

## **PtP pilot programme on Scrutiny and Accountability**

### **1. Purpose**

To develop and facilitate up to 3 pilots and a linked action learning set to support the scrutiny and accountability of partnerships.

### **2. Context**

Partnerships will have a greater significance and impact on the on the work of councils and across the locality. To date there has been a limited focus on the scrutiny and accountability of partnerships. However through the recent self assessments undertaken by partnerships as part of the PtP programme a number of partnerships identified scrutiny and accountability as an area in need of further support.

The legal basis for the scrutiny of partnerships was introduced as part of the Local Government Act 2000; this will be strengthened through the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill. Scrutiny of the impact and accountability of partnerships will become increasingly important as the new Comprehensive Area Assessments replace Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).

The most effective way of ensuring the accountability of partnerships is through council's overview and scrutiny committees (OSCs). The OSCs are well established in all councils and there use and involvement will ensure democratic accountability of the partnership.

Scrutiny of partnerships can be undertaken by a single local council or through a joint scrutiny approach, the joint approach will have significant advantages in two tier areas and will support the emphasis on joined up two-tier working.

### **3. Why Scrutinise Partnerships?**

The scrutiny of partnerships through council's OSCs will:

- enhance the democratic leadership and legitimacy of partnerships.
- support wider member engagement

- hold the leadership of partnerships to account
- bring partner organisations together
- bring the knowledge of local issues which ward councillors have to the work and delivery of the partnerships
- lead to wider community and user engagement in the role and outputs of the partnerships
- provide effective and constructive challenge which will support the improved performance of partnerships

The scrutiny of partnerships should be about:

- Achieving better **outcomes**. Supporting the partnership to find new ways to tackle problems, improve strategies through wider engagement and ensure the LSP is meeting its goals and targets.
- Achieving better **processes**. Improving how the partnership works, to enhance the partnerships openness and improve councillor engagement with the partnership. Ensuring all stakeholders are represented and the partnership structure is fit for purpose and relates to local democratic structures.

#### **4. Scrutiny and Accountability Pilot and Action Learning Set**

To support partnerships PtP will be facilitating up to three pilots, at least one will focus on a joint scrutiny approach within a two-tier area.

##### **How the pilots will work?**

Expressions of interest will be sought from partnerships who wish to be involved in the pilots. Pilots will be selected on the basis of geographical spread and councils will be asked to provide information on why they are interested in been part of the pilot.

##### **October 2007**

Representatives from partnerships participating in the pilot will be invited to an opening workshop to explain the purpose of the pilot, expectations on the participating partnerships and the processes which the pilot will be taken through

##### **November 2007**

Workshops will be held in each of the pilot areas to engage the key Stakeholders including: partnership Chairs, partnership manager, OSC Chair, OSC manager, key partnership members and the PtP facilitator.

The workshop will agree the theme of the review and begin to scope the terms of reference and the approach which will be taken. Where possible the scoping and project planning will follow the council's established processes and procedures. In the case of a joint review processes and procedures will have to be agreed. Partnerships and OSCs will establish mutual trust and establish the benefit of the scrutiny review.

Encouragement will be given for reviews that are focused on, and can be shown to produce, achievable benefits in respect of improved partnership outcomes or processes.

**December 2007 - January 2008.**

Once the project scope and plan is agreed the review will commence. The PtP facilitator will provide ongoing support to the review

**January- March 2008**

During the pilots the key participants of the three pilots will be brought together on a monthly basis to share experiences and to encourage critical friend peer challenge. This will be supported by the PtP facilitator.

**January – April 2008**

On completion of the review, or at an agreed point in the review process, the partnership and OSC will undertake a facilitated self assessment of the Scrutiny review. The purpose will be to identify:

- The added value of the review
- What was achieved in terms of supporting improved partnership outputs and processes.
- Identify any blockages and barriers whilst undertaking the review. This will be supported through a report and a case study.

**April- May 2008**

Case studies of the three pilots will be shared via the PtP website and through networked learning events. It is anticipated that there will be a high level of interest in the joint review from GOSE and CLG and will be a resource to future guidance in supporting effective partnership working in two tier areas.

**5. Costs**

The costs are indicative only at this stage. The participating pilots will need to fund the work through they credits available to individual LSPs through the PtP programme.

Funds will be utilised as follows:

Activity	Support time	Comments
Set up costs	2 days	Costs shared between pilots
Initial workshop with the pilot groups	3 days	Costs shared between pilots
Workshops in the three pilot areas to plan and scoping the pilots	3 days	
Action Learning sets with pilots - critical friend challenge	3 days	Costs shared between pilots

Ongoing support to the 3 pilots	2.5 days	
Development of case studies and a report for each pilot area	2 days	
<b>Cost per pilot</b>	<b>£6600</b>	Assumes three pilots in region

**Mark Palmer**  
**Head of Improvement and Governance**  
**South East Employers**  
[mark@seemp.co.uk](mailto:mark@seemp.co.uk)

DRAFT