

Appendix 2

Recommendations for improvement from verification of partnership governance Health Checks plus queries from Audit Committee members

Crime and Drugs Partnership (CDP)

- The CDP stated that in its 2017 review of governance arrangements they would create champions for different priorities, but we saw no confirmation that this had happened and what the expectations and responsibilities of the roles would be. If this proceeds we would recommend consideration of the remit, with formal recording of this, and details of the agreement of any named champion to undertake the role.
- There was no mention in the CDP's Terms of Reference or other documentation of a whistleblowing procedure. On questioning this we have learned that the City Council's Whistleblowing Policy would be adopted, so we recommend that this is formally recorded and adopted by the Board.
- In the CDP Executive Group's Terms of Reference it says they can make decisions such as "agree a lead agency to deliver interventions on a case by case basis" but their specific decision making and voting rights are not detailed. The role of the Executive was not explicitly clear, including its interrelationship with the CDP Board. We recommend a formal decision making process, including voting rights where appropriate, and details of the relationship with the CDP Board is created for the CDP Executive.
- We were informed that when a member leaves they are expected to identify a replacement for themselves on the CDP Board. On viewing an example of notification from a former Board member that they would be leaving the Board there was no expectation conveyed to the individual that they should identify a replacement, instead they were asked "will [named individual] be attending?". If identification and confirmation of a replacement is an expectation of the departing Board member, we recommend this is formally set out in the Terms of Reference and that this is followed up when a Board member gives notice that they will be stepping down.
- Following the December 2017 review of the CDP, it was agreed that the Executive will now undertake the "tactical work". We were unable to identify exactly what "tactical" meant in practice, so we would recommend for transparency that a clear understanding of their work is communicated.
- In the section on compliance with GDPR, the questionnaire stated that "The CDP does not have a data controller and does not control any personal information". The CDP does hold information on its members and contributors, including contact details and their job roles, plus how they might have voted on certain decisions and any confidential papers. Although the organisations to which CDP Board members belong have their own GDPR processes in place, we recommend an overarching arrangement or understanding is in place for the CDP's own information which it commissions, in the form of reports, and holds. If, however, the GDPR experts at Nottingham City Council have confirmed that the data the CDP holds does not meet the threshold for personal data, we would expect to see this confirmed in formal documentation.
- We were pleased to see the CDP has a risk log with considerations on likelihood and impact. We saw that discussion of the risk log was not included in June's CDP Board minutes. We would recommend that discussion of the risk log is included as a standing item on each agenda to allow an opportunity for any urgent updates to be raised, even if it is merely to note 'nothing to report/no change'. We also recommend an annual review of the risk log is included on the meeting forward plan if it is not already the case.
- We would like to commend the volume of governance documentation shared with us by the CDP and the thorough responses given in the self-assessment questionnaire.
- **Request for additional information from Audit Committee** – greater clarity on the role of the CDP Board and the role of the CDP Executive and how these interrelate.

Midlands Engine

- We would agree with the score of 1-2 for aims and objectives, however, as a result of the evidence provided and the fact that the partnership says it is 'working towards' being more effective as part of its governance review we would suggest this score is closer to 2 than 1. We would recommend this work continues for the partnership to achieve a score of 1 in the future.
- There were some instances in which we were unable to verify the assertions made in the questionnaire as documents were not available to us, despite repeated requests. This includes minutes recording any decisions taken by the Board and evidence of performance management reporting. As Nottingham City Council is the accountable body, we would recommend officers of Nottingham City Council ensure they have immediate access to all relevant documentation relating to Midlands Engine.
- In Midlands Engine's Transparency Code, it listed documents which would be available on its website, this includes details and documents that support its Governance and Assurance Framework and meeting agendas, papers and minutes. On reviewing Midlands Engine's website we were unable to find these documents. We would recommend Midlands Engine review their website and make amendments to ensure they meet their commitments for transparency.
- Although Midlands Engine confirmed their membership has been reviewed to identify gaps in expertise, we were unable to find anything on their website relating to membership of the board. We would recommend that information is added to the website detailing membership with a short résumé about the members and their experience. If this information is already available on the website it should be made easier to find.
- Further to the above, we recommend making the 'partners' section of the Midlands Engine website more interactive. For example where it states there are 20 universities within the Midlands Engine geography it would be useful if you could click onto this statement to find information detailing which organisations they are.
- For Partnership Risk Management, Midlands Engine stated that the risk registers would continue to be discussed and monitored at Board meetings. We have been unable to confirm this as documents were not available to us. We would agree with a score of 2 for this on the assumption these registers are in place and are discussed and reviewed at Board meetings.
- **Request for additional information from Audit Committee** – As Nottingham City Council is an accountable body it should be able to access all of the governance documents without meeting resistance.

Green Nottingham Partnership

- Although the Green Nottingham Partnership was not subject to the verification process this year, concern was expressed that documents are still not in place and agreed. It was noted that there have been improvements since last year, but that recent staffing and support issues have impacted on its rating.