

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

ON 16 November 2021

REPORT

SUBJECT: Arun District Council Partnerships Register

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DATE: 26 October 2021

EXTN: 37580

PORTFOLIO AREA: Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This paper sets out progress on a register of partnerships for Arun District Council and makes recommendations on how this should go forward.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) That the Audit and Governance Committee review the Partnerships Register on an annual basis and direct Internal Audit to carry out detailed reviews where necessary

2. BACKGROUND:

- 2.1. Partnership working has been identified as increasingly important for the future, particularly given the financial situation for local government.
- 2.2. In February 2020 the Audit and Governance Committee considered a report from the Group Head of Policy setting out how she intended to carry out the work required to establish a Register of Partnerships which Arun District Council participates in. Members would then be able to consider the future role, if any, of Internal Audit with regards to this register.
- 2.3. The Corporate Management Team (CMT) agreed a working definition of 'partnerships' in order to facilitate the development of a Partnerships Register and an ongoing review process.

"A voluntary or statutory arrangement between the authority and one or more free and independent parties which is designed to secure some shared objective. The authority is required to make either a significant financial contribution or a significant contribution in terms of other assets or it will take the role of lead or accountable body within the arrangement"

A partnership is not about a traditional customer/supplier relationship, outsourcing or other purely contractual relationship"

A survey of Group Heads has resulted in a much longer list of ‘partners’ than has been previously identified, set out in Appendix 1. The word ‘Partnership’ is potentially used differently in a number of different contexts, which we need to take account of.

The list of partners covers a number of differently defined bodies:

- Listed on the Arun Website under partnership working, but also Wellbeing and Arun Business Partnership pages;
- Listed in the Constitution;
- Identified by Full Council as outside bodies which require a member representative from Arun;
- Arrangements identified by Group Heads, including some contracts.

2.4. CMT and the Audit and Governance Committee have agreed that the current definition is as precise as possible.

2.5. Many of these partnerships are relatively operational in nature and it does not seem appropriate to list these, for example in the Constitution, so it will be necessary to hold a full register elsewhere.

2.6. Once the list is completed, it should be reviewed on a regular basis by officers, in particular for current relevance as arrangements do sometimes outlast their usefulness or need to change. Part of this regular review should focus on outcomes, added value and our contribution in terms of finance and other resource.

2.7. Members of Audit and Governance need to determine how they wish to use the register to carry out their responsibilities. It is suggested that should Members consider that an in depth review of any partnership is necessary this should be delegated to Internal Audit. A number of key relationships/partnerships with the Council (eg Freedom Leisure, Age UK) are covered by significant contractual arrangements and provide annual updates to the relevant Committee to allow members to scrutinise the arrangements. These are not listed on this register.

2.8. Before the development of the new website we referred to partnership working on our website, <https://www.arun.gov.uk/partnership-working> , this list is different to that included in the Constitution. We also have separate references to partnership on our Wellbeing pages and the Arun Business Partnership pages. We are currently reviewing how best to present and rationalise this information on the website.

3. PROPOSAL(S):

That the Audit and Governance Committee review the Partnerships Register on an annual basis and direct Internal Audit to carry out detailed reviews where necessary


3. OPTIONS:

To agree alternative arrangements to those set out in section 2

4. CONSULTATION:

See note in implications		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial		✓
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓
6. IMPLICATIONS: There are no implications for the actual review, the review may however lead to considering the nature of our future relationship with some partners which could well have implications for a number of Council policies.		

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION: To produce an up to date register of partners

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS: Arun website partnership page:- https://www.arun.gov.uk/partnership-working CIPFA Guidance to Audit Committees on Partnerships (see extract attached)  Appendix - CIPFA Guidance Extract.pdf
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