

Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1

WNDC and Partnership Working with Northampton Borough Council

Objective of Inquiry:

To establish how well WNDC is performing and how well Northampton Borough council and WNDC are working together in Partnership to deliver the regeneration, planning and growth objectives for the town.

Suggested Areas to Investigate

WNDC Performance

Key Performance Indicators- what are these for WNDC – how are they performing and against what benchmarks/targets?

What performance measures is WNDC judged on by Government/CLG?

How is WNDC performing against these measures?

What sanctions has CLG against non performance?

What are the major constraints holding the WNDC back from achieving its goals? How can these be addressed in a democratically accountable way?

How does NBC help/hinder WNDC achieving its goals?

WNDC Powers

WNDC does have a number of powers that could be used to promote regeneration -- including the ability to trade, acquire land and enter into joint ventures. Have any of these been used? When and how? And if not, why?

Other LDV's have not taken DC powers. Why did the WNDC consider it was important for them to buck this trend rather than focus on the primary task of delivery?

Why do WNDC maintain control over minor applications in Northampton Town Centre?

How has WNDC used its powers in a way that could not have been done by an alternative, more accountable arrangement?

WNDC and NBC Partnership Working

How do WNDC and NBC work together?

How would you characterise the relationship between WNDC and the local councils? What is WNDC doing to improve relationships?

The boundaries of the WNDC area make no sense. How were they determined and what would be a sensible area for a regeneration delivery vehicle to operate within?

What do you see are the main implications of the 'credit crunch' and the current economic slow-down?

Why do WNDC prevent board members who are district/borough councillors sit on planning committees for their area?

Why is Northampton area planning committee not chaired by a councillor- thereby strengthening its democratic legitimacy?

What is WNDC's contribution to key regeneration projects led by NBC- eg Market Square? What is their attendance record at meetings of the Market Sq steering group, Northampton Brownfields Initiative, Housing strategy steering group?

Evidence of Partnership Working

What evidence is there that demonstrates good partnership working?