

**Subject:**  
Capacity Building Model: Partnership  
Working

**Status:**  
For Publication

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**Report to:**  
The Cabinet

**Date:**  
15 November 2006

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**Report of:** Chief Executive

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**Portfolio**

**Holder:** Cabinet Member for Community and Partnerships

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**Key Decision:** YES

Forward Plan

General Exception

Special Urgency

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out a proposed way forward for Rossendale Borough Council in improving its approach to working in Partnership as part of developing our Capacity Building Model of Local Governance.

**2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 Strategic Objectives - strong partnership working is essential in achieving all eight of the Council's objectives

Corporate Priorities

- 2.2 Partnerships: Working with others to make a real difference –This report contributes to delivering this priority.

### **3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- 3.2 Failure to improve partnership working can mean that the costs involved in working in partnership outweigh the benefits and rather than enhancing capacity can limit it. Lack of good governance arrangements may mean partnerships are not performing as well as they could and accountability is unclear.

### **4. BACKGROUND/REASON FOR REPORT**

- 4.1 Rossendale Borough Council is a small Council with big ambitions. We recognise we do not have the capacity to deliver these ambitions on our own. Local councils have traditionally been the direct provider of a wide range of services but there are now opportunities to bring greater investment or capacity into the borough by providing these services in different ways.
- 4.2 Alongside this, we remain committed to the continuous improvement of those services and functions we provide directly – and we work in a range of ways to ensure learning, development and doing things better.
- 4.3 To capture and manage our diversity of provision we are developing our Capacity Building Model of Local Government. This includes the range of ways in which we are increasing our operational capacity beyond that of the Council's own direct capacity. Working in partnership is central to this approach.
- 4.4 The Progress Assessment report by the Audit Commission published in February 2006 recognised partnership working as an area of strength for the Council. However the report also recognised that the skills to support the new approach were not yet fully in place. This report and the attached Policy Statement are part of our development and competency building process.

### **5. OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 **Recommended Option** – To adopt the Policy Statement and Action Plan set out in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 5.2 **Amend the Policy Statement/Action Plan** – The Policy Statement contains suggested stages to partnership improvement. This could be adopted subject to amendments at the meeting.
- 5.3 **Do not approve Policy Statement** – The Policy Statement and Action Plan are not adopted.

## 6. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

- 6.1 The Policy Statement and Action Plan will assist in finance and performance management issues to be better understood and embedded within partnership working.

## 7. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

- 7.1 It is important we embrace partnership working and ensure roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and monitored. The ongoing work with the I&DeA will support this.

## 8. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

- 8.1 Work is ongoing to ensure organizationally we are skilled with the correct competency levels thus ensuring we are able to develop and deliver the approach as outlined.

## 9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Partnership working is a central element of our approach to capacity building and is crucial to the delivery of sustained improvements.

## 10. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 10.1 To adopt the Partnership Policy Statement and Action Plan.

## 11. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The Policy Statement and Action Plan have been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny policy Task Group on 2 November 2006.

<b>Contact Officer</b>	
Name	Carolyn Wilkins
Position	Chief Executive
Service / Team	
Telephone	01706 252434
Email address	carolynwilkins@rossendalebc.gov.uk

<b>Background Papers</b>	
Corporate Improvement Plan	
Audit Commission Progress Assessment February 2006	