

 West Mercia POLICE		POLICY & PROCEDURE
Security Classification	OFFICIAL	
Disclosable under Freedom of Information Act 2000	Yes	

POLICY TITLE	Partnerships
REFERENCE NUMBER	WMP104
Version	1.0

POLICY OWNERSHIP	
DIRECTORATE	CHIEF OFFICERS
BUSINESS AREA	STRATEGY, PLANNING & INSIGHT

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION DATE	October 2020
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	October 2023
RISK RATING	LOW
EQUALITY ANALYSIS	LOW

West Mercia Police welcome comments and suggestions from the public and staff about the contents and implementation of this policy. Please e-mail
contactus@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

1.0 POLICY OUTLINE

West Mercia Police and the Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) encourage partnership working wherever appropriate but we are anxious to see partnerships being managed and reviewed to ensure that they are productive, purposeful and meet the needs of the Force and OPCC requirements.

Partnerships are integral to the development of policing, community safety and service delivery, however they can present challenges and risks. This policy is designed to ensure a consistent governance approach. There is a need to ensure a suitable management of risk involved with partnerships by the adoption of appropriate governance standards, effective monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of partnerships.

2.0 PURPOSE OF POLICY

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the Police to work in partnership with other responsible authorities to reduce crime, disorder and reoffending. The number of partnerships, both locally and nationally, is expanding in response to central government requirements and local initiatives.

It is important to understand that the involvement with partners, however brief can carry legal, procurement, financial, personnel, reputation and service delivery risks and implications for the force, the PCC, and for partners.

This document provides a framework for establishing, managing and evaluating partnership agreements to fully maximise their potential benefit.

3.0 WHAT IS A PARTNERSHIP?

We use the following overarching definition of a partnership:

“An agreement between two or more independent bodies to work collectively to achieve an objective¹.”

Partnership working refers to a broad range of actions and can easily be defined as two or more groups coming together to achieve a common purpose. It is not necessarily a 50/50 division of power or financial responsibility but there is always some degree of spreading control or influence².

Partnerships are often formed to address specific issues and may be short or long term. The key principles of partnership working are, openness, trust and honesty, agreed shared goals and values and regular communication between partners. Partnership working is at the heart of the agenda for improving outcomes and making local services cost effective.

Partnerships typically fall into three main categories:

¹ Audit Commission, Governing Partnerships, bridging the accountability gap. Public sector national report, October 2005.

² Community Change (2010) *Working Together Effectively*.

- Statutory based

These are partnerships that are governed by statute. They include, Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA), Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC), Multi-agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), and Harm Assessment Units (HAU).

- Strategic

These are legally formalised partnerships set up to deliver core policing objectives. They can either be force-wide or local relationships that bring together public, private, business community and voluntary sectors to co-ordinate initiatives and services to support one another so they can work together more effectively. They may include Drug and Alcohol Governance Boards and Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJB) etc., and include all sub groups, tasking and working groups of the main partnership.

- Operational Partnerships/Ad-hoc

These are achieved by working together to target issues identified by local people. This may include partnership working between representatives from the following groups: police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs), Special Constables, local authority members and officers, youth workers, health workers, housing officers, fire officers, volunteers and others as appropriate. They include partnerships between Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) and Community Safety Partners (CSPs) working together to improve the quality of life in our communities.

Partners engaging in joint working arrangements have common responsibilities, namely:

- To act in good faith at all times and in the best interests of the partnership's aims and objectives
- To be willing to take on a role in the broader programme, appropriate to the skills and resources of the contributing organisation
- To be open about any conflicts that might arise
- To encourage joint working and promote the sharing of information, resources and skills
- To keep secure any information received as a result of partnership activities or duties that is of a confidential or commercially sensitive nature

3.1 What is not a partnership?

Using the term 'partnership' incorrectly can create confusion and raise unrealistic expectations.

The following are not partnerships:

- Networks of personal or professional relationships (e.g. membership of a professional body)
- Customer/supplier or contracted services
- Conferences
- A consultative or advisory group or panel with no direct delivery function (e.g. Police Consultation Groups)

4.0 ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS

Before entering into or continuing any partnership the potential benefit of force participation should be assessed against its own aims, objectives and responsibilities.

While the need for each partnership group to add value is recognised, it is important to recognise the differences between each partnership.

Approval for entering into a new strategic partnership should be agreed with the Executive Board and [Appendix 1](#) provides a broad template to follow. Approval should be sought before any commitments or changes to service delivery or operational arrangements are made.

A Statutory based partnership does not require a Partnership Assessment (Appendix 1). Reviewing these partnerships is covered in Section 6.

4.1 Partnership Agreements

The idea of a shared vision of purpose is a vital factor, without it a partnership is unlikely to be in a position to deliver. It is therefore essential that the partnership has agreed clear aims and desired outcomes and that these are achieved and documented.

Partners need to ensure that the governance of their partnership is clear to all concerned. Any financial relationship with a partner must be fully documented and legally binding. A formal agreement will bind together all of the issues of concern including the financial arrangements, governance and exit strategy.

It is important to note that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to the governance of partnerships. Arrangements in place must be appropriate to the particular partnership and proportionate to the risks involved.

4.2 Responsibilities of Managers

To follow this document for all partnerships, ensuring appropriate arrangements for the management of the partnership and any related contracts and service level agreements as necessary.

If appropriate to consult, as early as possible, the Chief Finance Officer and the Treasurer to ensure the development of the appropriate Partnership Assessment, correct treatment of taxation, appropriate financial and operational arrangements for the project, and any other accounting arrangements as necessary.

4.3 Risk Assessment

There is a degree of risk in all partnerships, but it is accepted that risk management is proportionate to the type of partnership and the potential benefits so as not to inhibit possible opportunities that may emerge. The types and levels of risk will vary from partnership to partnership; therefore the governance structure needs to be dynamic in order to accommodate the different levels of partnership with which the force and the Office of the PCC is involved. It is also essential to recognise the different perspectives of risk, as the risk to one organisation may not be a risk to another.

4.4 Exit Strategy

A clear exit strategy needs to be in place for both the planned and unplanned cessation of a partnership arrangement. This should form part of the partnership agreement and be agreed by all partners.

4.5 Information Sharing Arrangements

Information is a valuable asset and consequently needs to be suitably protected, and it is important that responsibility is assigned and appropriate controls are put in place.

All partner agencies must/will comply with information law and related legislation including:

- The Data Protection Act (2018)
- The Computer Misuse Act (1990)
- Freedom of Information Act (2000)
- General Data Protection Regulations (2018)

There are a number of force documents supporting this policy which include,

- Information Assurance Policy
- Information Exchange Guidance
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Protection Impact Assessment procedure
- Off-site Security of Police Information and Equipment Procedure
- Personnel Security Procedure
- Information Classification Procedure

If information sharing is applicable to the partnership, it is recommended that the Knowledge and Information Management teams are consulted for advice and guidance.

5.0 REGISTERING PARTNERSHIPS

The force currently has a high volume of partnerships and these are of many different types and values. Details of current partnership involvement will be held in a partnership register. The purpose of this is to provide:

- A mechanism for reviewing partnership involvement;
- Clarity regarding which partnerships the force is involved in and why, who is leading and how progress is being reported.

Operational/Ad hoc partnerships will be held locally.

The partnership register will be maintained on behalf of the force by the Analysis and Service Improvement department. The relevant partnership leads will be required to update Strategy, Planning & Insight (PSI), in respect of new partnerships (strategic or statutory).

6.0 REVIEWING PARTNERSHIPS

For statutory and strategic partnerships, there should be a partnership review at least annually or where significant change occurs, such as in relation to the partnership's priorities or funding, and amended where agreed and appropriate. This will be led by the identified partnership lead and a checklist at [Appendix 2](#) has been developed to assist with this.

This will help to ensure that they are continuing to deliver on the shared outcomes and value for money for the local community.

Where a partnership meeting is not adding value for money, but there is a statutory requirement to attend, the lead officer should work with the group to revisit the partnership terms of reference, membership, etc., to confirm the partnership is delivering on specified outcomes and that there is added value and fulfilment of statutory responsibilities.

Any reviews will be added to the partnership register to there is a central record.

7.0 CONSULTATION

Key stakeholders have been consulted on the content of this policy including critical friends.

<i>Business Lead Consulted</i>	<i>Date Consulted</i>
Matt Stiff	October 2020

8.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Author/Reviewer	Amendments/Rationale	Approval/Adoption
		Approved at previous JNCC meeting	JNCC 21/03/2019
Oct 2020	SPI	Reviewed – No changes reverted to West Mercia Policy	October 2020

9.0 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

Every policy and procedure will be subject of an Equality Analysis (EA), Health and Safety Assessment (HAS) and Risk Assessment (RA)

APPENDICES BELOW

Appendix 1

Partnership Assessment (new strategic partnership)

Name of Partnership	
Lead Officer/Partner	
Purpose and aims of partnership	
What aims and objectives of the partnership support the force and PCC?	
How is the performance of the partnership monitored, recorded and reported?	
Frequency of meetings	
Information sharing	

• Are the partners required to share information and data? • Is there an Information Sharing Agreement? (signed by all partners)	
List all Partner organisations and their responsibilities:	
Organisation:	
Contact name:	
Communication details: (tel, address, email, etc.)	
Organisation:	
Contact name:	
Communication details: (tel, address, email, etc.)	
Organisation:	
Contact name:	
Communication details: (tel, address, email, etc.)	
Police/OPCC representative:	
Name:	
Collar Number:	
Role:	
Partnership agreed by and when: (Exec Board, AGG)	
Daily Management of Partnership:	
Name:	

Collar Number:	
Role:	
Does the partnership provide adequate insurance coverage for the tasks and activities to be undertaken by the partnership? YES/NO (Details if necessary)	
Governance	
Consider: • Is there a formal agreement in place (signed by all parties) to include amendments, exit strategy and dispute resolution? • Does the partner have a risk register? • Who will be responsible for providing information to a third party (FOI/DP)? • Do the partners have business continuity arrangements in place? • Is there an information sharing agreement signed by all partners? • Is there a dispute resolution protocol signed by all partners? • Is there an <u>exit strategy</u> signed by all partners? • Is the partnership open ended or is it operating within a specific time frame? • Is one of the partners responsible for recruiting staff?	
Budget	
Consider:	

• Which partner is the responsible budget holder? • Whose financial regulations are being followed? • How long are funds being provided? • Who in the force or OPCC is authorised to agree changes in any contributions we make to a partnership? (this maybe around finances, staff, attendance at meetings, etc.)	
Procurement	
Which partner is responsible for purchasing goods and services?	
Insurance	
Does the partnership provide adequate insurance coverage for the tasks undertaken by the partnership?	
Health and Safety	
Have health and safety responsibilities been clearly allocated and documented?	

To be completed by relevant area/department		
Completed by (name, collar no.)	Completed on (date)	Sent to SPI (date)
To be completed by SPI		
Date received	Date put onto register	Date for review

Appendix 2**Partnership Review**

Name of Partnership	
Lead Officer/Partner	
Date Partnership agreed, by and when: (Exec Board, AGG, etc.,)	
Type of Partnership: • Statutory • Strategic • Operational/Ad hoc	
Date Partnership reviewed: • Is the partnership continuing? Yes/No Consider: Is the partnership still delivering on shared outcomes and still value for money? Do you need to revisit the Terms of Reference, membership of meetings, etc.	
Contact name:	
Communication details: (tel, address, email, etc.)	
Date of review:	

To be completed by relevant area/department		
Completed by (name, collar no.)	Completed on (date)	Sent to SPI (date)
To be completed by SPI		
Date received	Date put onto register	Date for review