



Community Planning Governance Framework and Guidance



08 September 2021

1. Introduction

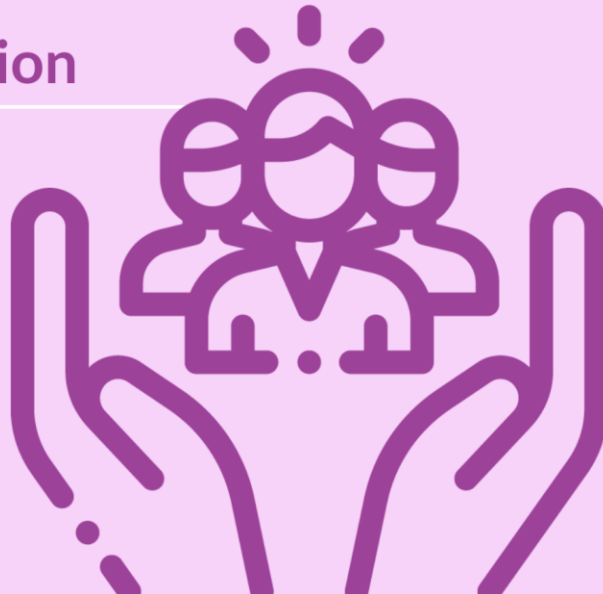
“Community Planning aims to improve the connection between regional, local and neighbourhood levels through partnership working and more integrated use of resources, with a focus on collaboration between organisations for the benefit of citizens” (Statutory Guidance for the Operation of Community Planning: October 2015)

This document sets out the community planning governance arrangements which apply in the Fermanagh and Omagh district. It outlines the mechanisms of the partnership and the role and remit of the various structures within the partnership.

Our Community Plan ‘**Fermanagh and Omagh 2030**’ is an overarching strategy for the district which sets out our belief that we can improve services and quality of life for all in our district by getting the public, private and community/voluntary sectors working together better towards our agreed Vision and six long-term outcomes.

Our Shared Vision

Our Vision is of a welcoming, shared and inclusive Fermanagh and Omagh district, where people and places are healthy, safe, connected and prosperous, and where our outstanding natural, built and cultural heritage is cherished and sustainably managed.





People & Communities

1. Our people are healthy and well – physically, mentally and emotionally
2. Older people lead more independent, engaged and socially connected lives
3. Our communities are inclusive, safe, resilient and empowered
4. Our people have the best start in life with lifelong opportunities to fulfil their potential



Economy, Infrastructure & Skills

5. Our economy is thriving, expanding and outward looking



Environment

6. Our outstanding and culturally rich environment is cherished, sustainably managed and appropriately accessible



2. Our Governance Structure

The following governance structure was agreed in March 2018 to oversee and manage community planning in Fermanagh and Omagh:



Aims of the governance structure:

- Ensure effective use of partners' time and resources.
- Maximise integration and alignment across Partners' Business Planning for the delivery of the Community Plan Outcomes.
- Establish and maintain clear reporting arrangements and a separation of strategic and operational roles and responsibilities.
- Provide transparency and accountability.
- Facilitate the development and delivery of the Community Plan as the overarching vision for the Council area.

Partner commitments:

The Partnership is a joint working arrangement where the partners are otherwise independent bodies who commit to:

- Ensure strategic and operational commitment of their organisation to the community planning process.
- Lead or support work to deliver the agreed outcomes and actions.
- Facilitate the sharing of information and resources to support the delivery of community planning activities.
- Ensure their organisation has mechanisms in place to allow effective communication and information sharing on community planning between its members, departments or services as appropriate. As a minimum these mechanisms will include regular reports at a senior management level, distribution of community planning information and updates to members of staff.
- Ensure any agreed community planning budget and resource requirements are included as part of their annual budget and resource planning process.
- Departments of Government to ensure their strategic and business plans incorporate relevant partners' commitments to Actions in the Community Plan.
- Appoint a representative(s) in accordance with the agreed partnership structures with appropriate authority to contribute to and seek to implement decisions made by the Partnership. In respect of the Strategic Partnership Board, this will be Chair or person of Chief Executive status or their senior nominee.
- Attend each Partnership Board meeting and, if this is not possible, a named substitute of sufficient seniority should deputise.
- Support capacity building initiatives aimed at strengthening the knowledge and skills of partner representatives in respect of community planning.

3. Partner Roles and Responsibilities:

3.1 - Lead Partner

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is the lead partner with responsibility for:

- Facilitating and managing the process, including putting in place appropriate governance and management structures and arrangements.
- Ensuring that the commitments set out in the Council's Equality Scheme are applied in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the Community Plan.
- Working collaboratively with community planning partners and identified support partners to reach consensus on the content of the Community Plan and publication of the Plan.
- Working with community planning partners and identified support partners to implement, monitor and review the Plan.
- Preparing a Progress Briefing after each SPB meeting and providing it to Partners for distribution to staff within their organisations; and
- Ensuring that community involvement is an integral part of the full community planning process.
- Ensuring that statutory processes are fulfilled, eg, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Rural Needs Impact Assessment.
- Ensuring that the statutory link between the Community Plan and the Local Development Plan is effectively managed.

3.2 - All Partners

All partners will work on the following aspects:

- Development of the Community Plan
- Delivery of agreed tasks identified in the Community Plan.
- Taking a lead role on delivery where actions are appropriate to the responsibilities of their organisation.
- Chairing Thematic/Action Groups where appropriate
- Monitoring and review of the Community Plan
- Seeking community participation in the community planning process, including production and review of the Community Plan.

4. Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board

Board Role/Remit:

The Strategic Partnership Board's role is to reach agreement on the Community Plan and to:

- Provide strategic leadership in Community Planning by developing, clearly communicating and driving change through the Vision and intended outcomes

for the benefit of the people who live, work and visit in Fermanagh and Omagh.

- Agree strategic indicators and associated baselines and targets to enable assessment of the achievement of outcomes and ensure improvements in service delivery.
- Approve Action Plan(s) and provide oversight through the management and publication of agreed performance measures and reports.
- Share budget planning assumptions and promote and facilitate the sharing and aligning of resources and ensure that the Partnership deploys finance and resources to achieve agreed outcomes.
- Ensure that the requirement to review the Community Plan every 4 years and to publish a Performance Report every 2 years is met.
- Promote and demonstrate commitment to partnership working at Board level, across the Partnership and in partner organisations.
- Ensure the engagement and involvement of the wider community.
- Ensure effective governance, accountability and challenge arrangements across the Partnership.
- Advocate and lobby on behalf of the Community Plan.

Membership:

In line with the Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (NI) 2016, the Board will consist of representation from each of the 13 statutory partners alongside representatives of Government Departments.

NB: representatives will be expected to speak authoritatively for their organisation and to be of sufficient seniority to be able to agree and commit their organisation to a course of action in line with the role and responsibilities of the Strategic Partnership Board.

The Community Voluntary (CV) Sector Forum and the Business Community will also be represented. It is recognised that the CV and Business sectors have particular challenges in participating in Governance due to their diversity and lack of resources for this role.

Where new partnership or other structures emerge which can contribute directly to the delivery of the Plan Outcomes the SPB may invite those organisations to become a member and send a representative to Board meetings.

Reporting:

Each agenda will include a Progress Report identifying progress made on the agreed Actions (with a hyper-link to Performance Score Cards on 50% of the Actions). The Progress Report will be based on information provided by Action Leads and collated by the Community Planning Team.

The Action Leads for the actions being reported on will be invited to be in attendance at the relevant SPB meeting (attendance may be in person or by video link).

Each partner will report to their own management board/committee on key decisions.

The Strategic Partnership Board will report to the Department for Communities and to the broader public every two years through a Performance Statement.

Meetings, Agenda and Minutes

The Strategic Partnership Board will meet a minimum of two times per year.

Members may attend meetings in person or by video link and will attend 50% of meetings in person each year.

All members will be invited to propose items for inclusion on the agenda for each meeting.

Following the conclusion of the agenda discussions there will be a workshop discussion on a strategic issue. These discussions will be led by one or more Partners. These strategic issues will be of a cross-cutting nature requiring an integrated approach and will be identified by the JMT for the Board's consideration.

Draft minutes will be circulated (on a 'for information only' basis) to Partners within 5 working days of each SPB meeting to facilitate sharing of information within each partner organisation.

Chair

The Strategic Partnership Board is chaired by a member of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, representing the Council's lead role in respect of community planning.

The Board will appoint a Vice-Chair from amongst the other partner organisations.

5. Joint Management Team

Role/Remit:

The Joint Management Team will meet at least once per year (see below) and otherwise on an ad hoc basis, if required, to consider and review any matters referred to it which need to be agreed upon by the Strategic Partnership Board and to prepare reports on such matters for agreement by the Strategic Partnership Board.

Membership:

Membership will consist of senior representation from the 13 statutory partners alongside Government Departments, the Community Voluntary Sector Forum and the Business Community.

Reporting:

The Joint Management Team will report to the Strategic Partnership Board.

Meetings

The JMT will meet each year in February-March to consider the integration and alignment of Actions in Partners' Business Plans for the coming financial year and to identify strategic, cross-cutting issues for discussion at SPB meetings. It may meet more often if it decides to do so.

Chair

The Joint Management Team will be chaired by the Chief Executive of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

6. Action Leads' Forum

Role/Remit:

- To facilitate greater integration across themes and actions and exchange of information, ideas and approaches.
- To manage reporting to and from the Strategic Partnership Board through the performance scorecards.
- To consider approaches to improving integration of community planning with partners' delivery plans.

Membership:

Membership will consist of those officers from across a range of partner organisations who have been appointed as '**Action Leads**' for community planning actions.

Community planning actions depend on the active contribution of a range of partners – an Action Lead cannot be solely responsible for achievement of an action. The role of an Action Lead primarily relates to co-ordination and reporting, ie:

- Co-ordinate contributions of partners to define and agree detail of each action, performance measures and involvement of each partner.
- Report to CP Strategic Partnership Board on progress using identified performance measures.
- Ensure obligations in relation to statutory processes are undertaken.
- Act as key point of contact for CP Partnership in relation to that action

Meetings:

The Forum will meet during October-November each year to consider progress made on the delivery of Actions and to identify issues and challenges to delivery, integration and alignment for consideration by the JMT. The Forum may also suggest to the JMT and SPB cross cutting issues for strategic discussion at SPB meetings.

The Forum may meet more often if it decides to do so.

Chair:

Meetings will be chaired by the Council's Head of Place Shaping.

7. Action Groups

Role/Remit:

Action Groups will be established to take forward the agreed Plan Actions.

The Action Groups will meet to discuss and review progress of specific actions and to liaise in respect of the development, progression, update and ongoing review of Performance Scorecards related to specific actions.

Membership:

Membership will include Action Leads and identified representatives of partner organisations who are contributing to the delivery of actions related to the relevant outcomes. Membership may be revised and updated in line with revisions to actions.

Reporting:

The Action Leads will report through the Progress Report and the ongoing updates to Performance Scorecards to the Strategic Partnership Board.

Meetings:

Meetings will be convened by Action Leads as necessary. Groups will operate flexibly and meet as often as they consider appropriate and may form short-term 'Task and Finish Groups' to progress specific work pieces.

At least one meeting will be held in advance of the Action Leads' Forum meeting in October-November to identify issues for consideration by the Forum.

Chair:

Meetings will generally follow a workshop format and will be chaired by a member of the Group (usually the Action Lead).

8. Policy and Performance Support Forum

Role/Remit:

To support policy and research development across the community plan themes and outcomes and to ensure that due consideration is given to the agreed shared values and principles. In addition, to oversee the effectiveness of arrangements for:

- Performance monitoring and reporting
- Community engagement
- Communications
- Data sharing.

Membership:

Membership will be drawn from the statutory community planning partner organisations and the Department for Communities alongside a Community Voluntary Sector and Business Community representative.

Reporting:

The Forum will report direct to the Strategic Partnership Board.

Meetings:

Meetings will be held as required.

Chair:

A Chair will be appointed by the Forum from within its membership.

9. Partnership Support

Partnership support for the Partnership is co-ordinated by the Community Planning and Performance Section, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. This includes:

- Partnership and policy support across all partnership structures
- Research and information including highlighting emerging strategic issues to the Partnership
- Community engagement and communications
- Data Sharing and access to information requests
- Preparing and issuing the notice and agenda for meetings of the Partnership
- Programme managing the Partnership's Action Plans
- Performance management and monitoring.

10. Communications

The SPB will agree a Communications Plan. Progress on the Plan will be reviewed annually by officers responsible for communications across all of the Partner organisations.

The Community Planning Team will provide a 'Plain English' Progress Briefing after each SPB meeting which communications officers will distribute to all relevant staff within their organisations. The Team and the communications officers will also promote progress through their social media and internal communications platforms. The Team will, as appropriate, issue information to local media on progress and achievements.

Operation of Strategic Partnership Board and Joint Management Team Meetings

(i) Absence of Chair

If neither the Chair nor Vice-Chair is present at a meeting, then a Chair for that meeting will be appointed by those members present.

(ii) General Conduct of Meetings

Conduct should correspond to the shared values and principles set out at para 2.2.

Representatives should abide by any Code of Conduct applicable within their own organisation.

(iii) Decision Making

It is the duty of the Chair to ensure that decision making is clear, open, transparent and founded on consensus.

Whilst it is anticipated that the Partnership will achieve consensus on priorities and issues, in the event of a vote being necessary each partner organisation will be entitled to exercise one vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair will exercise a casting vote.

(iv) Notice of Meetings of the Partnership

a) Notice and Agenda

At least five clear days' notice in writing (via email) will be given of forthcoming meetings, including time and place, and a list of all agenda items.

b) Papers

Electronic copies of papers will normally be issued by email alongside the notice and agenda; hard copies can be made available upon request.

On occasion it may be necessary to issue papers with less than 5 days' notice, however, this will be kept to a minimum.

c) Quorum

No business will be conducted by the Partnership unless at least 40% of the members are present (rounded up to the next whole number).

(v) Substitutes

All Statutory and Support partners may nominate a substitute to attend a meeting in their absence. Substitute members should be fully briefed and be of sufficient seniority from within their respective organisations.

(vi) Tenure

Members of the Strategic Partnership Board and other community planning governance structures will generally represent their organisation for the duration agreed by their organisation. An exception to this rule is elected member representation on the Strategic Partnership Board.

(vii) Admission to Strategic Partnership Board Meetings

Meetings of the Strategic Partnership Board will be open to the public unless the Chair decides that an item of business is confidential. Papers for such meetings will be publicly available through the Council website.