

## Policy Title

Partnership Working Policy

## Summary Table

<b>Policy Status</b> (circle as appropriate)	<b><i>Approved and finalised</i></b>
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<i>Erin Wood, Policy Officer, PP&amp;I Team</i>
<b>Policy Sponsor</b>	<i>Amanda Roe, Service Manager, PP&amp;I Team</i>
<b>Authorised by</b>	<i>Business Services Committee</i>
<b>Approval Date</b>	<i>November 2018</i>
<b>Review Date</b>	<i>November 2023</i>
<b>Completed</b>	<i>25 November 2023</i>
<b>Reviewed by</b>	<i>Katie Insch, Policy Officer, Business Strategy Team</i>

### 1. Policy Statement

The policy provides governance for when the council is committing to participation in a partnership, with the aim of minimising any risk. It ensures that there is reduced risk of partnerships being entered into or continuing when they are not aligned with the council's Strategic Priorities. It is recognised that the council works in partnership formally and informally to deliver the priorities for the council and working in partnership should be encouraged as normal business.

### 2. Scope

The policy applies to all council services.

For the purposes of this policy, a partnership has:

- an agreed framework for jointly delivering common goals, with shared risk and resources, which provide identified added value and measurable impact, based on shared accountability for outcomes, which cannot be cost effectively obtained in other ways.

This excludes:

- professional bodies or membership organisations - representative bodies which could either include a member from each of the 32 local authorities or a body that has members which pay a fee to receive services.
- informal networking groups - groups that exist to inform stakeholders with common interests rather than deliver outcomes.
- contractual relationships - includes those relationships bound by a Service Level Agreement or similar, or anything procured.

- short-life task-and-finish groups – groups which are brought together in the short term to deliver on a task and then cease to meet.

Statutory partnerships that the council must participate in are not subject to the terms of this policy. This is where the actual partnership is a statutory one (e.g Health and Social Care Partnership, Community Planning Partnership), rather than a non-statutory partnership being formed to undertake work that is statutory (e.g., GIRFEC Partnership facilitating the Children’s Services Plan).

**There may be other working relationships that do not fit the partnership definition and may not adhere to the excluded categories above. In those cases, the Head of Service should determine whether the policy should be followed.**

### 3. Principles

The policy aims to ensure that any partnership working arrangements that the council is involved in are in line with the council’s [Strategic Priorities](#) and that any risks associated have been mitigated.

The decision to enter into a non-statutory partnership must be agreed by Full Council as specified at Section A, 9.2 in the [Scheme of Governance](#).

A short partnership assessment and a short risk assessment must be undertaken before joining a partnership and every two years thereafter. It is important that the partnership produces benefits that outweigh its costs, supports the [Council Plan](#) including the strategic priorities, and considers priorities of statutory arrangements such as the Children’s Services Plan, Community Planning, Community Justice and NESTRANS.

A process for the initial assessment and subsequent reviews are detailed in the Partnership Working Procedure. This also highlights that an exit strategy should be prepared for when leaving a partnership. A Register of Partnerships has been established to keep a record of all partnerships the council is currently involved in and whether they have adhered to the policy by undertaking regular reviews.

If participation in a partnership is a statutory requirement for the council, the assessments should still be completed as best practice guidance. There is no requirement for a statutory partnership to gain approval from Full Council.

### 4. Related Links

Partnership Working Procedure (internal only)  
Partnership Working Procedure - Partnership Assessment & Risk Assessment (internal only)  
[Aberdeenshire Council Plan 2022-27](#) including strategic priorities

## 5. Index of Documents

### a) Policy

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes
12 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	2014	-Correcting out of date information -Creation of procedure to support brief policy -Register of Partnerships tool to be developed as a log -Process remains broadly similar -Approval for new partnerships at Full Council, as per Scheme of Governance
25 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	12 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2018	-Correcting out of date information -Updated Pentana register to reflect ended partnerships -Process remains unchanged and policy still fit for use.

### b) Distribution

Name	Title
Rob Simpson	Director of Business Services
Alan Wood	Director of Infrastructure Services
Laurence Findlay	Director of Education and Children's Services
Pamela Milliken	Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership
Craig Paterson	Risk & Resilience Team