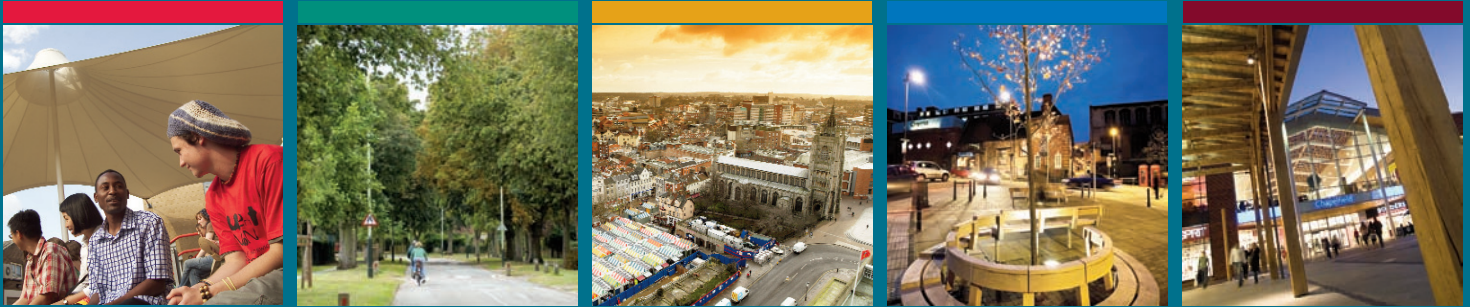


City of Norwich

PARTNERSHIP



City of Norwich Partnership

Governance framework and
members' handbook

www.norwich.gov.uk

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Supporting reference materials – national LSP-related documents

- i. New national LAA indicator set (released in 2008)
- ii. Guide to comprehensive area assessments (CAA)
 - overview
 - background
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- iii. Planning Together – LSPs and Spatial Planning: a practical guide

List of acronyms used in this document

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| CAA | comprehensive area assessment |
| CoNP | City of Norwich Partnership |
| LAA | local area agreement |
| LDF | local development framework |
| LSP | local strategic partnership |
| NI | national indicator |
| NRF | neighbourhood renewal fund |

1. Introduction to the governance framework and handbook

- 1.1** This is a handbook for the members of the City of Norwich Partnership (CoNP) – the local strategic partnership (LSP) for Norwich. It provides the governance framework for CoNP to ensure that it is fit for purpose. It sets out CONP's strategic, decision-making and operational structures, and identifies the roles and responsibilities of its constituent boards and partners.
- 1.2** The handbook reflects CONP's current position, but also draws from best practice emerging nationally. It will be reviewed and updated as necessary, to reflect local and national developments regarding local strategic partnerships.

2. What is an LSP?

- 2.1** An LSP is a non-statutory body that brings together the public, private and voluntary sectors for an area, in order to work jointly to solve problems and plan for the future across all policy areas. The concept of LSPs was first introduced in statutory guidance to the Local Government Act 2000, which introduced the duty for local authorities to produce a community strategy in partnership with others. The requirements for LSPs have been further enhanced following the introduction of the Local Government Act 2004, when the LSP was required to develop a sustainable community strategy (SCS). The role of LSPs was enhanced again following the introduction of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 2.2** Within a context of increasing reliance on partnership working, government sees the LSP as the 'partnership of partnerships' in each area. The local authority usually plays a key role in the LSP, but all partners have to contribute to make an LSP successful.

- 2.3** Government policy in relation to LSPs is evolving, with an increasing emphasis on the statutory community leadership role of the local authority and on collective responsibility for well-being in an area. Stronger decision-making procedures are essential, alongside robust systems for financial, performance and risk management as LSPs move from a predominantly strategic, advisory role to a greater delivery role.

3. Aims and objectives of the City of Norwich Partnership

- 3.1** The CoNP vision is: "To enhance the well-being, welfare and quality of life of the people who live in, work in or visit Norwich."
- 3.2** By working in partnership, CoNP seeks to deliver sustainable improvements – economic, social and environmental – to the city as a whole and to individual communities within Norwich.
- 3.3** To achieve this, CoNP will:
- establish a shared, strategic long-term vision and clear priorities for Norwich, based on local data, the expertise of partners and wider evidence from individuals and communities who live and work in the city
 - oversee the development, delivery and appropriate refresh of a local SCS, as the expression of this vision
 - contribute to the development and delivery of the Norfolk local area agreement (LAA), ensuring that it reflects and addresses the needs of Norwich
 - ensure that the planning framework – known as the local development framework (LDF) – reflects the vision for Norwich generally, while ensuring that the expected growth in jobs and housing for greater Norwich as stated in the regional spatial strategy addresses and helps alleviate deprivation in existing local communities

- ensure effective partnership working in Norwich between key local organisations in the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors
- while recognising organisational autonomy, encourage partners' organisations to deploy resources in the most cost-effective way to ensure delivery of the SCS vision with particular regard to working in partnership between organisations
- ensure allocation of special funds that come into the city to address deprivation and gaps in services are allocated in accordance with the vision for Norwich
- undertake, where appropriate, and have regard to community consultation and engagement.

the vision for Norwich is delivered. (Further details of their respective roles are provided in sections 5 and 6 below. Governance arrangements in sections 7 and onward apply to both boards.)

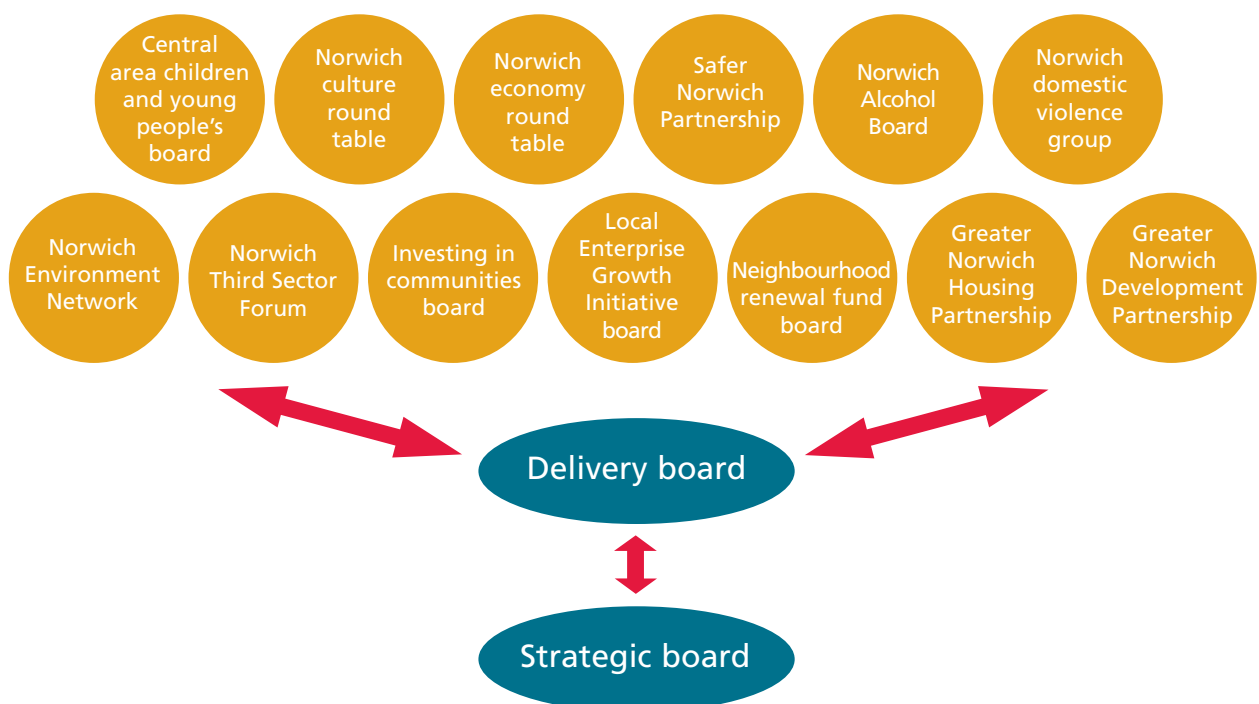
4.2 In addition to the two boards, CoNP membership includes members of the thematic round tables. These were established by the Norwich LSP in 2003 and helped to identify the themes, strategic objectives and priorities within the SCS.

4.3 As LSPs shift from defining the key issues to delivery, CoNP recognised the need to shift its structure towards a 'family of partnerships', where thematic delivery partnerships drive the delivery of objectives and priorities in the SCS and LAA. The structure of CoNP therefore changes as the local partnership arena develops and responds to changing structures and priorities. The diagram below indicates some of the key partnerships in the CoNP family of partnerships.

4.4 Throughout a constant process of refinement and a changing landscape, the CoNP will continually review linkages to other local partnerships.

4. Structure of the City of Norwich Partnership

4.1 Like all LSPs, CoNP is a non-statutory, non-executive body and has no independent legal status. CoNP has a two-board structure: the strategic board and the delivery board. The strategic board has ultimate responsibility for setting the vision for Norwich, and the delivery board acts at an operational level to ensure that



5. Strategic board

5.1 Terms of reference

The strategic board has agreed the following terms of reference:

- act as the executive decision making body of CoNP
- set the vision and priorities for Norwich – as expressed in the Norwich SCS – through a process that is in keeping with latest government guidance on community engagement and consultation
- bring together the senior partners from key organisations in each sector to make effective decisions for Norwich and foster effective partnership working
- break down the barriers between partners and ensure ways of working together that foster innovation and creativity with appropriate challenge
- ensure that a robust performance management system monitors delivery of the SCS
- receive reports from the delivery board, to ensure effective delivery of the SCS
- promote awareness and discussion in relation to major issues affecting Norwich at a local, regional and national level
- oversee the ongoing development of the partnership and keep its structures, membership and working practices under review
- keep the SCS under review and make decisions on revision when necessary.

5.2 Frequency of meetings

The strategic board will meet four times per year to receive quarterly performance reports of the delivery board. Additional meetings will be called as required, and these meetings might be held jointly with other boards and/or partnerships where appropriate.

5.3 Chair and vice-chair of the board

It has been good practice for the leader of the council to act as chair of the strategic board. However, the leader of the council may choose to nominate an independent chair.

The leader of the council will also propose a vice-chair.

These arrangements should be reviewed each time there is a new leader of the council.

6. Delivery board

6.1 Terms of reference

The delivery board has agreed the following terms of reference:

- coordinate and drive the delivery of the Norwich SCS
- ensure that CoNP actively contributes to and participates in the development and delivery of the Norfolk LAA
- report quarterly to the strategic board on performance/delivery against the SCS and any issues arising regarding the effective delivery of LAA targets within Norwich
- ensure that partner organisations work together to join up planning and delivery of local services more effectively, particularly where this requires delivery that goes beyond the remit of any one partner, leading to improved outcomes for citizens
- maintain an overview of partnership activity, ensuring that relevant links are made between thematic and geographically-based partnerships and that cross-cutting issues are reflected in their work
- maintain an overview of delivery agencies and strategies impacting local service delivery
- identify gaps and report to the strategic board on potential to align mainstream budgets to address key issues identified in the SCS
- co-ordinate proposals and bids for external resources, ensuring that these (a) are led by evidenced need and (b) help deliver the shared vision of the CoNP SCS.

6.2 Frequency of meetings

The delivery board will meet quarterly to monitor performance against the Norwich SCS. Between quarterly meetings, an additional meeting date is scheduled in advance to facilitate convening the board if required to ensure wider engagement, address current priorities or permit thematic discussion.

6.3 Chair and vice-chair of the board

The chair of the delivery board shall be the chief executive officer of Norwich City Council, to reflect the council's role as the accountable body for the partnership. If the board chooses, it may elect a vice-chair from members of the board representing any organisation other than the city council for a one-year term.

7. Membership of the City of Norwich Partnership

CoNP is the overarching partnership for Norwich and is a multi-agency partnership representing the city's diverse public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Full membership of CoNP has been developed to meet statutory guidelines. CoNP aims to be an inclusive body and will keep its membership under review.

Current membership of the two boards is provided in appendix a. Broadly, members are selected to ensure appropriate representation from the following:

Statutory sector	Private sector	Voluntary and community sector
Housing Education Social services Health Police Probation Higher and further education Urban regeneration bodies Government Office East	Key umbrella organisations Businesses from industry sectors key to the Norwich economy	Key umbrella organisations Key delivery partners for issues identified in the SCS Faith groups

Individual partners who no longer wish to be involved in either of the CoNP boards or a round table should write to their respective chair to offer their resignation. A replacement nomination shall be identified from their organisation or sector. New members are offered a briefing on the work of the strategic partnership.

8. Quorum and decision making

The quorum for a meeting of either board shall be that at least six of the organisations represented on that board have a representative present.

The majority of decisions will be reached through consensus, rather than a voting procedure. A voting procedure based on a simple majority will be used when:

- a decision is required that will commit finance; or
- a consensus cannot be reached; or
- in exceptional circumstances to be decided by the chair.

When the board meets, this voting procedure will be a show of hands. When voting takes place, there will be one vote per partnership or organisation, among the board members present. In case of a tied vote on any question, the chair of the meeting will have a second casting vote. (In practice, voting has not proved necessary to date.)

9. The role of individual board members

Members of the board will be expected to:

- ensure effective two-way communication between CoNP and their host organisations, at both a strategic and operational level
- ensure relevant issues/developments from their area of work are added to the agendas of the relevant board meetings, particularly where members can identify gaps, overlaps or conflicts in service provision locally
- use their personal skills, experience and networks to ensure that the partnership is effective and is addressing local needs, and to promote the city wherever possible
- demonstrate a strong commitment to the city of – and communities within – Norwich.

10. Nolan principles of public life and code of conduct

All members of CoNP are required to act in accordance with the Nolan principles:

- **Selflessness:** take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. CoNP members should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
- **Integrity:** not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, CoNP members should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability:** be accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their role.
- **Openness:** be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty:** have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership:** promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

In addition, and where applicable, CoNP members should have regard to their own internal codes of conduct, particular to the organisation they represent.

11. Declarations of interest

At the outset of any CoNP board meeting, board members will declare any conflict of interest they may have with any specific agenda item(s). If necessary and/or appropriate, the chair will ask any individual member with a conflict of interest to abstain from the discussion and/or leave the room for any decisions required.

12. Openness

Membership of the CoNP boards is published on the Norwich City Council website, and contact details of partners are held and maintained by the partnership team.

All board meetings will be open to the public as observers (ie, no speaking or voting rights) and minutes of the meeting (subject to confidential items) are available on the Norwich City Council website www.norwich.gov.uk

13. Equal opportunities

The City of Norwich Partnership has a duty and is committed to:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religious belief
- promoting equality of opportunity
- promoting cohesive communities.

We will ensure that the different needs of members are taken into account (eg, physical access, ensuring participation) and that all participants are regarded as equal. We will make sure that we are open and as informed as possible, by all members of our communities.

The partnership is committed to meeting the needs of individuals and their communities. We are working to ensure that all groups, particularly minority groups, are secure, respected, valued and equal members of the partnership and the whole community of Norwich. If any partner or member of the community believes that CoNP is not living up to this commitment, s/he should contact the chair of the strategic board via email cityofnorwichpartnership@norwich.gov.uk

14. Performance management and accountability

CoNP is responsible for delivery of the Norwich SCS, and as such must ensure appropriate mechanisms for performance management and accountability. CoNP must also ensure it cooperates with and actively contributes to the Norfolk LAA, in particular as this relates to effective delivery within the city.

The delivery board has developed a set of delivery plans which sets out local activity which contributes to delivery of the Norwich SCS and Norfolk LAA. In addition, the board receives quarterly reports from key delivery partnerships operating within the city.

It must be recognised that LSPs do not have any collective authority, delegated powers or electoral mandate. A number of public sector bodies now have a statutory duty to cooperate within the context of LSPs and LAAs, including the police, primary care trusts, the Youth Offending Team, the Learning and Skills Council, Jobcentre Plus, the Highways Agency and Natural England. The new comprehensive area assessments (CAA) will measure effectiveness of partnership working in a way that has not previously been experienced. (Further information about CAA is provided in the supporting reference materials in the back of this handbook.)

15. Risk and opportunity management

A robust and effective partnership governance structure and performance management arrangements are essential elements in managing risk. CoNP will apply risk management principles to its work and will analyse and review risk on an ongoing basis.

Norwich City Council's scrutiny committee may call CoNP and its partners to account for their performance and actions with regard to commitments outlined in the SCS. In addition, a joint scrutiny panel has been formed at a county level to hold partners to account with regard to the LAA. All eight Norfolk local authorities have a place on this panel. (Further information about the panel is provided in appendix h of this handbook).

16. Resource allocation and financial management

CoNP does not have regular government funding. However, where funds are awarded to CoNP (such as neighbourhood renewal funds), Norwich City Council will be the authorised fund-holder for CoNP and the council's audit procedures will be extended to include the management of CoNP monies. The financial year of the council will apply, which is from 1 April to 31 March.

All withdrawals from CoNP funding will be authorised by the chair of the strategic board (where this may be delegated to, for example, the chair of the NRF board) and the chief executive of Norwich City Council. Norwich City Council will give access to any formal external audit of the CoNP funds as and when necessary and/or required by external funding agencies.

17. Secretariat for the City of Norwich Partnership

Norwich City Council will provide the secretariat for CoNP, primarily via the partnerships team. Support will include (but is not limited to):

- organising events and meeting venues
- distributing agendas and taking minutes
- developing a range of documents, from drafting papers for consideration at board meetings to coordinating the development of the SCS.

Agendas and supporting papers will be circulated one week prior to meetings. Minutes will be distributed one week following meetings. All papers will be posted in the CoNP section of the council's website. In addition, a quarterly electronic newsletter will be produced to assist in wider dissemination of key messages from board meetings and information on relevant important issues identified by partners.

Additional support will be provided in the form of training and networking opportunities. Board 'away days' will also be provided as the need is identified by either of the boards.

18. Conflict resolution

By virtue of its executive role, the strategic board shall act as the final arbiter in instances where conflict has arisen between partners, operating within the context of the CoNP and its decision will be final.

19. Amendments to the handbook

Any amendment to these operating procedures will only be effective if it has been subject to a special resolution of the strategic board and has been approved by a simple majority.

20. Dissolution of the City of Norwich Partnership

The CoNP will only be dissolved if a special resolution of the strategic board is agreed by a simple majority. In the event of dissolution of CoNP, any property or monies remaining after settlement of debts and liabilities will become the property of Norwich City Council.

Appendices – additional CoNP and related Norfolk documents

- a. Membership of strategic board and delivery board (as of January 2009)
http://www.norwich.gov.uk/internet_docs/docs/CoNP/Strategic_delivery_boards_membership.pdf
- b. CoNP information sharing protocol
http://www.norwich.gov.uk/internet_docs/docs/CoNP/CoNP_information_sharing_protocol.pdf
- c. CoNP communication strategy
http://www.norwich.gov.uk/internet_docs/docs/CoNP/CoNP_Communications_Plan_2008.pdf
- d. Neighbourhood renewal fund (NRF) board – terms of reference
http://www.norwich.gov.uk/internet_docs/docs/CoNP/NRF_terms_of_reference.pdf
- e. Norwich's sustainable community strategy
http://www.norwich.gov.uk/intranet_docs/A-Z/Partnerships/Sustainable_Community_Strategy.pdf
- f. A guide to the Norfolk LAA
http://www.norfolkambition.gov.uk/norfolkambition-laa/documents/FINAL_-_Norfolk_Action_Summary_A5.pdf
- g. Norfolk LAA
<http://www.norfolkambition.gov.uk/norfolkambition-laa/documents/NorfolkActionFINAL2.pdf>
- h. Norfolk county strategic partnership joint scrutiny panel protocol and terms of reference
[http://www.norfolkambition.gov.uk/norfolkambition-partnership/documents/Joint_Scrutiny_Panel_TOR\(1\).doc](http://www.norfolkambition.gov.uk/norfolkambition-partnership/documents/Joint_Scrutiny_Panel_TOR(1).doc)

Supporting reference materials – national LSP-related documents

- i. New national LAA indicator set (released in 2008)
http://www.norwich.gov.uk/internet_docs/docs/CoNP/New_national_LAA_indicator_set.pdf
- ii. Guide to CAA overview
<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caa/index.asp>
background
<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caa/background.asp>
frequently asked questions
<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caa/faqs.asp>
- iii. Planning together – LSPs and spatial planning: a practical guide
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/154326.pdf>



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