

Report to	Corporate Governance and Audit Committee
Date of meeting	17 March 2021
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Richard Mainon / Nicola Kneale, Strategic Planning Team Manager
Report author	Carol Evans, Strategic Planning and Performance Officer
Title	Alternative Service Delivery Model (ASDM) Toolkit

1. What is the report about?

1.1 The Alternative Service Delivery Model (ASDM) Toolkit for the Council.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 The Toolkit was requested by the Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee (henceforth Committee) in response to the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan (January 2021).

2.2 To brief the Committee on the ASDM Toolkit and how it can be used to work in partnership and collaboration.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. The Committee notes the content of the ASDM toolkit, its intended use, its definitions, and approves its use both within the Council and when the Council is working in partnership.

4. Report details

4.1. In 2020 the Committee requested creation of a toolkit which would offer guidance on necessary considerations for a variety of partnership working models both within and outside of the Council. This was seen as a key element to ensuring there is a coherent partnership framework in Denbighshire.

- 4.2. The Toolkit provides guidance to establishing good practise in terms of partnership governance, covering evaluation/options appraisal methodology, policy, scrutiny requirements and good practise when reviewing the service delivery models we are involved in, and guidance to ensuring good governance arrangements are in place. This in turn will lead to better accountability, clearer understanding about performance, and subsequently, improved services for our communities.
- 4.3. The Toolkit is intended to be used as a manual. Page 5 lists the different types of service delivery models and contains links to further definitions of each, along with information on the process for establishing each model. From p8, the content covers the governance arrangements that should be considered for any model, along with a brief description of each item and signposting/links to further guidance. The end of the document features Appendices containing checklists and templates for use by partnership managers.
- 4.4. The Toolkit identifies the necessity to work with officers within key functions in the authority, for example Finance and Property, Legal, Human Resource, Democratic and Procurement services, from the onset of any partnership work. This will ensure any legal obligations the council needs to consider are met.
- 4.5. This comprehensive approach to establishing and monitoring partnerships will help improve effective scrutiny and focus on strategic partnerships and major partnerships.
- 4.6. A key priority is to ensure that there is a coherent partnership framework in Denbighshire. Once the toolkit is in operation the Authority will require:
 - That Partnerships complete an annual “Health Check”
 - That Partnerships’ risks are identified and feed into the appropriate Service and / or Corporate Risk Register.
- 4.7. This Toolkit will replace any historical partnership governance documents within the Council.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1. Improved partnership governance is a key area for improving the Council’s performance in relation to all of its corporate priorities.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 No additional costs are envisaged in embedding the ASDM Toolkit within the Council. Adaptations will be within existing resources.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1 In the main we offer positive or neutral impact upon all the seven well-being goals in terms of assessing this document. The Toolkit is a guidance document only, offering signposts to other policies and procedures, all of which would have received a Well-being Impact Assessment when created. We seek to ensure anyone within the Council entering into an alternative service delivery model has skills and information to enable an equal and transparent way forward.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. The new ASDM framework takes account of the consultation conducted as part of the internal audit for the Committee in 2020.

8.2. The draft Toolkit was shared with Senior Leadership Team members requesting their input and advice in incorporating this into Council processes and considerations for partnership work. Contributions were noted and incorporated into the Toolkit.

8.3. Meetings with officers from key service functions (Business Improvement and Modernisation, Internal Audit, Finance and Property, Legal Services) were undertaken when work began on the ASDM, and draft versions have been shared as the work progressed. Lead officers for key decision-making functions have been involved in the creation of this document.

8.4. Following presentation at the Committee, the Toolkit (English and Welsh versions) will be published on line, and promoted via Linc and emails to SLT and Cabinet.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. It is important that all factors are taken into consideration when developing ASDMs. We have learnt from recent experience that the objectives and benefits must be clearly defined from the outset. It is also vitally important that realistic estimates for set up costs and timescales are included and scrutinised. The Commercialisation Strategy (part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy) includes clear guidance on what factors should be considered.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. There is a risk that this guidance isn't followed and/or that there is a lack of awareness of its existence, which could lead to policy breaches. To mitigate against this, we will promote the Toolkit internally. It is important to consider how effectively tools such as this document are being used by officers and members to aid development and scrutiny of partnership arrangements, and whether any improvements could be made.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 (subsidiary powers of local authorities).