

Report of	Meeting	Date
Head of Corporate and Policy Services (Introduced by Cllr D Edgerley, Executive Member for Customers, Policy and Performance)	Executive Cabinet	09/03/06

## CHORLEY PARTNERSHIP – A WAY FORWARD

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To facilitate a discussion about the future structure of the Chorley Partnership which makes it “fit for purpose”.

### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. Within the Council’s draft Corporate Strategy 2006-9 the Council has identified an outcome of becoming an excellent community leader. To achieve this we need to demonstrate a renewed commitment to the LSP and work with partners to deliver the Community Strategy aspirations and to make a difference for the Chorley community. The target relating to this outcome is to achieve ‘green status’ in an LSP Self Accreditation by March 2009. The proposals outlined in this report are key to the achievement of this target. We would ask that partners support us in achieving this ambition.
3. The self accreditation will use the Performance Management Model for LSP’s developed by ODPM and the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. The model is made up of three sections:

#### Section 1 Reviewing Delivery

Examining the progress our LSP has made against the targets and priorities set out in our Community Strategy.

#### Section 2 Partnership Working

Reviewing the effectiveness of the LSP and the added value it brings to the delivery of local services.

#### Section 3 Improvement Planning

Using the findings from Sections 1 and 2 to set out the activities and support needed over the coming year to build on and improve the delivery of services. This Improvement Plan will form the basis of discussions at an annual review.

## RISK ISSUES

4. The issues raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy	√	Information	
Reputation	√	Regulatory/Legal	
Financial		Operational	
People		Other	

5. An effective LSP is essential to the delivery of the Community Strategy priority outcomes. The current structure and constitution of the Partnership has not proved to be effective and Partners have questioned whether the LSP 'adds value' to work currently ongoing in the Borough and actually makes a difference.
6. This ineffectiveness perceived or otherwise, is undermining the reputation of the Partnership and is deterring some partners from engaging effectively. This paper seeks to identify proposals to address this.

## BACKGROUND

7. The Chorley Partnership was established in 1996 with the purpose of promoting the economic and social well being of the Borough. The Partnership was established as a company limited by guarantee and was initially supported by KONVER funding.
8. In 2000 the Local Government Act introduced a requirement that a Community Strategy should be prepared for each authority area to promote economic, environmental and social well-being. Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP's), although not required by law, were seen to be the key vehicle for achieving preparation and shared ownership of the Strategy.
9. Clearly in responding to the Local Government Act it made sense for the Chorley Partnership to be our LSP. The Partnership formally became the Borough's LSP in October, 2002.

## CHORLEY PARTNERSHIP – CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

10. As indicated above the Partnership has company status. This was done primarily to allow the Partnership to employ its own staff when it enjoyed KONVER funding.
11. The Partnership currently has four elements to its structure. These four elements together form the LSP. The overall purpose of the LSP is defined as:
- Lead the development of a shared strategy for the Borough of Chorley.
  - Influence individuals and key public, private and voluntary sector organisations to develop their own strategies and realign their services within the framework of the Community Strategy.
  - Provide individuals and organisations with genuine opportunities to influence the strategy.
  - Monitor and report on progress.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

12. The purpose of the Board of Directors is:

- To recommend the draft Community Strategy to the Partnership.
- To approve Action Plans in support of the Strategy.
- To provide leadership to the LSP by ensuring that membership and methods of consultation and engagement are balanced and inclusive.
- To consider regular performance management reports.
- To encourage Partners to properly resource the LSP.

13. The current Board comprises 25 Directors drawn from the following:

Private Sector (3)  
Local Authorities - Chorley Borough Council (2)  
Lancashire County Council (2)  
Lancashire Constabulary (1)  
Voluntary Service Sector (1)  
Community Sector (1)  
Education Sector (3)  
Environment Sector (2)  
Health Sector (1)  
Transport Sector (2)  
Faith Community (1)  
Member of Parliament (1)  
Parish Councils (1)  
Executive Director (1)

## **THE EXECUTIVE**

14. The purpose of the Executive is:

- To prepare and revise the Community Strategy for approval by the Partnership.
- To prepare draft Action Plans for the delivery of the Community Strategy, in consultation with key agencies.
- To provide leadership to the partnership by building relationships between key agencies and by addressing and resolving difficult decisions.
- To design, implement and monitor a performance management system for the LSP.
- To integrate the work of the Thematic Groups.

15. Membership of the Executive is as follows:

- Chair of the Board
- Chorley Borough Council
- Lancashire County Council
- Primary Care Trust
- Lancashire Constabulary
- Runshaw College
- Learning and Skills Council
- Environment Agency

Other agencies are invited to attend dependent on the agenda.

### **THEMATIC/TASK GROUPS**

16. The purpose of the Thematic/Task Groups is:

- to develop multi-agency responses to key priorities within the Community Strategy.

Membership of these Groups is determined on a case by case basis. The Thematic/Task Group structure required to support delivery of the new Community Strategy has not yet been determined.

### **PARTNERSHIP FORUM**

17. The purpose of the Partnership Forum is:

- To act as a forum for the local community to clarify issues for Chorley.
- To receive and endorse the Community Strategy.
- To receive progress reports.

The Membership of the Forum is open to:

- Representatives of the public, business, community and voluntary sectors representing the Borough of Chorley.

Meetings of the Forum will normally be held twice a year.

### **THE CASE FOR CHANGE**

18. There are a number of key drivers in suggesting changes to the current partnership arrangements. Clearly the key driver is that the Partnership needs to be seen to be making a difference and to be adding value to work already being undertaken in the Borough.

### **National Guidance and Initiatives**

19. Nationally there is a growing expectation of the role LSP's can play in bringing together partners to achieve priority outcomes in a local area. Local Area Agreements (LAA's) for example, are an agreement between the Government and a local authority and its partners (through LSP's) to deliver agreed outcomes and targets with a potential reward for delivery.

20. The recent consultation paper “Local Strategic Partnerships – Shaping the Future” reinforces the crucial role that LSP’s are expected to play.

### **New Community Strategy**

21. As a Borough we have invested significant resource in preparing the second Community Strategy. It is important that we now have the necessary structures in place to deliver the aspirations articulated in the strategy.

### **Good Practice**

22. There is now a lot of identified good practice in respect of LSP’s and it is important that we both recognise and learn from this. The current Chorley Partnership needs to be “fit for purpose” if we are to achieve our stated target of achieving “green status” in our LSP self accreditation by March 2009.

### **THE WAY FORWARD – A PROPOSAL**

23. The proposal identified below is derived both from an analysis of good practice and an assessment of the needs of the Partnership in achieving our Community Strategy priority outcomes.

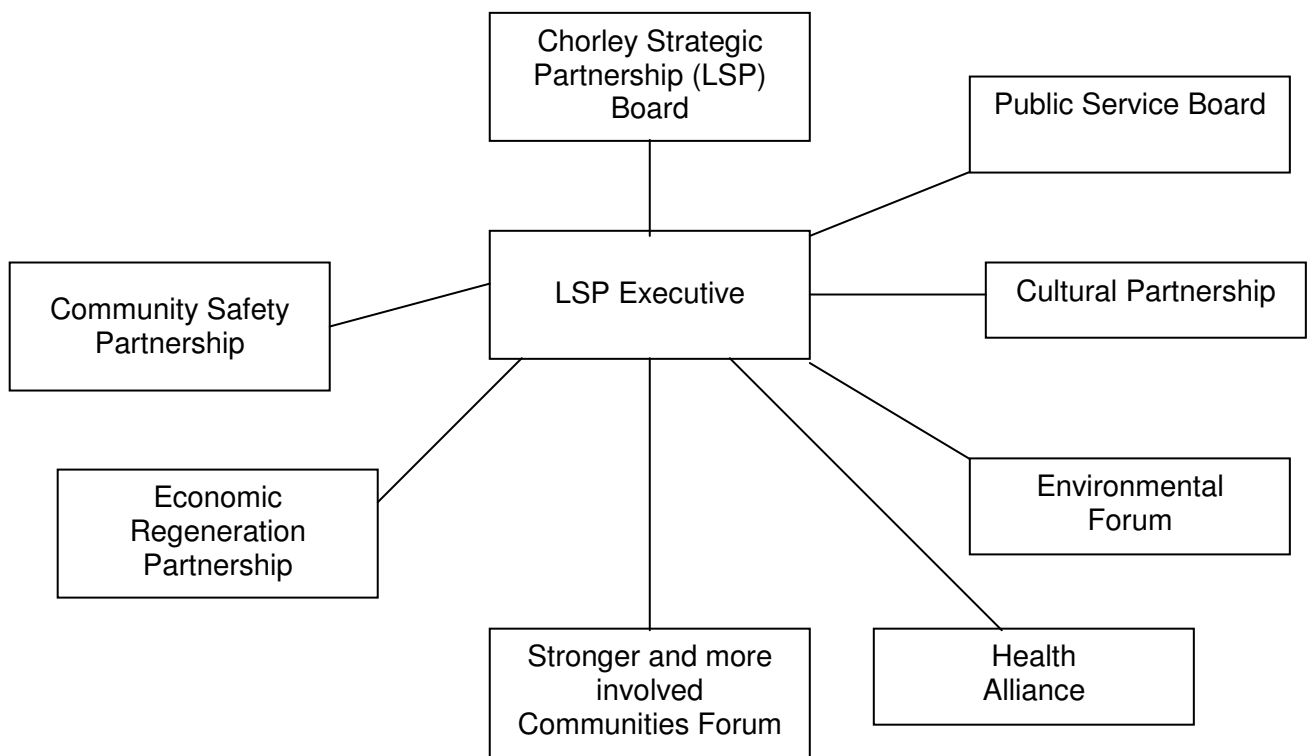
### **Removal of Company Status**

24. As indicated above the Partnership originally obtained company status to allow it to employ its own staff from the KONVER funding that had been received. This funding ran out a considerable time ago and the company status is now proving to be an obstacle to change due to the rules surrounding the operation of a company and its board.
25. It is proposed that the company status be removed. The process of a members’ voluntary liquidation starts with a resolution at a general meeting of members, coupled with a declaration of solvency made by the directors. There appears to be the need to appoint a liquidator, who needs to be a qualified insolvency practitioner, even where the company is solvent. The Company Secretary will provide a detailed timetable if the proposal is accepted.

### **Proposed Structure**

26. Once company status has been removed it is proposed that the LSP would have:
- An overarching Board of around 40 members;
  - A smaller Executive of 20 members;
  - Sub-Groups which focus on delivering the priorities of the Community Strategy; and
  - A Public Service Board comprising the key public sector agencies operating in the Borough.

37. Diagrammatically this can be shown as:



38. Every effort will be made to use an existing body/group/partnership to form the identified sub-groups. This piece of work is on-going and this may necessitate some small changes to the Sub-Group Structure shown above.

### **The LSP Board**

29. The Terms of Reference for the LSP Board would be:

- To provide a strategic overview of the implementation of the Community Strategy.
- To develop effective communication networks to ensure key issues for the Borough are raised and discussed at the LSP.
- To use these networks to consult with a wide range of organisations to ensure wider ownership of the LSP within the Borough.

30. The suggested composition of the Board is:

- 10 Borough/County Councillors
- 10 Business Sector representatives
- 10 Representatives from other public sector organisations
- 15 Representatives from the Faith, Community and Voluntary Sectors.

31. Representatives would either be appointed through their sector's lead organisation or through the invitation of expressions of interest. Each representative would serve on the LSP Board for two years. This would allow for either the appointment of new representatives or the re-appointment of others. The Chairman would be appointed through an election involving all Board members.

32. The LSP Board would be a wide consultative forum of 44 representatives from across the sectors within the Borough. The Board would meet four times a year in venues across the Borough.
33. All members of the LSP would be entitled to input into the agenda for meetings and request items.

### **The LSP Executive**

34. The Terms of Reference for the LSP Executive would be:
  - To drive the delivery of the Community Strategy at operational level ensuring milestones and targets are being met.
  - To co-ordinate the work of the Sub-Groups and ensure effective communications across the LSP and at every level.
  - To develop specific initiatives which will benefit the LSP and aid implementation of the Community Strategy as a whole.
  - To bring together the key decision-makers in the Borough in a way that is visible, meaningful, and accountable to local people and which delivers improved public services.
  - To exercise a leadership and governing role, identifying and articulating the needs and aspirations of local people, reconciling competing interests, steering collective partnership capacity, and harnessing community support for Community Strategy goals.
35. The suggested composition of the Executive is:
  - 4 Borough Council representatives
  - 3 County Council representatives
  - 2 Business Sector representatives
  - 1 GONW representative
  - 5 Representatives from other public sector organisations (eg Police, PCT, Runshaw College)
  - 5 Representatives from the Faith, Community and Voluntary Sectors
36. Appointment of representatives would again be through each sector's lead organisation although their decision would need to be ratified by the LSP Board. Each representative would serve for a period of two years. It is suggested that the Chair would be the Council's Chief Executive.
37. The Executive will be a focussed decision making body with 18 representatives (who are also on the Board) from across the Council, other public services and the business and faith, community and voluntary sectors.
38. Meetings would be held approximately six times a year at venues across the Borough. Each member of the Executive would be entitled to input into the agenda and request items.

## The LSP Sub-Groups

39. The role of the Sub-Groups would be:

- To develop an action plan which will ensure that progress can be demonstrated against Community Strategy targets year on year.
- To consult with a wider range of individuals and organisations to ensure the action plan responds to the needs and wishes of local people.
- To bend policies, practice and structures to enable innovative joint working across organisation boundaries.
- To develop excellent new models of service delivery to progress Community Strategy priorities.

40. Membership of the Sub-Groups will vary dependent on the needs of each group. Task groups can be formed under each Sub-Group to pursue particular tasks or initiatives.

41. It is proposed to have five Sub-Groups working to the following Community Strategy goals:

Sub-Groups	Community Strategy Goal
Community Safety Partnership (existing)	Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and encouraging the feeling of well-being.
Economic Regeneration Partnership (to be developed)	A vibrant, diversified economy.
Stronger and more involved Communities Forum (to be developed)	Cohesive communities and social inclusion.  Involving more people in decision making.  Increase the number of people that are involved in faith, community and voluntary activities.  Identifying social, education and economic inequalities and preparing action plans to bridge these gaps.
Environmental Forum (existing)	Improving the urban and rural environment.
Cultural Forum (to be developed)	Leisure and Recreation.  Heritage and Arts.
Health Alliance (Existing)	Identifying health inequalities and preparing action plans to bridge these gaps.



42. In addition to these Sub-Groups the Executive also needs to be represented on, and effectively engaged in, the sub-regional “footprint” groups for children and young people and older people, co-ordinated by Lancashire County Council.
43. Closer links also need to be established with the County wide LSP, the Lancashire Partnership.
44. The Sub-Groups will meet at least quarterly, although many may meet more frequently. Some also have sub-groups or task groups themselves. Membership will vary although a number of LSP Board representatives will be on Sub-Groups. The majority of members of Sub-Groups will be from key partner organisations that impact or influence services within that Sub-Group area – this may include, for example, service users.
45. Sub-Groups will be required to report to the LSP Executive on both progress and achievements and barriers to progress.

### **PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD**

46. The Public Service Board would provide an opportunity to bring together the key public sector agencies in the Borough to:
  - Oversee public expenditure in the locality, and to align relevant budget streams through joint planning and resource allocation, for the better achievement of shared priorities and more efficient service procurement.
  - To act as an agent for the transformational change needed if new forms of public service delivery are to become embedded across many separate workforces, and if public perceptions of the value and importance of good government at local level are to be highlighted in the long term.

### **THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF MEMBERS ON THE LSP**

47. The LSP will only operate effectively if all partners are fully engaged and understand their role, responsibilities and the contribution they can make. The following guidelines are therefore suggested.

#### **Representing your Organisation: Accountability**

48. All LSP representatives are accountable to their representative organisation or network. They need to be senior enough within their organisation or network to be able to influence both the LSP and their organisation. LSP representatives speak for the organisation, or network that they represent at meetings and similarly need to carry back to their organisations the key messages and decisions of the LSP. This is a key part of the role. Accountability is complex in that:
  - Collectively the LSP is accountable to the wider community for developing and delivering the community strategy.
  - Individual partner organisations are accountable to their own organisations.
  - All partners are accountable to each other for delivering particular aspects of the Community Strategy.
  - Individuals on the LSP are accountable to the people whose interests they represent.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

49. There may be occasions when representatives feel torn between their commitment to the partnership and their responsibilities to their own organisations. This tension may be difficult where national targets and priorities differ from local targets and priorities. All partners need to be aware of these possibilities and be honest about this and inform members as soon as possible.

## **Role of Lead Organisations**

50. As mentioned above, lead organisations are responsible for taking a lead on their sector representation. This should also extend to accountability. Officers from those lead organisations should assist their sector representatives in creating mechanisms to feedback the key messages of the LSP into their own organisations. They should offer briefing sessions on request and ensure their representatives understand their role and how best they can fulfil it. This will help ensure that the LSP becomes established and accepted as the main overarching partnership body in the Borough that can really influence the bending of mainstream resources to meet the objectives of the Community Strategy.

## **Relationships between Organisations**

51. A positive working relationship between organisations on the LSP is fundamental to the delivery of the Community Strategy targets and can be assisted by regular briefing sessions between sectors.

## **COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

52. Currently the Council supports the LSP primarily through officer time. The 2006/07 budget allows for more of a dedicated resource to support the new proposed framework. At this time there are no known other costs associated with this proposal, however, should any arise these will be reported to members.

## **COMMENTS OF HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

53. Human Resources are in support of changing the structure of the LSP in line with best practice.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

54. The Executive are invited to consider the proposals and make an appropriate recommendation to the Board of Directors.

TIM RIGNALL  
HEAD OF CORPORATE AND POLICY SERVICES

There are no background papers to this report.

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