



Partnership Protocol Policy Statement

Northamptonshire County Council recognises the strength and value of effective partnerships in contributing to the improvement of the well-being of the county's communities. The Council encourages partnership working wherever appropriate.

We believe partnerships are necessary when:

- The delivery of outcomes for our communities can be more effective, and sometimes only, delivered by us working together with other partners or agencies.
- They are required by Government (e.g. Crime and Disorder Partnerships).
- To strengthen our ability to access external funding.
- The Council does not have the capacity, the knowledge or expertise on its own to deliver new services or service improvements.
- Better value would be gained from delivering services in partnership with others.

We believe that partnerships can:

- Give critical mass through strength in negotiation, greater influence and better use of resources.
- Achieve benefits greater than the sum of what could be achieved by the individual partners, by sharing knowledge, finding new ways of working and pooling and aligning resources.
- Achieve economies of scale and lever new resources into the county.
- Enhance local democracy by actively involving customers, communities, businesses and the third sector.

When considering whether to get involved in a partnership, the Council will make a decision having examined the issues set out in the Partnership Protocol checklist.

The Council will only join a partnership if it can resource the investment (of time, assets, knowledge and money) required to do so effectively.

We all appreciate the need to ensure that partnerships we engage in, work to achieve our shared outcomes and our individual organisations outcomes and priorities. In evaluating the Council's contribution to a partnership we will work with partners to ensure that our involvement is appropriate and relevant. Our involvement will vary from being the lead accountable body in a partnership to other partnerships where we only receive papers for information. In making a judgement about the nature of our involvement we will ensure all partners are clear about what we can offer to support the work of that partnership.

Any partnership which the Council is involved in will have appropriate performance management frameworks to ensure that the partnership is always moving forward towards achieving its objectives.

July 2009