



## Creating a New Successful Partnership

Before creating a new partnership the Council's partnership framework requires you to consider whether a new partnership is really the best option (see appendix 3 of the Partnership Framework).

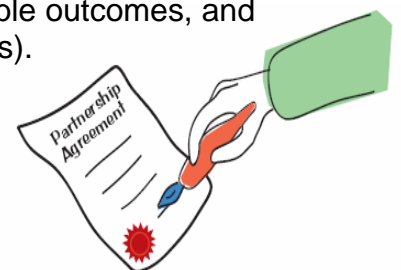
The steps involved in setting up a new partnership are similar to those involved at the beginning of any new project or activity. Unfortunately many partnerships in their hurry for impact and results, ignore the importance of establishing the right environment for the partners to work well together.

This process involves regular communication, creating a culture of trust and respect, and encouraging the active participation of all the partners. In the early stages it is usually better to start with some smaller achievable tasks until the partnership matures.

Once you have decided that a new partnership should be formed, the following list of points should be considered :-

### Quick Start Up Checklist

1. Agree a shared, clear vision that defines the purpose of the partnership.
2. Create opportunities for partners to get to know each other.
3. Define the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
4. Set up a structure for communication within and outside the partnership. Clarify links with existing partnerships or agencies.
5. Obtain the appropriate level of support and commitment from each partner.
6. Establish a governance structure that ensures open and active decision-making by the partners. Clarify lines of accountability internally and externally (i.e. who will the partnership report to)
7. Determine what resources each partner has available for the partnership.
8. Define some clear tasks, which have tangible outcomes, and clear measures of success (SMART targets).
9. Design a monitoring plan.
10. Seek approval from the Cabinet



It is good practice to formally constitute the partnership through a written agreement (or constitution) adopted by each partner organisation.

The form of agreement will depend on the nature of the partnership and its legal status. For more information refer to the Partnerships Framework, and for help on legal matters refer to Legal services.

Partnership agreements often cover governance arrangements and terms of reference. The partnership agreement should also cover what arrangements or processes are in place in the event of a dispute or conflict.

You should also undertake some form of risk assessment – the degree of complexity will depend on the nature of your partnership. See the separate section on the partnerships website for more information on partnership risks and risk assessments.

Examples of partnership constitutions and Terms of Reference (T o R) are available on the intranet.

Planning a start up activity that will publicise the launch of the partnership and its joint efforts can be useful too.

**See also** the section on partnership life-cycle

**Remember** : when forming a new partnership things may get worse before they get better!

- Before establishing a new partnership check out existing partnerships to make sure you don't duplicate what they are already doing. Maybe you could support the work of an existing partnership instead.
- If you are going ahead with a new partnership take the time to consider the links and relationships with existing structures or partnerships. Often it is helpful to demonstrate this in the form of a diagram, map or structure tree.

