



AGENDA ITEM: 6

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

16 DECEMBER 2008

MIDDLESBROUGH PARTNERSHIP

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Board with an overview of the Partnership and how it operates in Middlesbrough.

INTRODUCTION

2. Local Strategic Partnerships (known as ‘LSPs’) in England aim to improve the way in which local services are planned and delivered. Whilst an LSP has no formal legal powers or a budget of its own, it does seek to co-ordinate a range of services across a number of organisations, agencies and bodies. It also has a key role to play in respect of some important strategic documents.
3. The purpose of this report is to provide a general overview of how the LSP is structured in Middlesbrough to undertake and deliver those roles.

THE MIDDLESBROUGH PARTNERSHIP

4. The Middlesbrough Partnership brings together a range of organisations from across Middlesbrough. This includes the public and private sectors, residents and the voluntary and community sectors.
5. Whilst it has no legal powers, the Partnership’s key aims are to:
 - work towards achieving the vision as set out in the Middlesbrough Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS);
 - harness collective resources and build on the diverse base of representation, knowledge and expertise and ensure that the SCS is sustainable;
 - develop and monitor the Local Area Agreement;
 - reduce local inequalities and create a more inclusive Middlesbrough; and

- narrow the gap between areas in Middlesbrough and between Middlesbrough and the rest of the Country in relation to key quality of life indicators.
6. Membership of the Partnership is open to any organisation that agrees to support its aims and constitution including, for example, its code of conduct and minimum standards for equality and diversity.

HOW THE PARTNERSHIP DELIVERED IN MIDDLESBROUGH

7. As outlined in Appendix 1, the Partnership consists of the following three elements:

A) Partnership Executive Board

8. The Board provides the management and direction for the Partnership and takes the lead for driving the delivery of the Partnership's targets, aims and objectives. It does this in several ways including:
- the development and performance management of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Partnership's contribution to the Local Area Agreement;
 - assessing the performance and providing direction, when necessary, for its Action Groups (see below);
 - providing an opportunity for Board members to raise and share key issues which are relevant to partners which can lead to subsequent actions being taken; and
 - dealing with constitutional issues relevant to the Partnership.
9. The Board meets in public at the Town Hall every six weeks and consists of the following members:

Organisation	Number of Seats
Chair	1
Vice-Chair	1
Action Group Chairs	6
Private Sector representatives	2
Key Partner Representatives:	
▪ Community Leader (Council)	3
▪ Education (LSC or University)	1
▪ Community Safety (Police)	1
▪ Health (PCT)	1
▪ Housing Provider (Erimus)	1
▪ Voluntary & Community Sector (MCN)	2
Cluster Representatives	2
TOTAL	21

(A representative from Government North East also attends meetings)

10. In order to give Members an indication of the type of issues considered by the Executive Board, a newsheet arising out of the last meeting is attached at Appendix 2.

B) Middlesbrough Partnership Forum

11. The Forum's main role is to provide a mechanism to disseminate information and consult on key cross cutting issues relevant to the partners. Forum meetings therefore provide an opportunity for all partners to work together in discussing and providing feedback on those issues. This can also involve issues being referred on to the Executive Board for further consideration. The Forum meets at least four times a year and involvement is open to all members of the Partnership. In order for the meetings to proceed, at least one third of the membership or 25 members, whichever is the smaller, must be present and include at least one representative from each of the private, public and voluntary and community sectors.
12. Again for Members information, a newsletter arising out of the last Forum meeting is attached at Appendix 3.

C) Action Groups

13. Middlesbrough Partnership has the following seven Action Groups, some of which (as shown below) are required by statute:
 - Stronger Communities Group – key roles include community cohesion, culture, community engagement and involvement and voluntary and community sector issues;
 - Safer Middlesbrough Partnership – It is a statutory body and its key areas of responsibility include community safety including strands relating to crime reduction, alcohol and hate crime;
 - Children's Trust Board – It is a statutory body and is responsible for the five themes of Every Child Matters which includes, Be Healthy, Be Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Well Being;
 - Middlesbrough Learning Partnership – Its role focuses on skills and learning covering the age groups 0-7, 8-13, 14-19 and Adult Learning;
 - Health and Social Care Partnership – public health issues (including physical activity and smoking) and social care are key areas within its remit;
 - Local Economy Action Group – culture, particularly flagship projects, economic regeneration and development, housing and transport are key issues covered; and
 - Environment Action Group – areas covered include air quality, bio-diversity, recycling, sustainability and waste.
14. Underlying these specific roles, each Group also has responsibilities to review and monitor performance against relevant Sustainable Strategy themes and Local Area Agreement priorities for which they are also held to account (see paragraphs 17 – 20 below).
15. Membership is drawn from relevant sectors to ensure that the Groups have the expertise and authority to deliver the Partnership's priorities and any actions of the Executive. The Groups also need to work effectively between themselves to

address cross cutting issues and ensure that any duplication of activity is reduced to a minimum.

16. Due to the nature and range of issues considered by the Action Groups, a number of sub-groups have been established, details of which are shown in Appendix 1.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

17. LSP's also need to have robust procedures in place to demonstrate their effectiveness and accountability to the local community. In Middlesbrough the performance management framework focuses on a series of accountability sessions, the development for which was based on collaboration and investigation. There is also input from the Overview and Scrutiny Board.
18. The framework must also be able to respond to the requirements of the new national performance framework such as Comprehensive Area Assessment. Although the Partnership has had robust performance management processes in place for a number of years, a recent review of the LSP structures did take in to account these new requirements.
19. Each Action Group is held to account twice a year with each meeting focusing on:
 - performance issues relevant to the Action Group and including indicators and targets contained within the SCS and the LAA; and
 - the wider work of the Action Group including any partnership cross-cutting issues.
20. In terms of involvement in the accountability sessions, the Action Group is represented by its chair and lead officer. Other officers involved include the Partnership chair (who also chairs the meeting), a community representative, the relevant Council Executive Member, the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and the Council's Chief Executive (or representative). An officer from Government Office North East also attends.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD'S WORK PROGRAMME

21. It is intended to submit a report to the Partnership Executive Board in January 2009 outlining a proposed work programme for that year. If OSB would find it helpful, that report once approved could also be brought to a future meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

22. The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to note this report and its views are requested on whether it would wish to receive any further reports relating to the Middlesbrough Partnership.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Partnership's Constitution.

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