

Appendix 3

Partnership Governance Toolkit Guidance Notes and Templates

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1. Introduction

This set of guidance notes and templates may be used in conjunction with the Partnership Governance Toolkit document (February 2012) which has been created to assist Denbighshire County Council personnel with their partnership arrangements.

Documents include guidelines for some of the processes that will assist in assessing partnerships and the complex issues and criteria related to partnerships.

The documents will be reviewed and updated where necessary.

2. Guidance Notes, Tools and Templates (GNT)

GNT 1: Template Partnership Agreement

A partnership agreement must address the following headings since this model combines all the attributes of best practice. The level of detail provided under each heading will be dependent on the significance of the partnership. All agreements must be checked by legal representatives.

Name of the Partnership

1. Definitions and Interpretation

Define any key words.

2. Commencement and Term

Length of time partnership will run / point at which will be reviewed.

3. Purpose

What is the purpose of this partnership?

4. Aims, Objectives and Outcomes

What has this partnership been established to achieve?

5. Partnership Principles

The members agree to work together actively to achieve the aims of the partnership. This may include:

- Visible commitment and 'ownership' by the various member organisations and

- individual representatives.
- Mutual trust and respect.
 - Openness and transparency.
 - Effective communication and accountability.
 - Shared ownership of resources, where appropriate.
 - Combined expertise.
 - Creative and innovative solutions to problems.
 - Identification and sharing of best practice, based on mutual learning.
 - Removal of barriers to equality of access and opportunity.
 - How the partnership will operate in terms of sustainable development.
 - Clear purpose, clarity of expectations and agreed targets for action.
 - Effective decision-making.
 - Shared mechanisms for risk management, monitoring, evaluation, reviewing and reporting on performance, progress and success.
 - Allowing each constituent member unobstructed access to the audit records of the partnership, on request.

6. Membership and Terms of Office

This may include:

- The number of representatives from organisations in the public, private and the voluntary and community sectors, which are actively involved in the area (equal representation is not a requirement, unless other rules dictate) and why they were chosen.
- A list of the constituent members and the number of representatives they have on the partnership.
- Who chairs and vice-chairs the partnership, how appointed and for how long?
- How often the membership is reviewed and any time limits that an individual representative can serve on the partnership.
- How the membership of the partnership reflects the characteristics and aspirations of the area / people it has been set up to serve.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Identify the roles and responsibilities of each constituent member of the partnership. It may be appropriate to include statements explaining how different sector members can bring to the partnership and which areas of partnership activity they will be responsible for. In addition this section may include the roles and responsibilities of the lead / accountable body, management board, partnership coordinator and partnership link officers etc.

8. Meetings and Secretariat

This may include:

- What is the minimum number of meetings within a period?
- Are meetings open or closed?

- How are extraordinary meetings convened?
- Where is the responsibility for setting meetings, agendas, working papers, minutes, follow up of actions etc?
- Who will provide the secretariat function and for how long?
- How and why are venues chosen?
- What are the expectations regarding members' behaviour during meetings?
- What if a member needs to deputise the meeting, what protocols need to be followed?
- And any other elements of the meeting that need to be stipulated.

9. Performance Management

The partnership should specify its performance management processes.

10. Risk Management which includes Indemnity and Insurance

The partnership should specify when, and in what format, the shared risk assessment and risk management plan will be monitored and reviewed, and by whom.

11. Resource Management/Pooled Funds

The partnership should specify its resource management processes, which may include the partnerships:

- Processes for financial control and monitoring within and between partnerships.
- Processes for human and physical resources to enable the partnership to operate effectively.
- The contract standing orders of which Partner organisation are being followed?
- Processes for auditing the partnership
- VAT and Tax arrangements.

12. Partnership Assessment and Alteration of the Partnership Agreement

The partnership should specify its self assessment / review processes, which may include:

- How does the partnership review itself?
- How often is this agreement to be reviewed?
- What are the protocols for changing or amending the partnership agreement?

13. Exiting of Involvement with the Partnership

The partnership should specify systems and procedures that exist detailing the need for written notification to the Chair and secretariat of intention to leave the partnership, the notice period required and any exceptions.

14. Termination of the Partnership

The partnership should specify systems and procedures that exist detailing under what circumstances the partnership may be disbanded and how.

15. Effects of Termination

The partnership should specify systems and procedures that exist in relation to the termination of partnerships.

16. Community Involvement and Equality

The partnership should specify systems and procedures that exist to involve the community in the delivery of services and ensure consideration is given to equality and diversity in the key areas of partnership working. Safeguarding policies must be in place for the partnership, evidenced for audit purposes.

17. Information Sharing and Communication Methods

The partnership should specify systems and procedures that exist in relation to management of sharing information and communications methods, which may include:

- How will the partnership share information?
- How will communication take place within this partnership?
- How will communication take place from this partnership to stakeholders?
- How the partnership is applied to WASPI.

18. Decision Making Process

This may include:

- How are decisions reached by the meeting? What are the processes to ratify decisions?

19. Conflict of Interest

The partnership should specify the systems and procedures that exist to resolve issues relating conflict of interest?

20. Dispute Resolution

The partnership should specify the procedures that exist to resolve disputes within the partnership, which may include:

- How will disputes be resolved where there is conflict at between members, organisations and over decisions?

21. Complaints

The partnership should specify systems and procedures that exist in relation to management of complaints.

22. NHS Health Care Functions and Health Related Care Functions

23. Service and its Operation

This may be commissioning or provision.

24. Confidentiality

This is a short statement expressing the expectations of partnership members with reference to confidentiality.

25. Exclusion of Partnership and Agency

26. Assignment and sub-agreements

27. The Contract (Right of Third parties) Act 1999

28. Prevention of corruption / quality control

29. Notices

30. Governing Law

GNT 2: Good Practice Guide on Risk Management in Partnership Working

In order to achieve the good practice recognised by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, organisations must meet two key responsibilities for each partnership they have. They must:

- 1) Provide assurance that the risks associated with working in partnership with another organisation have been identified and prioritised and are being appropriately managed.
- 2) Ensure that the partnership has effective risk management procedures in place

There are two aspects to risk management in partnership working:

Outside looking in – from the Organisations perspective

What are the risks that the organisation faces in being involved in the partnership? This risk identification exercise must be undertaken **before** partnership working commences and should be incorporated into the Partnership business case. Risks that should be considered and may apply include:

- Financial risk
- Legal risk
- Reputation risk
- Resource conflicts
- Reliance on a partner to deliver the organisations objectives
- The partners track record in managing risk
- Risk specific to the nature of the partnership or its objectives

The responsibility for ensuring that risk management has been taken into consideration when establishing or continuing a partnership should lie with the relevant organisational managers and (portfolio holders Local Authority only) who's remit the partnership falls under.

The risks identified initially in the partnership business case should be transferred to a risk register which will be updated, managed and monitored by the service involved in the partnership in the same way that a project risk register would be maintained for the life of a project.

On the inside – from the partnership's perspective

The lead organisation should seek assurances from prospective partners:

- How well is risk management embedded in the business?
- Does their risk management methodology conform to good practice?
- Who are the key players involved?

As a minimum, organisations must undertake a pre-partnership risk assessment (see above – outside looking in) for its own purposes and other partners may have done the same. If there is a willingness in the partnership to share these risks, this could form the basis of a partnership risk identification exercise and joint risk register.

If the lead organisation has a tried and tested risk management strategy and methodology consideration might be given to applying this to the partnership.

GNT 2: Risk Categories

Risk categories focus on the source of risk, and are intended to be used as a set of prompts to consider scenarios that will give rise to consequences that will impact on specific objectives.

Successful risk categorisation can be compared to an effective medical evaluation. If the doctor asks: "How do you feel?" the patient might say, "Fine." But the examination is much more revealing if the doctor asks: "How do your knees feel? How about your lungs? Any back pain?" With these questions, the patient will begin to think specifically about his or her body parts.

The risks faced by an organisation should be categorised in relation to what the organisation does. There are a number of commonly used categories that help to group risks according to the various aspects of the organisation and its activities. We need to consider which categories are relevant to Denbighshire.

Suggestions are made in the table overleaf, and have been devised following research on categories used by other councils; consideration of how useful each prompt will be for shaping the thoughts of those identifying risk, and practical attempts at applying these categories to the risks that services have identified.

<p style="text-align: center;">Political</p> <p>Arising from the political situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of Govt Policy • Political make-up • Election cycles • Decision-making structure • Abuse (e.g. fraud, corruption) • Reputation management 	<p style="text-align: center;">Economic & Financial</p> <p>Arising from the economic situation, and the financial planning framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury – investment, reforms • Demand predictions • Competition and the effect on price • General/regional economic situation • Value/cost of capital assets 	<p style="text-align: center;">Community</p> <p>Demographics, social trends, and meeting customer needs or expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential patterns and profile • Social care • Regeneration • Customer care • Quality of community consultation
<p style="text-align: center;">Technological</p> <p>Arising from the ability to deal with pace of change, and the technological situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to deal with change/advance • State of architecture • Obsolescence of technology • Current performance and reliability • Security and standards • Failure of key system or project 	<p style="text-align: center;">Legislative/Regulatory</p> <p>Arising from current and potential legal changes and/or possible breaches, and the organisation's regulatory information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New legislation and regulations • Exposure to regulators • Legal challenges/judicial review • Adequacy of legal support 	<p style="text-align: center;">Environmental</p> <p>Concerned with the physical environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of environment (urban, rural, mixed) • Land use – green belt, brown field sites • Waste disposal and recycling issues • Impact of civil emergency (i.e. flood) • Traffic problems, planning, & transport • Pollution, emissions, noise • Climate change & energy efficiency
<p style="text-align: center;">Professional/Managerial</p> <p>The need to be managerially and professionally competent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer reviews (e.g. IDeA, consultancy) • Stability of officer structure • Competency and capacity • Management frameworks and processes • Turnover, recruitment, and retention • Profession-specific issues 	<p style="text-align: center;">Physical Hazards and Health & Safety</p> <p>Physical hazards associated with people, land, buildings, vehicles and equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health, safety and wellbeing of staff, partners and the community • Accident and incident record keeping • Maintenance practises • Security of staff, assets, buildings, equipment • Nature and state of asset base 	<p style="text-align: center;">Partnership/Contractual</p> <p>Partnerships, contracts and collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key partners - public, private & voluntary • Accountability frameworks and partnership boundaries • Large-scale projects with joint ventures • Outsourced services • Relationship management • Change control/exit strategies • Business continuity • Partnerships – contractual liabilities

Risk Assessment Criteria

LIKELIHOOD	Event is almost certain to occur in most circumstances	>70%	Almost Certain	A						
	Event likely to occur in most circumstances	30-70%	Likely	B						
	Event will possibly occur at some time	10-30%	Possible	C						
	Event unlikely and may occur at some time	1-10%	Unlikely	D						
	Event rare and may occur only in exceptional circumstances	<1%	Rare	E						
					5	4	3	2	1	
					Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High	
					Service Performance	Minor errors or disruption	Some disruption to activities / customers	Disruption to core activities/ customers	Significant disruption to core activities. Key targets missed	Unable to delivery core activities. Strategic aims compromised
					Reputation	Trust recoverable with little effort or cost	Trust recoverable at modest cost with resource allocation within budgets	Trust recovery demands cost authorisation beyond existing budgets	Trust recoverable at considerable cost and management attention	Trust severely damaged and full recovery questionable and costly
					Financial Cost (£)	<£50k	£50k - £250k	£250k - £1 m	£1 m - £5 m	>£5m
					IMPACT					

Corporate Risk Severity Key

	Minor	Risk easily managed locally – no need to involve management
	Moderate	Risk containable at service level – senior management and SLT may need to be kept informed
	Major	Intervention by SLT and / or CET with Cabinet involvement
	Critical	Significant CET and Cabinet intervention

GNT 3: Template Partnership Action Plan

Ref No.	Partnership Objective	Key Actions in Place	Key Actions to be Implemented	Partnership Lead Officer	Resources (Refer to key below)	Scrutiny Arrangements	Any Risks Logged (include reference)
Objective							
Resources							
Are resources within existing?							
Is there an additional revenue requirement?							
Has the resource requirement been agreed?							
Is it included within the Project Management Programme?							
Should it be included within the Project Management Programme?							

GNT 4: Template Highlight Report

1. Purpose of the Report: To provide a summary of progress at intervals agreed by the project / partnership board

2. Period Covered: Usually previous month, but depends upon the project

Score each element of your project Green = All OK; Yellow = some potential problems identified; Amber = Several problems identified; Red = major problem identified. Delete the unrequired scores to give an “at a glance” status report for the project.

3. This Period

3.1 Budget Status: Are the resources being used according to the expected profile?

Green Yellow Amber Red

3.2 Schedule Status: Is the project on time?

Green Yellow Amber Red

3.3 Products completed: List of milestones and products completed and outcomes delivered since the previous report

Green Yellow Amber Red

4. Actual or Potential Problems

4.1 Problems Internal to the project: List problems internal to the project

Green Yellow Amber Red

4.2 Problems due to external events: List problems due to interdependency on events external to the project e.g. potential conflicts with other current or proposed projects

Green Yellow Amber Red

5. Risk Update: List any changes to the risk log

Green Yellow Amber Red

6. Lessons learnt / good practice identified: List any experiences that would inform or benefit other projects

7. **Next Period:** Products to be completed: List products to be completed

8. **Tolerance Situation:** Consider entries for cost, time, quality, scope, benefit and people / resources

Green

Yellow

Amber

Red

9. **Changes:** Impact on Budget and Schedule: identify any changes to the project.

GNT 5: Insurance Considerations for Partnerships

It is important to note that as part of risk management, insurance is one way of transferring risks. The following table illustrates some of the main insurable risks which the members of a partnership may wish to insure for. The source and extent of insurance taken by each partner should be adequate to meet their commitments under the partnership agreement.

Asset	Potential insurable risks	Relevant insurance policy
People	Injury to staff at work Injury to public Damage to property of others Financial loss Libel and slander Conditions of service Travel issues Fraud	Employers liability Public liability Public liability Officials Indemnity Professional indemnity Libel and slander Assault Cover Personal accident Motor credit guarantee Travel insurance Officials indemnity
Buildings	Loss of income Loss of rent Material damage Terrorism Denial of access Increased cost of working Damage to work in progress Liability of hirers	Loss of income Loss of rent Material damage Terrorism Denial of access Increased cost of working Work in progress Hirers liability
Contents	Material damage Theft	Material damage Theft
Plant / Equipment	Theft	Plant & equipment
Hired Equipment	Theft Accidental damage	Hired equipment
Computers	Material Damage Theft Loss of Data	Computer
Money	Theft	Money
Motor	Theft Damage to third party property Injury to third party Own damage	Motor, third party fire and theft Motor, fully comprehensive
Marine Craft	Injury to public Damage to property of others Financial loss	Marine

Note: It is important for all partners to seek the advice of their insurance advisers when considering the establishment of a new partnership.

GNT 6: Template File Index for Retaining Grant Funding Information

	SECTION	
1	Evidence of Project Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business case • Feasibility studies • Reports
2	Grant Funding Application Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of signed application forms • Working papers • Match funding letters/certificates • Internal minutes/ Partnership papers i.e. confirming support for project/funding set aside
3	Funding Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of signed grant approval letters • Evidence of activities/actions to adhere to the projects special conditions
4	Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence between funding partners i.e. confirming any changes in project activity • Project deliverers, contractors
5	Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project staff structure • Copy of recruitment adverts • Job descriptions • Employment contracts • Appointment letters • Staff desk instructions
6	Project Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes/notes of progress meetings • Action plans • Progress reports • Evidence to support project targets achieved i.e. beneficiary details, jobs created, businesses supported • Project evaluation • Photographic evidence i.e. pictures during capital build (before and after) • Visit record sheets i.e. visit to SME's in receipt of third party grants

7	Procurement Process Undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief • Advert for tender • Copy of tenders and envelopes • Tender reports • Selection criteria • Justification for the appointment of the successful contractor • Letter appointing successful tender • Copy of contract • Letter accepting contracts • Copy of contract • Copy of quotations (if under the formal procurement threshold)
8	Publicity (promoting Project and Funding Assistance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity strategy • Leaflets • Posters • Brochures • Press cuttings • Press releases • Presentation material • Advertisements • Photographic evidence i.e. site hoarding, project launches, plaques, events
9	Financial: General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of cost centre and description codes set up for project • Financial regulations • List of authorised signatories
10	Financial: Grant Claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of grant claims • All relevant working papers/spreadsheets to support the preparation of the grant claim • Ledger print • Paid invoices • Remittance advice (particular relevance to third party grants) • Receipts • Corresponding bank statements • Timesheets to support staff time on projects • Travel claims • Payroll information • Written methods of apportionment e.g. overheads • Depreciation methodology • Inventory of any equipment purchased i.e. PC's, digital cameras • Follow up action letters on grant claims/responses • External audit certificates/reports i.e. Wales Audit Office audit certificates, Welsh European Funding Office monitoring visits reports

GNT 7: Guidance on Managing Conflicts of Interests

In preparing policies and procedures for dealing with conflicts of interest, the nature of the partnerships particular structure, functions and activities, and any applicable statutory requirements should be taken into account. It should consider what its operations are, what fields it operates in, and what sorts of problems or risks might typically arise. For example, does the partnership:

- Contract
- Allocate grants
- Public consultation
- Undertake regulatory decision-making.

1.0 Policies and procedures for managing conflicts of interest could:

- State principles or values that emphasise the entity's commitment to addressing conflicts of interest, and the importance of people within the entity being alert for such situations.
- Establish rules for the most important and obvious actions that people must or must not take.
- Set out a process for identifying and disclosing instances of conflicts of interest as and when they arise (including a clear explanation of how a member should disclose a conflict of interest, and to whom).
- Set out a process for managing conflicts of interest that arise (including who makes decisions, and perhaps detailing the principles, criteria, or options that will be considered).
- Provide avenues for training and advice.
- Provide a mechanism for handling complaints or breaches of the policy.
- Specify the potential consequences of non-compliance.

2.0 There are two aspects to dealing with particular situations:

- 1) Identifying and disclosing the conflict of interest (primarily the responsibility of the partnership member concerned)
- 2) Deciding what action (if any) is necessary to best avoid or mitigate any effects of the conflict of interest (primarily the responsibility of the entity).

2.1 Disclosing a conflict of interest

The partnership member with the conflict of interest is obliged to identify it, and disclose it to the relevant people in a timely and effective manner. The partnership member will always have the fullest knowledge of their own affairs, and will usually be in the best position to realise whether and when something at work has a connection with another interest of theirs. (However, managers and other senior

personnel should remain generally alert for issues affecting other people that may create a problem).

Disclosure promotes transparency, and is always better than the partnership member silently trying to manage the situation by themselves.

If a matter in which a partnership member has an interest arises at a formal meeting, the partnership member should declare to the meeting that they have an interest in the matter before the matter is discussed. The declaration should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

In other situations, the matter should be raised and discussed with a relevant person as soon as the potential for a conflict of interest is identified. For most staff, the relevant person will be their manager (or another designated person in the organisation).

2.2 Deciding on further action

Simply declaring a conflict of interest is not usually enough. Once the conflict of interest has been identified and disclosed, the partnership may need to take further steps to remove any possibility – or perception of public funds or a partnership member's role being used for private benefit.

The entity should carefully consider what, if anything, needs to be done to adequately avoid or mitigate the effects of the conflict of interest.

In each case, it is important for the entity to actively consider whether something more ought to be done after disclosure. It is not safe to assume that a disclosure, with nothing more, is always adequate.

First, if any legal requirement applies, then compliance with that is critical, and overrides any other scope for discretionary judgment. (For example, where the situation involves a legal requirement about a board member participating in a meeting, the law will usually require the member to refrain from participating in discussions and voting on the matter. In those cases, there is usually no scope to decide on some lesser mitigation option).

Secondly, the entity should consider whether any relevant policy of the entity contains a clear rule covering the situation.

Thirdly, if no relevant legal requirement or policy applies (or after any such rule has been complied with), then the partnership should also consider whether anything more needs to be done. This is where there may be scope for a range of options. This assessment involves the exercise of a discretionary judgment. In especially difficult situations, it may be necessary to seek professional advice, and/or consult other published sources of guidance.

3.0 In exercising judgment, the partnership needs to assess carefully:

- 1) The seriousness of the conflict of interest
- 2) The range of possible mitigation options.

3.1 Assess the seriousness of a conflict of interest

Several factors may need to be weighed in assessing the seriousness of the conflict of interest. They include:

- The type or size of the partnership member's other interest.
- The nature or significance of the particular decision or activity being carried out by the partnership.
- The extent to which the partnership member's other interests could specifically affect, or be affected by, the entities decision or activity.
- The nature or extent of the member's current or intended involvement in the entities decision or activity.

3.2 Mitigation options

Selecting a suitable mitigation option will largely be informed by the judgment about the seriousness of the conflict of interest in each particular case. It may also be necessary to take into account the practicability of any options for avoiding or mitigating the conflict.

There is a broad range of options for avoiding or mitigating a conflict of interest. The options (listed roughly in order of lowest to highest severity) include:

- Taking no action
- Enquiring as to whether all affected parties will consent to the partnership member's involvement
- Seeking a formal exemption to allow participation (if such a legal power applies)
- Imposing additional oversight or review over the partnership member
- Withdrawing from discussing or voting on a particular item of business at a meeting
- Exclusion from a committee or working group dealing with the issue
- Re-assigning certain tasks or duties to another person
- Agreement or direction not to do something
- Withholding certain confidential information, or placing restrictions on access to information

- Transferring the official (temporarily or permanently) to another position or project
- Relinquishing the private interest
- Resignation or dismissal from one or other position or partnership.

The most typical mitigation options involve withdrawal or exclusion from involvement in the Partnerships work on the particular matter or decision – that is, the fifth, sixth, and seventh bullet points in paragraph. Taking one of those steps will usually be enough to adequately manage a conflict of interest.

It is wise to make a written record about any decision. This might include details of the facts, who undertook the assessment and how, and what action was taken as a result.

GNT 8: Wales Accord on Sharing Personal Information

[Link to Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information \(WASPI\)](#)

GNT 9: Wales Assessment Checklist for Sharing Personal Information

[Link to Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information: Self Assessment Checklist](#)

GNT 10: Best practice in drawing up Complaints Protocol in Partnerships

These recommendations should not lead to an overly bureaucratic approach being taken – their implementation should be reasonable and proportionate, taking into account the wide variations in scale, structure and objectives that exist between partnerships.

1.0 Key recommendation:

When the partnership is first created, there should be clarity regarding accountability for different parts of the work that will be carried out

1.1 Summary and recommendations

- There should be a clear statement as to who is responsible for handling complaints and providing redress

- There needs to be effective communication with those who use the service so that they understand what they need to do in the event of something going wrong
- There should be a strong commitment from the partnership to learn from complaints, so that services may be improved.

2.0 Setting up the complaints process

- Consider the views of service users and potential users, where practicable, and of other relevant stakeholders such as advice agencies, when drawing up or reviewing the protocol.
- Ensure that the complaints process is clear and accessible to all groups in the community, and is consistent with the principles set out in the Local Government Ombudsmen's guidance on running a complaint system and on remedies.
- Communicate effectively through leaflets and other publications and media, so as to increase public awareness of the complaints procedure. Where people also have the right to access a statutory complaints procedure, this should be made clear at the outset.

3.0 Supporting the complainant

- Consider providing the option of conciliation or mediation to bring about early resolution where practicable.
- Provide access to local sources of independent advocacy and advice.
- Ensure that complainants are kept informed of the progress of their complaint, the stage at which it is being considered, and the applicable timescales.

4.0 Defining responsibilities

- Define the partnership's responsibility for handling complaints or, if appropriate, which body the complainant needs to contact when the responsibility lies elsewhere (e.g. with the local authority). Leadership by senior managers, or others responsible for decision making, is vital. They should be supported by systems that ensure that lessons can be learned from complaints, with the aim of improving services.
- If the initial consideration of the complaint lies with the partner(s) immediately involved with the provision of the service, consider what review mechanism is appropriate.
- Where a complaint is about the actions of a partnership (or other) body exercising a discrete function of a local authority, consider the need for the

authority (if not already involved) to investigate the matter through its own staff.

5.0 Monitoring and Review

Where a local authority exercises a function through any other body, ensure that the arrangements provide for effective monitoring and review of complaints handled by that body, including a requirement to provide the authority with such access to evidence as it may request. Any review should identify learning points arising from complaint outcomes.

6.0 Redress

Where an organisation exercises a function through another body, ensure that the arrangements provide for effective redress by that body (if the authority does not retain this responsibility). These arrangements should also cover responsibility for redress where the authority agrees to an Ombudsman recommendation. Redress may include an apology, financial compensation, staff guidance, procedural changes or service improvements

7.0 Training

Train any staff dealing with complaints, so that they understand the agreed procedures and have the right skills to resolve problems quickly, and so that investigations of complaints are rigorous and evidence-based, with clear, well explained decision.

GNT 11: Development Tool for assessing partnership working – including “An annual health check”

[Link to Assessing Strategic Partnerships](#)

This link provides a simple and effective development tool which partnerships could use to undertake partnership assessments, taken from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Assessing Strategic Partnerships – the Partnership Assessment Tool 2003.