



United Kingdom (England)

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)

Framework and setting

Geographic scale There are currently over 360 Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in England, 86 of which are in areas that currently receive Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF). Some of these partnerships date back to local initiatives in the early 1990s, others have only been set up relatively recently.

Policy framework Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) were introduced as a result of the Local Government Act 2000. In some localities they have made great strides towards improving the local quality of life. LSPs are now established in all areas and much progress has been made in terms of representation, establishing a common vision and moving to genuinely collaborative working. Local Strategic Partnerships have a critical role in further developing coherent service provision and genuinely sustainable communities.

Partnerships at work

Rationale Lack of joint working at local level has been one of the key reasons for lack of progress in delivering sustainable economic, social and physical regeneration, or improved public services that meet the needs of local people. A combination of organisations, and the community, working co-operatively as part of an LSP will have a far greater chance of success. To achieve these improvements, the Government, local authorities and other service providers need to work co-operatively, change the ways they work, reallocate resources and “bend” their mainstream programmes to tackle issues that really matter to local people.

Objectives The main objective of LSPs is to set out the vision of an area and co-ordinate and drive the delivery of local services leading to improved outcomes for citizens that go beyond the remit of any one partner. Other benefits of partnership working include increased opportunities for joint provision of services, the ability to attract external funding and increased influence over the policies and structures of partner agencies.

Functions LSPs prepare and implement a Sustainable Community Strategy (which sets out the vision and priorities for the area agreed by all parties, including local citizens and businesses); provide strategic co-ordination within the area and link with other plans, partnerships and bodies established at the regional and sub-regional and local level; develop and drive the effective delivery of their Local Area Agreements (LAAs) agree an action plan for achieving the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities, including the LAAs’ outcomes; and provide a wide range of support and training.

Policy areas Economic, social and environmental well-being, community development, labour market and social inclusion

Policy tools/ Instruments The LSPs use a variety of different instruments, e.g.: forums for debate, discussions and common decision-making; advisory; facilitating community strategic planning (developing and implementing the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Local Area Agreement and Local Development Framework); implementing performance management system; developing mechanisms for monitoring and reporting progress to the partnership and local people.

Timeframe Several local initiatives have started in the early 1990s; currently operating partnerships have no time limitation.

Partners LSPs are seen as the “partnership of partnerships” in the local area and has a board made up of senior officers from public sector (such as councils, health, the police, Jobcentre Plus, Environment Agency) and elected members, as well as representatives from the private and community and voluntary sectors. The board works with area-based or thematic partnerships and the wider community as the Sustainable Community Strategy and other plans are prepared and implemented.

- Contracts** Various approaches taken in different areas.
- Legal status** LSPs are non-statutory, non-executive organisations
- Sources of Financing** Partnerships are funded through public service budgets, partners' contributions and central government grants.
- Results** LSPs are able to co-ordinate delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and LAAs. They provide the strategic co-ordination within the area and link with other plans and bodies established at the regional, sub-regional and local level. As stated in the Audit Commission validation published in 2005: "In the last 12 months LSPs have made significant progress in implementing performance management systems. This is a notable achievement given the complexity and sensitivity of developing performance management in a partnership context. It marks a further stage of development in the life-cycle of LSPs and demonstrates a level of organisational maturity which is reassuring given their relative youth." (Further information at: www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/document.asp?id=1366).

Partnerships' highlight

- Programme/Project** West Midlands LSP Capacity Building Programme
- Timeframe** September 2006 – July 2007
- Objectives** The major aim of the programme is to develop the capacity of West Midlands LSPs and Government office for the West Midlands (GOWM) to deliver LAA and Community Strategy outcomes. The objective is to provide a programme of capacity building activities which:
- _ is cost effective and demonstrates value for money;
 - _ is collaborative in approach wherever possible;
 - _ is developed and owned by practitioners;
 - _ reflects the principle of devolved decision making; and
 - _ produces practical results which supports the overall aim of the programme.
- Activities** All activities link knowledge & best practice with supported local improvement projects. Used methods include:
- _ seminars and workshops;
 - _ mentoring, coaching and shadowing;
 - _ peer review;
 - _ best practice showcasing (regional and national);
 - _ study visits;
 - _ secondments from partner organisations;
 - _ good practice to be recorded and disseminated; and
 - _ independent brokerage required to ensure collaboration, equity and value for money.
- Results** Expected results:
- _ a systematic needs analysis of all LSPs in the West Midlands and a capacity building programme which has been developed and delivered in a collaborative manner; and
 - _ better delivery of local outcomes and joined up services in disadvantaged areas.

Contacts

Partnership co-ordination at national / sub-regional level

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Partnership co-ordinators at regional / local level

All LSP Websites can be found at Regional Co-ordination Unit's LSP
website: www.gos.gov.uk/localgov/lsp/?a=42496