



**TO: Audit & Governance Committee**

**FROM: Policy and Partnerships Manager**

**DATE: 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

**PORTFOLIOS AFFECTED: All**

**WARDS AFFECTED: All**

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**TITLE OF REPORT: Significant Partnerships Register 2019/20**

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**1. PURPOSE**

To provide Members with an update on the Significant Partnerships Register for 2019/20. The Register identifies all the significant partnerships the local authority is involved in as per the Audit & Governance Committee's Terms of Reference.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Audit & Governance Committee is asked to:

- Review and approve the significant partnerships submitted for inclusion in the 2019/20 register

**3. BACKGROUND**

The information held within the Significant Partnerships Register is captured using the Partnership Governance Framework. This document was designed to determine which partnerships exist across the Council and of these, which ones would classify as 'significant.'

The document is in two parts – guidance and template - to ensure that Directors are able to identify which partnerships within their remit can be defined as 'significant' and lead officers can then outline the partnership's compliance with the Council's guidelines using the template. The document has undergone changes following internal audits and changes to best practice nationally. However, it still maintains its original aim of ensuring compliance with council policy and identifying appropriate evidence of this to aid future audits.

The current framework is based on the Council's Code of Corporate Governance and CIPFA guidance on Delivering Good Governance. The Register is an opportunity to ensure that partnerships throughout the local authority are well governed and that appropriate oversight is in place.

For the purposes of this exercise a significant partnership is:

*"an agreement between two or more independent bodies to work collectively to achieve an objective, normally excluding the familiar relationships between client and contractor or employer and staff."*

It is defined as a joint working arrangement where the partners:

- are otherwise independent bodies;
- agree to co-operate to achieve common goals and outcomes for the community;

- share accountability, risks, and resources;
- share relevant information; and
- agree processes and programmes to achieve the common goal.

**4. RATIONALE**

The Significant Partnerships Register is updated on a six monthly basis to review and assess partnerships to ensure that they continue to be relevant, offer value for money and that the intended outcomes are being achieved. As a result of budget pressures over the past ten years there has been a change in the number of partnerships the council is involved in. To ensure resources (assets, staff and financial) are utilised to maximum benefit, membership of various partnerships has been reviewed over the years.

**5. KEY ISSUES**

The Significant Partnerships Register 2019/20 is attached as appendix A. Following approval of the Register by the Committee, lead officers for each partnership will be asked to complete an updated governance framework to ensure that the partnership is compliant with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council guidance and CIPFA recommendations. Responsibility rests with the department to ensure that supporting evidence is available for examination upon request.

Directors have been reminded of their responsibility to ensure that completed framework documents are submitted for each significant partnership within their department. In addition, Directors must sign each framework document before submission to the Corporate Research, Policy and Partnerships team.

**6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no policy implications arising from this report.

**7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

**9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no resource implications arising from this report.

**10. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATION**

There are no equality implications arising from this report.

**11. CONSULTATIONS**

Individual Directors approve each entry on the register and also sign-off the related framework. Entries without a Director's signature are not accepted.

Contact Officer: Mohsin Mulla (ext. 5525)  
 Date: 31<sup>th</sup> December 2019  
 Background Papers: Significant Partnerships Register (Appendix 1)