerset and its communities to meet current and future challenges.

We will do this by making the most of the opportunities that are presented to us, particularly:

1) Using the area’s leverage to maximise the impact of community and business investment. This community and business (or “not-public sector) investment would include:

- Broad external funding sources available to Bath and North East Somerset e.g. from Government. Trusts, Big Lottery, Big Society Bank, and businesses (both in and outside of the area). This could be set alongside some public service funding, particularly pump-priming funds.
- In-kind contributions, including volunteer time (both locally and from organisations including local employers) and the support of the community- for example developing new roles that strengthening our communities’ resilience to risks such as flood

2) Using the influence of Council and other public service providers to “unlock” issues and potentially remove barriers to local schemes. These bodies would of course retain their legal and policy accountabilities, but would undertake to seek to remove barriers where possible and appropriate.

In particular it will achieve this by

- acting strategically, with a focus on the broad capacity of our area and communities rather than service delivery and commissioning: a key focus will be on attracting additional resources into our area from external funding streams including the Big Society Bank and other new methods of investment
- sponsoring bold, specific projects that deliver its objectives: this will be a mix of cross-area projects that address key capacity issues and localised projects that test new approaches and help communities tackle specific problems

Method of Operation

Initially, the Partnership will operate through and also co-ordinate the projects arising from the Performance Reward Grant process. Each member organisation of the partnership will bring identified resources to the table. Over time, the intention is that these will be pooled into a Resource Bank which will then be “brokered” to specific projects that meet the Terms of Reference. At minimum the organisation will be expected to bring:

- Volunteering time and access to a developing employee volunteering scheme
- In-kind or other support to assist with managing the process, gaining external funding, etc.

Membership

The following will be invited to form initial membership of the Board

- Independent Chair
- Council
- Other local public services representation
- Quartet Community Foundation
- Local funders and trusts
- Big Lottery
- Business/employee volunteering
- Volunteering support role

Resources

Once established, the working capital for the Partnership will be formed from resources remaining from the Community Empowerment Fund. The recent announcement by the Office for Civil Society of the involvement of Southdown Ward in the Community First programme presents an opportunity to move this forward. This is because it is intended that this programme be match funded by contributions and volunteering time.

Example Case Studies

- The Council's Annual Chairman's Community Awards celebrate the achievements of local people who have made an exceptional contribution to the local community. Bath and North East Somerset's volunteers contribute an estimated five million hours of their time each year- valued at £29 million.
- Somer Community Housing Trust staff and students from both universities were some of those who took part in a Council-backed volunteering scheme in June. Projects include dry-stone walling at Keynsham cemetery, painting children's play areas at Oldfield Park and Widcombe. The activities are part of the council's commitment to promote civic pride and celebrate the contribution which volunteers make to their community
- Following pump-priming funding from the Council and PCT, the Village Agents scheme has now been funded by the Lloyds Foundation to continue its work helping rural residents. These are often older residents who are isolated and not already in contact with the Council or other agencies.
- Community @67, a community resource space in the old Post Office at Queens Road Keynsham, has now opened its doors and is offering a range of activities each week for local residents. Community@67 would not have happened without the hard work of a group of dedicated local volunteers, working closely with the Council and other partners.