

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Director of Legal and Governance Services
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Submitted to:	Individual Executive Member Decision-Making: The Mayor
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Date: TBC	17 December 2024
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Title:	Partnership Governance Policy
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Report for:	Decision
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Status:	Public
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Strategic priority:	All
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Key decision:	No
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Why:	Decision does not reach the threshold to be a key decision
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Subject to call in?	Yes
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Why:	Not urgent
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Proposed decision(s)
That the Mayor: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• AGREES the Partnership Governance Policy.

Executive summary
The revised Partnership Governance Policy sets out how the Council will ensure a good governance approach to its strategic partnerships.

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the revised Partnership Governance Policy which is in place to ensure appropriate governance arrangements are in place for the Council’s key strategic partnerships.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That the Mayor:

- **AGREES** the Partnership Governance Policy.

3 Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 The policy will ensure that there is a consistent framework in place that assesses the health of partnerships governance to ensure the council is able to take appropriate action to maximise the effectiveness of its partnerships.

4 Background and relevant information

4.1 The purpose of a policy for Partnership Governance is to ensure that the Council’s partnerships are managed in line with the principles of good governance, to ensure that the Council works effectively with its partners to maximise its ability to achieve the objectives set out in the Council Plan and demonstrate how the Council meets the requirements of the Best Value Duty. An Effective approach to Partnerships and Community Engagement is one of the seven Best Value themes:



4.2 The policy, appended to this report, sets out that the health of all partnerships will be assessed using the CIPFA ‘Delivering Good Governance in Local Government’ guidance as a framework to assess the following broad principles:

- Whether the partnership behaves with integrity, demonstrating a strong commitment

- to ethical values and the rule of law
- How the partnership ensures compliance with the principles of openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimize the achievement of the intended outcomes
- Developing the partnership’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

4.3 It sets out an expectation that where there is a strategic partnership in place, it should have the following elements within its governance where they are applicable:

- A clear statement on aims and purpose, legal status and obligations
- Targets, objectives and outcomes and that they should be accompanied by milestones
- Risks to the effectiveness of the partnership should be recorded and monitored
- Documented decision making and accountability rules that align with the agreed remit of the partnership and the council’s constitution
- Documented meetings schedule and nominated deputies
- Clear and transparent financial and resourcing arrangements for finances and staffing resources
- Dispute resolution procedures and exit strategy
- An annual review of the partnership through the updating of the Partnership governance register which includes a health assessment
- Alignment with the Council’s minimum standards for programme and projects where the Council is the lead partner
- An assessment completed on an annual basis of the health of the partnership.

4.4 Compliance with this policy is reported to Audit Committee on an annual basis.

5. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

5.1 The Council could choose not to have policy framework document in place to set out expected standards for its partnerships, however this would increase the risk that the Council could have partnerships which do not have the necessary arrangements in place to maximise their ability to deliver improved outcomes for the residents of Middlesbrough.

6. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	There are no direct financial implications with respect to the approval of this policy.

Legal	There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report. The report supports compliance with the statutory duties placed upon the Council by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
Risk	<p>The revised policy impacts positively on the following risks within the Strategic Risk Register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the Council’s Corporate Governance arrangements are not fit for purpose and appropriate action is not taken to rectify this at pace, this could result, censure from the Council’s auditors within a public interest report that would damage the Council’s reputation and/or in government formal intervention including removal of powers from officers and members and direction of council spend. • If the Council and its partners do not have the collective capacity to deliver system wide change to key issues such as public health, crime and safeguarding, then this could result in the population’s health, wellbeing and safety declining.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	The proposed policy is not directly relevant to these themes however it will enable the Council to have an appropriate governance structure in place to ensure it complies with relevant legislation on this matter, within a partnership setting.
Climate Change / Environmental	The proposed policy is not directly relevant to these themes however it will enable the Council to have an appropriate governance structure in place to ensure it complies with relevant legislation on this matter, within a partnership setting.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	The proposed policy is not directly relevant to these themes however it will enable the Council to have an appropriate governance structure in place to ensure it complies with relevant legislation on this matter, within a partnership setting.
Data Protection	The proposed policy is not directly relevant to these themes however it will enable the Council to have an appropriate governance structure in place to ensure it complies with relevant legislation on this matter, within a partnership setting.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

6.8 Publication of this policy on the Council’s Open Data site.

Appendices

1	Partnership Governance Policy
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Background papers

Reporting body	Report title	Date
Executive	Delivering the Strategic Plan	20200204
Audit Committee	Partnership Governance annual assurance report	20220929
Audit Committee	Partnership Governance annual assurance report	20231214

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