ORDER NO. 22/2

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

1. STRATEGY

It is the Policy of the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) to work in partnerships with the community and other agencies, so that we can better deliver our services to the community of the West Midlands.

Anyone thinking of taking advantage of any partnership working opportunities must follow the procedures detailed in this policy which will ensure integrity and accountability whilst getting the most out of such opportunities.

Partnerships must be able to show through clear objectives and targets that they meet the aims of this Authority's 'Vision and Mission Statements' (see section 2.3). The Service will only enter into partnerships that do not conflict with statutory obligations, compromise the principles of the Service and do not detract from the agreed priorities of the Authority.

2. PROCEDURES

2.1 Introduction

WMFS will take full advantage of various forms of partnership working, funding, resources and/or the supplying of works or services given freely by partners whether such opportunities arise from partnerships alone and/or funding, grants or sponsorship.

2.2 Partnership definitions

For the purposes of this Standing Order, partnerships fall within three definitions:

2.2.1 Social responsibility partnerships (SRP)

These may be the result of a statutory requirement or be formed due to a moral and social duty to improve the local community. Examples of SRP:

- Arson Task Force (ATF)
- Public Service Agreement (PSA)
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP)
- Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
- Ward Committee
- Safer Neighbourhood Group
- Local Area Agreements

2.2.2 Cause Specific Partnerships (CSP)

These are set up for a specific cause. The cause is often decided by social responsibility or policy and tends to be influenced by the aims and objectives of the partner organisations. They may result from a 'social responsibility partnership' or the partnership may be developed as part of a joint project.

This type of partnership has **specific targets and requires a commitment of resources from the partners** and may or may not involve funding.

Due to the commitment involved, this type of partnership **must** have a **Service Level Agreement**.

Examples of CSP:

- Joint project to train local wardens in fire safety so that they in turn can make referrals for Home Fire Safety Checks
- Mentoring scheme
- Dying to Drive
- HFSC partnerships
- Partnership with the (BID) deaf community

2.2.3 Sponsorship

This involves the donation of funding and/or resources for specific projects by companies or organisations, in return for the 'public relations' benefits of being associated with such projects. These partnerships should include a **SLA**.

Examples of a sponsorship:

- A food outlet sponsoring the raffle prize for HFSC
- M&S Sponsoring the Service's Detector Dog and 4x4 vehicle

2.2.4 Form of agreements

Agreements may be in the form of goods, works, services, funds, projects, activities and/or resources, but must be in support of one or more of the key priorities as well as the borough and/or departmental action plans of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority. Partnerships may not attract any specific income but such arrangements must be consistent with one or more of the key priorities as well their borough and/or departmental action plans

2.3 Vision and Mission Statements of the Authority

Every partnership arrangement **must** include the Vision and Mission Statements of the Authority.

2.3.1 The Authority's Vision Statement

'Making West Midlands Safer'.

2.3.2 The Authority's Mission Statement

We will provide a quality service to reduce risk by:

- Preventing
- Protecting
- Responding

2.4 Delivery mechanisms

We will provide a quality service to reduce risk by:

- Preventing
- Protecting
- Responding

- The development of a **partnership toolkit** to train and spread good practice (see section 2.10).

2.5 Risk management

All partnership arrangements will include a structured process (see Standing Order 22/7 for details of this process). This will minimise the risk to the Authority where such partnerships attract financial benefits in the form of monies and/or resources, require the Service to deliver against set targets or commit the Service to the expenditure of monies and/or allocation of resources.

All partnerships, whether as part of a joint project or as representation on a socially responsible group such as a Ward Committee, Neighbourhood Forums or Local Area Agreements, must be formalised through the structured process of recording the details on the partnership database and maintaining appropriate records of the partnership at regular intervals using the database. Any partnership involving the commitment of resources must be formalised through a **Service Level Agreement**.

2.6 Service Level Agreements (SLA)

The SLA is **not a legally binding document,** but is designed to identify working arrangements, the expectations and the responsibilities of the partners and project and to help with the management of the project or partnership. A template of a recommended SLA (see Appendix 3) is available and minor changes are allowed. All partnerships involving funding or grants should include a contract that identifies any legal obligations between the partners and the funding body.

All partnerships involving a commitment of resources will be subject to a SLA and will have a clearly named responsible person (the facilitator) from WMFS representing the Authority's interests throughout the life of the partnership. If the named responsible person changes it is essential that another is nominated and the partnership database is updated.

2.7 Evaluating partnerships

The evaluation process is an **essential** part of any partnership and should be in keeping with the type and size of the partnership or project. The extent of the evaluation should be decided by the resource available (time, budget, skills and expectations) and should:

- measure what you have done against the original aims and objectives of the partnership or project;
- monitor what you are doing and whether it is an effective use of resources and/or value for money;
- find out what worked and what did not as well as identify any improvements or changes;
- identify any risks to the partnership or project, the WMFS, the partner(s) and those included in the partnership or project, at the very beginning of the partnership and evaluated throughout the life of the partnership using a Risk log (refer to Standing Order 22/7);
- provide an ongoing portfolio of evidence for assessment purposes; and
- determine the success of the partnership or project.

It is essential to plan the evaluation process at the very beginning of any partnership or project and this should take place during the expression of interest stage. The actual evaluation(s) should form part of the progress or update report(s).

The WMFS has adopted the principles of the National Performance Improvement Network Evaluation Toolkit (see Appendix 4).

2.8 Partnership officer

The role of the Partnership Officer includes the approval process for funding and the auditing process to ensure integrity and accountability is maintained. The Partnership Officer will also work with project facilitators to identify potential funding, advise during the bidding process and ensure that the SLAs are in place to protect all parties. The officer will also be responsible for the following:

- The provision of advice, guidance and support in respect of external funding and partnership arrangements, and the maintenance of the partnership toolkit.
- The maintenance of a central database, accessible by the public, of external funding and/or partnership arrangements. The database will provide a focal point for partnership and funding activities and ensure a co-ordinated approach to seeking partnerships and/or funding as well as identifying good practice
- Requesting information from project facilitators as necessary to ensure partnerships are continually monitored as part of a continual audit process.
- Highlighting at the earliest opportunity to the appropriate people, infringements of this order.

If in doubt, the first point of reference should be the Partnership Officer and in the case of the station based personnel, the first point of reference can be either the respective Community Safety Officer and/or the Partnership Officer. In the absence of the Partnership Officer, the Head of Finance and Procurement, who will be responsible for the overall management of the Partnership Working Policy, should be contacted.

2.9 Partnership database

The partnership database is designed to be a live tool that maintains a record of every partnership registered, giving the partnership a unique reference number. The partnership facilitator is responsible for registering and updating their respective partnership records. The **database** must be maintained and updated frequently to start regular reviews of partnership activity and to ensure a level of auditing in line with the commitment in terms of finance, resource or output. Any exchange of data must keep to WMFS's policy on information sharing.

The partnership database is currently situated in Live Web (see Appendix 2 for the Database User Guide)

All the partnerships details **MUST** be completed and saved at the relevant sections of the partnership database. However in the unusual situation where the database cannot be accessed, paper based Partnership Process Forms PA1-4 and the templates can be downloaded via QuickForms on the Intranet. The checklist and guidance document can be downloaded via the Finance and Procurement/Partnerships/Partnership Resource Library on the Intranet.

2.10 Partnership toolkit

The **partnership toolkit** is available in the partnership resource library, situated in the Finance and Procurement Section of the Intranet. It can identify partnership opportunities, provide training with regard to partnerships and provide the templates for SLA for both internal and external partnerships as well as formal and informal ones. The toolkit will ensure partnership development in line with this Service's policies and provide a source of good practice.

2.11 Partnership facilitator

The partnership facilitator is the person responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the partnership. The facilitator will oversee and manage the partnership until such time that the partnership is finished and provide regular progress reports to their respective line manager and the Partnership Officer via the PA3 section of the database. They will also be expected to provide regular updates to the partners. The partnership facilitator is representing the interests of the WMFS and must conduct themselves accordingly.

The facilitator's main responsibilities are:

- to be able to authorise and be the main signatory on behalf of the Service, for the partnership concerned in accordance with Service policy. This makes them responsible for the overall management of the partnership;

- to tell the Partnership Officer of any partnership or funding opportunity as soon as there is any intent to enter into such, by completing an Expression of Interest- Form PA1 directly on the database. This must be sent, together with a copy of the proposal or bid, to the Partnership Officer so that they may offer any initial advice as necessary and add the information received to the database;
- to update the partnership details via the PA2 section on the database, once any firm commitment to a partnership and/or funding opportunity has been set up and to send this, together with a copy of confirmation of the funding or partnership and a copy of the SLA to the Partnership Officer;
- to write bids and proposals with advice and support from the Partnerships Officer or Local Authority Liaison Officers (LALO);
- to implement, manage, maintain and evaluate the partnership;
- to maintain regular contact with the partner(s) or funder(s);
- to ensure that progress and updates are reported to the Partnership Officer and their own line manager via the PA3 section on the database, during all stages of a partnership, on a quarterly basis or otherwise, as identified during the evaluation planning stage (see Section 2.7) and in agreement with the partners, the respective line manager and/or the Partnership Officer;
- to ensure that if they are not able to continue facilitating the partnership, a new Project Facilitator is appointed and briefed. This 'hand–over of project' MUST be formalised by completing a Notification for the Change of Facilitating Officer (PA4) Section on the database. Failure to do so will result in a lack of accountability and often leads to a failure in meeting commitments and agreements made to partners;
- to ensure that exception reports are completed and immediately sent to the Partnership Officer and/or respective line manger if any concerns, problems or difficulties arise during the course of the partnership or project; and
- to co-operate at all times with the Partnership Officer in giving information relating to any partnerships they are involved with.

2.12 Process dependent on the level of funding

In order to process funding opportunities the following levels for authorisation must be followed:

Funding up to £2.5 K	-	Approval by Station Manager
Funding between £2.5K and £5K	-	Approval by Operations Commander
Funding between £5K and £10K	-	Approval by SDO
Funding between £10K and £20K	-	Approval by Head of Finance & Procurement
Funding above £20K	-	Approval by Corporate Board and Executive Committee

The values above relate to the total value of the funding, even if this is spread over a number of years.

If any direct funding is to be provided, then personnel must liaise immediately with the Head of Finance & Procurement to make sure that accounting procedures and rules of probity are followed at all times.

Any funding associated with a partnership must have a suspense account and the account number must be logged on the database.

2.13 Actions in the event of a delay in starting partnership

If there is a delay or a lapse, the Partnership Facilitator must tell the Partnership Officer or the Head of Finance and Procurement of the new start date. Funding should be used as per original SLA in agreement with the funding provider.

2.14 Practical considerations

There are many organisations who are seeking to raise brand awareness or enhance their profile through partnership or funding and association with organisations such as the West Midlands Fire Service. Such organisations may operate on a local, national or international level; links with local communities may be part of their business plans. It is essential that due care is taken to ensure that public association with a partner or funding source does not cause embarrassment to the Authority. Partnership or funding should not be considered where there is **a risk of compromising the integrity or propriety of the Authority**, for example, by accepting offers from sources which would be in conflict with statutory obligations or where the provider seeks endorsement of a product or service to gain preferential treatment in supplying or contracting goods or services to WMFS or to influence the direction of a particular policy or Fire Service operation.

All personnel must consider the following guidance before proposing an organisation as a potential partner or source of external funding.

- Potentially sensitive association with unsuitable sponsors.
- Projects which could distract efforts from tackling agreed priorities, the Vision or Mission Statement, the key priorities or business plan objectives.
- Service policies in terms of changes to use of existing buildings, new build and planning permission.
- Projects of dubious or limited benefit in Fire Service terms.
- Offers of goods, loans or funds or partnerships with unsuitable conditions attached.
- Offers of goods, loans or funding or partnerships with additional or ongoing revenue costs attached.
- Offers of equipment which is incompatible with existing Service equipment.
- Offers of equipment which may attract additional costs, for example, insurance costs, maintenance costs.
- The risk of becoming unduly dependent on a facility liable to be withdrawn.
- Consideration must be given to Value Added Tax implications. The Financial Management Section will advise and arrange centrally for proper accounting arrangements with Revenues and Customs

2.15 Political considerations

Some partnership opportunities may have political considerations. Funding and partnerships are generally welcomed by all main political parties though some parties may be associated with values that conflict with those of WMFS. Funding in excess of £20K will be drawn to the attention of Authority Members via the Executive Committee reports. However, it may be beneficial to draw to the attention of Elected Members, and in some cases Members of Parliament, funding opportunities below £20K and partnerships in general. Personnel should tell the Head of Finance and Procurement in writing of any such proposed political involvement.

2.16 Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety and the Environment

All partnerships will be required to care for the health and safety of all our people, operate within a culture of equality that values diversity, and not have a harmful effect on the well being of the environment. Partnerships will be monitored to make sure that they deliver services in the most efficient and effective manner and that both parties and the community receive real benefits.

2.17 Integrity and accountability

External funds have the potential to greatly extend the WMFS's service to the public. Not only can external finance be used for projects that could not otherwise be undertaken but there is the additional benefit of involving a wider sector of the community in the work of the Service. However, the process is potentially complicated and external funding should only be sought and accepted under clear and carefully defined conditions. Everyone involved must have a full understanding of what is being offered and what each party to any agreement will receive. It should not be assumed that the other party is always aware of the possible pitfalls.

Businesses will have a legitimate commercial interest in offering resources to WMFS but there should also be a well intentioned reason for offering assistance. WMFS will always give priority to the needs of the Service rather than those of the sponsor or donor.

It is vital to make sure that such agreements provide real extra resources, that is, after taking into account any increased costs incurred by the Service in developing agreements and in subsequent maintenance and other liabilities. Intangible benefits obtained through increased public support and co-operation is a bonus.

Potential partners and/or funding providers must not be put under undue pressure or made to feel obliged to support WMFS. All such contributions must be voluntary. Suitable written agreements must be prepared and exchanged as part of, and before, accepting partnership working.

2.18 Consultation

Representative bodies

From time to time, opportunities may arise which, if put into effect, may impact upon employees. Where necessary, consultation will take place with the representative bodies to ensure full attention is given to the potential impact of any proposal. All such consultation must be done in accordance with Service policy.

Internal departments

Relevant internal departments must be consulted to make sure that all issues are identified and dealt with before any agreement is signed.

Financial management must be consulted where any vehicles and/or equipment is provided in terms of their inclusion in fleet lists and/or asset registers, as well as about the disposal of such equipment. This consultation can be done via the partnership database.

Examples are given in Appendix 1 to this Standing Order of possible scenarios.

2.19 Conflict of Interest

During the course of work involving sponsorships, personnel may be exposed to offers of donations, gifts or hospitality.

Personnel must ensure that the procedures, as detailed in Standing Order No. 2/15, Acceptance of Donations, Gifts and Hospitality, are strictly followed at all times.

2.20 Promotion and launch of partnership working

Major launches of all related events should be included in the Service's electronic diary and the Service's Media Relations Officer should be told at the earliest opportunity in order to promote the partnership concerned.

3. CROSS REFERENCES

Standing Order No. 1/5	-	Freedom of Information Act
Standing Order No. 1/8	-	Procurement Procedure
Standing Order No. 1/9	-	Programme and Project Management Process
Standing Order No. 1/14	-	Environmental Policy
Standing Order No. 1/22	-	Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
Standing Order No. 2/13	-	Equality & Diversity Policy
Standing Order No. 2/15	-	Acceptance of Donations, Gifts and Hospitality
Standing Order No. 19	-	Health and Safety
Standing Order No. 22/07	-	Risk Management Policy

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority's - Financial Regulations (Section 5)

4. KEY CONSULTEES

This Standing Order was approved by Corporate Board and no further consultation was required.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The initial Equality Impact Assessment raised no issues and a full EIA was not required.

6. OWNERSHIP

This Standing Order was approved by Corporate Board.

7. RESPONSIBILITY

7.1 Responsible Corporate Board Member / Department

Head of Finance and Procurement/Partnerships.

7.2 Created / fully reviewed / amended

This Standing Order was updated by the Partnership Officer – February 2008.

GUIDANCE NOTE - AREAS TO CONSIDER WHEN INVESTIGATING PARTNERSHIPS, BIDS, GRANTS OR SPONSORSHIP

With the increased involvement of personnel in partnership activities, it was felt that it would be helpful to issue guidance as to some of the issues they must think about when considering such partnerships.

The following is meant to be an aide memoir and is by no means exclusive. Each project tends to be different and therefore may require a different approach and input and other things may need to be considered in addition to those listed below.

For contact details see CONTAX on the Service Intranet.

1. Approval from Corporate Board - report template available from Word Processing Unit - FSHQ.
2. Corporate Planning & Support – Risk Management
3. Approval from the Authority - report template available from Word Processing Unit - FSHQ.
4. WMFS's building stock – contact Estates.
5. Insurance implications – contact Secretariat.
6. Residential tenancy implications – contact Secretariat.
7. If vehicles involved - contact Transport Engineering Workshops.
8. Legal implications (contracts, etc.) - contact Secretariat.
9. Leases with third parties – contact Secretariat.
10. Staffing implications including secondments – contact Personnel.
11. ICT issues – contact ICT.
12. Asset Register or fleet list implications – contact Finance.
13. Inventory implications – contact Secretariat.
14. Prevention, protection, intervention implications – contact Operations Support Department.
15. Media interest or specific launch – contact Media Relations.
16. Involves fitting or provision of smoke alarms – see Service policy – contact Community Safety Team.
17. Local Authority Partnerships – contact the relevant Local Authority Liaison Officer
18. Management of external funding – contact Finance

PARTNERSHIP DATABASE USERS GUIDE

Initial access

1. To access the partnership database you need to be an authorised user – if you are not and need access please contact the Partnership Officer at sheetal.panchmatia@wmfs.net.
2. To access the database you will need to be log on in 'Live Web'.
3. If you are an authorised user (check with your Partnership Officer) and are having difficulties, accessing the database screens please following instructions below:
   - To access the screens, you will need to use 'Change Service', which is available from the Options panel on the front page of the service.
   - If you then select 'Performance and Planning', this will change your service, giving you access to the Partnership screens. These are available from 'Function' - 'Performance and Planning' - 'Partnerships' menu option.

Please complete all fields.

If you have a question or are unsure please contact Sheetal Panchmatia (6948) or Rob Davis on 753 1313.

Creating a new partnership record (PA1)

1. Log on to 'Live Web' – Functions – Performance and Planning – Partnerships – PA1.
2. Enter the relevant details using either the drop-down menu or free text as appropriate.
3. **'Parent Id'** field is used if the partnership is the main or parent project and has one or more 'sibling' partnerships or projects, for example:
   a) Your Choice on the Road would be the Parent Project and Dying to Drive would be the Sibling Project.
   b) The Local Strategic Partnership or Neighbourhood Priority Group or LAA (SRP – Partnership Type) would be the Parent and any partnership project coming out of that would be the sibling.

   If there are a number of partnerships with a parent Id – please make sure the project title is consistent to that of the parent project.
4. '**Station or Section'** – if the partnership project is a borough wide project – please state so by selecting the appropriate borough reference from the drop-down menu.

   You can exit out of the screen at any time by clicking on 'Exit' – a question box will pop up asking you – click 'Yes' if you wish to save any records and complete later – this will save any data inputted so far.
5. You can return to complete the data at a later time using PA2 screen – see section 2 below.
6. Please ensure that as much accurate detail as possible is provided.

Updating or amending an existing partnership record (PA2)

1. Log on to 'Live Web' – Functions – Performance and Planning – Partnerships – PA2.
2. You now have a number of choices of how to retrieve your partnership file:
   a) Simply press F8 to retrieve every WMFS partnership recorded on the database. Select the one you want and double click to retrieve all relevant details.
   b) You can retrieve your partnership by either entering:
      - Project ID followed by F8, then double click on the one you want.
      - Partnership name followed by F8 then double click on the one you want.

- Type (for example, CPS/SRP) followed by F8 then double click on the one you want.
- Start date (for example, 30/01/04) followed by F8 then double click on the one you want.
- End date (for example, 31/04/07) followed by F8 then double click on the one you want.
- Status (for example, P fop pending) followed by F8 then double click on the one you want.

3. Go through each page using the tabs at the top of the page and update accordingly – and do not forget to keep saving your updates.

Updating or amending an existing partnership record (PA3)

1. Log on to 'Live Web' – Functions – Performance and Planning – Partnerships – PA3.
2. Follow instruction as set out in section 2 above.
3. Go through each page using the tabs at the top of the page and update accordingly – and do not forget to keep saving your updates.

Change of Partnership Facilitator (PA4)

1. Log on to 'Live Web' – Functions – Performance and Planning – Partnerships – PA4.
2. Follow instruction as set out in section 2 above.
3. Go through each page using the tabs at the top of the page and update accordingly – and do not forget to keep saving your updates.

View partnership (project) details

1. Log on to 'Live Web' – Functions – Performance and Planning – Partnerships – View Project Details
2. Follow instruction as set out in section 2 above.
3. **NOTE: YOU CANNOT CHANGE ANY DATA HERE – THIS IS SIMPLY A VIEW PROFILE**

APPENDIX 3

Example Service Level Agreement

Between

West Midlands Fire Service

And

Name of the Organisation(s)/Partner(s)/Forums etc

Agreement Reference Number:	***/****/******/***/*** To be allocated by the External Partnerships Officer
Title of Project:	************************
Life of the agreement:	200*/200*

Example Service Level Agreement

This Service Level Agreement (SLA) is not a legally binding document; it is designed to identify working arrangements, the expectations and the responsibilities of the partners and project as well as to assist with the management of this partnership. Any partnerships involving funding or grants should include a contract that identifies any legal obligations between the partners and the funding body.

1. Purpose of Service level Agreement

1.1 To increase the safety of (*name of the community/group/area/ward)*, the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) and *(Named Organisation/Forum etc)* will seek funding to provide training and equipment to enable Community Wardens to provide the range of services specified in this document for the period (*date)* until (*date)*.

External funding of *(amount)* is sought from *(funding body),* payable to the WMFS. It is sought under the terms contained within this Service Level Agreement and is subject to review to ascertain the impact upon the community. (Copy of funding bid and/or agreement attached).

2. Duration of Agreement

This agreement will commence on *(date)* and will run for a *(number)* month period to *(date)*

3. Service Description *(Partner)*

3.1 The (*named organisation)* will use existing community wardens to provide the following services:

- Conducting Basic Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC), in line with the policy and procedures of WMFS to identify risks within the homes they visit and to encourage occupiers to take advantage of a fire service HFSC and make the necessary referral.
- Identifying any vulnerable build up of combustible materials in the *(named)* area.
- Identifying abandoned vehicles in the *(named)* area.
- Identifying possible opportunities for arson attacks of buildings or property and referring this local intelligence to WMFS.
- Facilitating community safety awareness programmes to coincide with local or national initiatives.

4. Service Description (WMFS)

4.1 West Midlands Fire Service will provide the following services:

The WMFS is committed to reducing the risks within communities as detailed in the Corporate Strategy 2007/08. In addition it is committed to supporting local initiatives that deliver a range of activities which reduce all risks to communities. To achieve this, the WMFS will:

- use the above funding to provide the training and necessary equipment to enable community wardens to fulfil the above;

- put systems in place to ensure that referrals from the wardens are forwarded to the Fire Station who will then make an appointment to visit the property. WMFS employees will carry out HFSCs and fit smoke alarms as appropriate;

- confirm all appointments via Email to *(address)* and they will be completed within 12 days from the request date;

- process and manage all data collected as a result of this project will be processed and managed by WMFS in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. WMFS will share all HFSC data with its partners within this agreement upon request. It may also share such data with other partners and agencies as part of existing arrangements. Partners within this agreement may not share this information with other agencies and partners without written consent from the Station Commander at *(Named)* Fire Station; and

- provide resources and equipment to specific output areas in *(named area/ward)* in accordance with the IRMP. These areas will be defined and agreed between both parties.

5. Service delivery principles

All services provided, as part of this agreement should aim to secure:

- a positive contribution to the Neighbourhood Development Plan
- sustainable safer homes
- an environmental impact within *(named area)* that will contribute to a Flourishing Neighbourhood.

6. Activity

6.1 The community wardens shall compile quarterly information returns to the Station Commander at *(Named)* Fire Station, in relation to the information required as outlined in section 3.1

6.2 The WMFS will, as far as reasonably practicable, supply information about any fires within the *(Named)* area.

7. Targets

500 HFSCs to be carried out during the life of this agreement to result in a minimum of 1 smoke alarm per floor fitted to all households visited.

8. Milestones

Wardens trained by *(date)*

50 HFSCs by *(date)*

9. Evaluation

9.1 The WMFS will evaluate the process with two reviews of the initiative. These should include statements on the performance of each element of the service provided and the impact on the community. The dates for the reviews are *(date) and (date).*

9.2 The agreement will be formally evaluated following these reviews to make sure that it supports the services identified above and other general services provided by the community wardens.

10. Monitoring

10.1 The West Midlands Fire Service will be a member of the independent *(Named Organisation/Forum, etc.)* Steering Group, which will include principal funding partners. The Steering Group will monitor and evaluate all aspects of the service delivery of the warden scheme. The steering group will meet every two months and receive a formal report of activity from the scheme. The Station Commander at *(named)* Fire Station will be the Fire Service representative on the steering group.

11. Training

11.1 The West Midlands Fire Service will deliver the right training to allow community wardens to carry out the services and give advice as identified in section 2.

11.2 *(Named Organisation/Forum, etc.)* and West Midlands Fire Service will identify any additional training needs in respect of community safety and will also make sure that community wardens maintain their competencies in relation the services in section 2.

12. Funding and payment

12.1 West Midlands Fire Service fund the provision of all smoke alarms and all expenditure associated with delivering referred HFSC.

The (partner agency) will be responsible for the costs associated with the HFSCs carried out by the community wardens other than the provision of a smoke alarm.

Unexpected costs will be subject to agreement and will require amendment to this Service Level Agreement.

12.2 All invoices for payments under this service level agreement must indicate the following information.

- The reference number as shown on the front of the agreement.
- The title of the project.
- The year of agreement.
- The period of time covered by the invoice.

Any invoice, which does not contain the information detailed above, is liable to be returned unpaid. Payments will normally be in two instalments, one in *(date)* and one in *(date)*.

13. Agreement variation

13.1 There will be no variation to increase the value during the period of this agreement.

In the event of the organisation failing to deliver in full the service level specified in the Service Description, the Authority will seek to negotiate a reduction in the agreement value in the year.

14. Termination

This Service Level Agreement shall continue until *(date)* unless ended earlier by mutual agreement of both parties.

15. Insurance and indemnity

(Named Organisation/Forum, etc.) must provide details of insurance cover for services applicable to this Service Level Agreement, including a copy of the Certificate of Insurance.

The West Midlands Fire Service and the (Named Organisation/Forum, etc.) will:

- only supply smoke alarms to BS 5446 part 1
- fit smoke alarms in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- carry out Home Fire Risk Assessments and give advice in accordance with Service instructions

As such, neither party will be responsible for any defect in any alarm supplied nor for any subsequent fire or other incident that arises from the service provided under this Agreement.

16. Complaints

16.1 West Midlands Fire Service considers successful resolution of complaints to be a key quality indicator. Service providers are expected to have a complaints procedure that is compatible with that provided by the West Midlands Fire Service.

16.2 All partners are expected to analyse the content of complaints and to carry out changes to overcome any poor practice identified.

16.3 All partners will be expected to co-operate with any independent review arranged by any of the agreement partner bodies.

17. Services for diverse community groups

17.1 Connecting with service users from the different community groups is a high priority for the West Midlands Fire Service, however this partnership is specifically designed to target households at risk and therefore has no targets or requirements to specific ethnic groups, disability, gender or age.

17.2 The method of collecting equalities information, tenancy, and occupation of households will be that prescribed within the HFSC procedure for Fire Service purposes. *(Partner organisation)* will require this information as part of their statutory duties. There is no requirement for other partner agencies to collect additional information or to retain any records for monitoring purposes.

18. Human resource management

18.1 All partner agencies will be equal opportunities employers with a system of human resource development, which provides for the development of individuals in the context of organisational objectives, which monitors the development and impact upon and quality of service provided.

18.2 In particular they will operate policies that firmly embrace equality and diversity and harassment and bullying that reflect those standards required by WMFS.

19. Acceptance of this Agreement

I accept this Service level Agreement on behalf of West Midlands Fire Service

Signature: Name:

Designation: Date:

I accept this Service level Agreement on behalf of *(Named Organisation/Forum etc)*

Signature: Name:

Designation: Date:

APPENDIX 4

PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION GUIDE

Purpose of this Guide

These guidelines provide an overview of how to evaluate a partnership. The principles can be used to evaluate any partnership you may enter into. The evaluation process can be adapted to any partnership, however large or small. However, the evaluation should be in proportion to the partnership being set up. You can read through these guidelines very quickly and there is further information available on the Partnerships intranet site.

The guidelines are based upon a critical review of recent developments in evaluation techniques and those already used in many fields, including crime prevention, road safety and injury prevention.

Each of the 8 stages takes you step-by-step through the evaluation process. It also gives you planning templates (see Appendix 4.1) and additional resources you can use for evaluating your partnership. Good practice case studies can be found on the Partnership intranet site.

1. What is evaluation?

Evaluation is that part of a partnership where you stand back and take stock. It is where you:

- measure what you have done against the original aims and objectives of the project;
- monitor what you are doing; and
- find out what was effective and what was not.

Evaluation is not an add-on feature of well-funded partnerships, it is a necessary part of all partnerships, although the evaluation should be in keeping with the type of partnership being set up. The extent of the evaluation will usually be decided by the resources available (time, budget and skills).

2. Why evaluate?

Evaluation can be used to show the success of a partnership. It can be used to find out:

- if a partnership is effective – helps to answer the 'So what?' question;
- why it is effective or ineffective;
- what can be learned from the successes or mistakes that have occurred;
- potential risks to both the partnership and the organisation as well as to those involved in the partnership.

It can also help you to:

- highlight and celebrate successes and achievements;
- publicise the partnership to gain additional funding or support from outside agencies;
- decide if a partnership is an efficient use of resources;
- inform any improvements to the partnership; and
- collate an ongoing portfolio of evidence for assessment purposes.

3. When evaluate?

It is essential to plan your evaluation at the very beginning of any partnership. This ensures that it is an ongoing process and allows you to:

- gain a clearer understanding about the aims and objectives of the programme;
- put procedures in place for the collection of data for the evaluation, for example, before and after measures;
- plan for any costs – evaluation is resource intensive, around 10% of the total programme costs (including staff time) should be budgeted for evaluation.

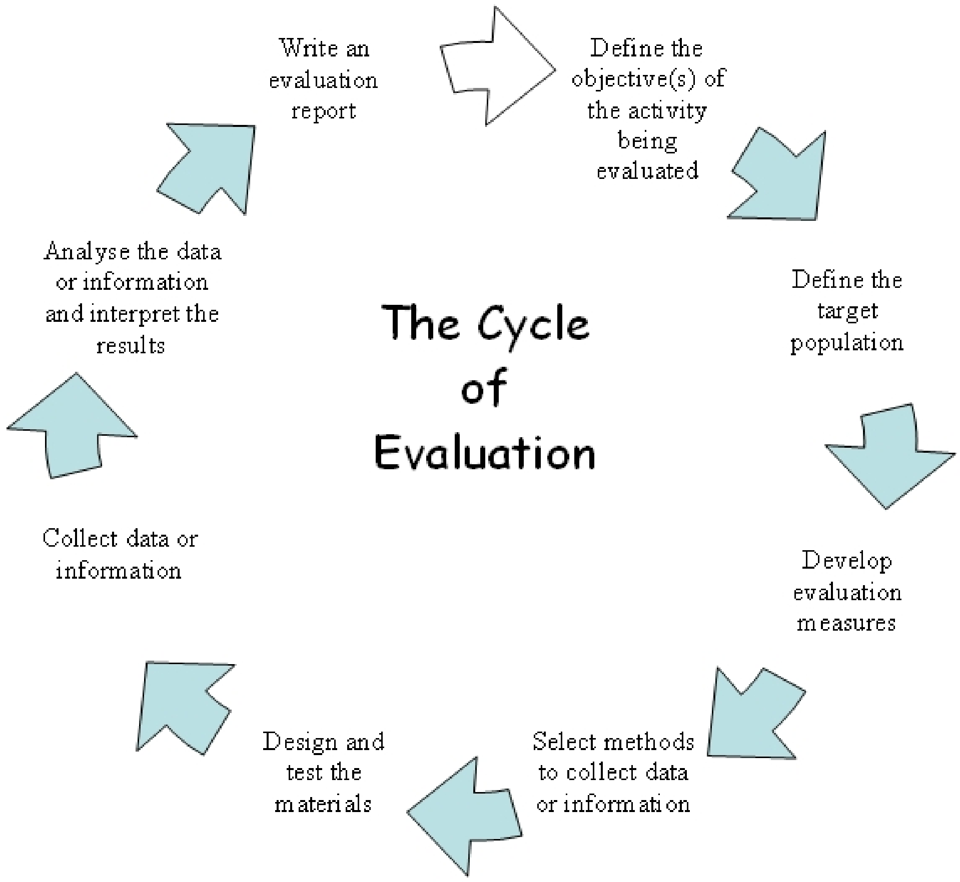
Interim evaluations may be necessary for activities that extend over a long period of time. Many larger activities, particularly those which are resource intensive or politically sensitive, will require continuous evaluation, for example, Home Fire Safety Checks or the relocation of stations.

4. Who evaluates?

The person who is responsible for the partnership should make sure that the evaluation takes place. This could be a project sponsor, project manager, lead officer or partnership manager. It is not the job of a central department to evaluate; it should be part of everyone's role.

5. How to evaluate

The stages described below provide a practical non-prescriptive process that summarises the important elements of partnership evaluation. Figure 1 shows the eight key stages in an evaluation.



(adapted from Thompson and McClintock, 1998)

6. Stage 1: Define the objective(s) of the partnership

An objective is what you want to achieve in the first place; in evaluation terms this would be what you want to find out about the partnership. It is where you ask 'Does it work?' It may be helpful to consider the following more specific questions against the original partnership objectives.

- Will it provide value for money?
- What are the intended outcomes?
- Who is it intended to work for?
- How is it intended to work?
- Why is it intended to work?

7. Stage 2: Define the target population

This is where you decide who will take part in your evaluation. This would usually be the groups that are involved in the partnership. However, the evaluation may want to consider the benefits to other stakeholders, for example, an organisation providing the funding for a partnership.

Target groups could include:

- vulnerable or 'at risk' groups such as children and the elderly
- employees
- companies or institutions
- partner organisations
- Local Authorities

The time and resources available will determine the extent to which each stakeholder group can be involved in the evaluation.

8. Stage 3: Develop evaluation measures

This is where you decide the criteria used to judge the performance of the partnership. Any evaluation measures should provide evidence against the objectives outlined at Stage 1. Measures are usually compared to a baseline, for example, before and after comparisons. This reiterates the importance of considering how you will evaluate at the initial planning of the partnership.

Measures could include:

- assessing the management of the programme, including delivery and cost efficiency
- examining how and to what extent the programme was implemented
- changes in behaviour, attitudes, knowledge or skills are used as outcome measures
- an assessment of costs associated with the partnership – cost v benefit
- performance indicator data.

Some data and information may already have been collected for another purpose. This should be considered before collecting new data.

Changes in behaviour, attitudes, knowledge or skills can be important, especially when evaluating community safety initiatives. The overall aim of a safety education programme may be to reduce deaths and injuries. However, this is unlikely to be of use as an outcome measure in local studies.

For example most studies of road safety education programmes have found little or no change in accident rates. The number of accidents in a local area is likely to be too small to detect significant difference when comparing one year to another.

A larger sample may need to be monitored over a longer period to find a reduction in accident or casualty rates and this may not be practical for a programme that builds up gradually. Instead of this, the evaluation of road safety initiatives has focused on a change in behaviour; the theory being a reduction in casualty or accident rates may be anticipated from behaviour change such as:

- developing safer attitudes against drink driving
- improving knowledge and understanding of road safety
- teaching people skills such as hazard awareness

9. Stage 4: Select methods to collect data or information

This is a description of what you will do to evaluate the partnership. The methods selected should balance the scale and complexity of the partnership with what is most desirable and feasible within the timescale and resources available.

Methods of collecting data or information include:

- interviews
- questionnaires
- focus groups
- on-line focus groups
- observation – best in natural environment but can be simulated
- document analysis
- experimental designs – Experimental Vs Control groups
- quizzes – multiple choice
- simulations – computer or video based tests, card tests
- draw and write – useful for younger children
- diaries

For further information on each of these methods, please refer to the Evaluation Toolkit in the Partnership Resource Library on the intranet.

Along with the research methods, other considerations include:

- who will specifically participate in the research? For example, if you decided school children were your target group for the evaluation (Stage 2) then you need to decide which schools you will use.
- sample size related to the size of the partnership and the information required
- how will participants be recruited?
- where will the evaluation take place?
- cultural issues, for example, accessibility, language
- ethical issues, for example, if working with children or vulnerable people a criminal records bureau check may be necessary
- the timing of the evaluation, for example, no point planning to evaluate a school's education programme during August
- have any similar studies been conducted? If so there may be an opportunity for comparison

10. Stage 5: Design and test the materials

This is the stage where you design any materials required for the evaluation, for example prepare a questionnaire or a draw and write exercise. Do not forget to decide how you will record any results. Once designed a thorough pilot of the materials should be undertaken, preferable in the geographic location of the main study. A pilot study only needs to be carried out with a small number of participants and save time and money by highlighting problems early.

11. Stage 6: Collect data or information

This is the part where you actually conduct the data or information collection exercise as determined in Stage 4.

12. Stage 7: Analyse the data or information and interpret the results

Following the collection of the data or information, the results will require interpretation. This will require answers to the questions:

- Did the partnership meet the objectives defined at Stage 1?
- Were additional benefits realised because of the work?

You will then have to:

- relate the findings to the original objective of the partnership;
- compare before and after data;
- compare the results to similar evaluations , for example, other stations; and
- acknowledge other factors that may have influenced your results, for example the weather, media, and so on.

13. Stage 8: Write an evaluation report

Evaluation reports can take various forms such as an article for publication in a scientific journal or a report for a committee. In some cases, a written summary or a presentation to a group may be all that is required. The type of report will depend upon whom it is being written for – it may be helpful to refer back to your target population identified in Stage 2. If the report contains a lot of detail, an executive summary would be helpful.

It would be useful to structure any evaluation report around the first seven stages of this toolkit, starting with what you wanted to achieve in the first place

It is inevitable that any decision on the success and continuation of a partnership will take into account cost. You should consider including in your report, costing in line with the scale of the partnership being evaluated.

Once the report has been produced, it is important to act on the findings and recommendations.

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Evaluation Planning Template

This simple template is to help you plan for the evaluation of a Partnership. It follows the eight stages of the evaluation process outlined in the guidance.

Date:

Partnership Name & Reference Number:

Partnership Facilitator:

Stage 1: Define the objective(s) of the Partnership

What do you want to achieve?

Stage 2: Define the target population

Who will it affect?

Stage 3: Develop evaluation measures

Referring to your objectives outlined in Stage 1 and identify the criteria you will use to judge the performance of the partnership.

Stage 4: Select methods to collect data or information

What methods will you use to evaluate the partnership?

Stage 5: Identify any risks

Are there any risks associated with your partnership (SO22/07)?

Stage 6: Collect data or information

Include any additional information relevant to the data or information collection process.

Stage 7: Analyse the data or information and interpret the results

How will you analyse the data or information and interpret the results?

Stage 8: Produce an evaluation report

How will you report your findings, to whom and by when?