



GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Corporate Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements

July 2023

A summary of partnership and shared working
arrangements

**Operational Services
Cabinet Committee**

Gravesham Borough Council

Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements

July 2023

- 2 -

Introduction

The council maintains a comprehensive register of its partnerships and shared working arrangement that is reviewed on an annual basis.

Partnerships

The council defines a partnership as “***an agreement between the Council and one or more independent bodies to work together to achieve the council’s Corporate objectives***”.

In addition to this, the council also splits the partnership register into ‘Significant’ and ‘Key other partnerships’. In order for a partnership to be classified as significant it must meet the following definition:

“A partnership for which there is a council resource provision of £50,000 or greater or one that is fundamental to the delivery of a corporate objective as established within the council’s Corporate Plan. Without this effective partnership therefore, the delivery of Gravesham Borough Council’s key corporate goals would not occur. This will also include those partnerships that have been established to deliver legal or statutory requirements on behalf of the council.”

The council is currently involved in the following partnerships:

Page Ref.	Name of Partnership	Significant
3	Kent & Medway Air Quality Partnership	
6	Kent Resource Partnership	

Shared Working Arrangements

In addition to partnership working, the council also has a number of shared working arrangements in place which range from a full-shared service with another local authority to shared manager/officer arrangements. The council is currently involved in the following shared working arrangements:

Page Ref.	Name of Partnership
8	Licensing Shared Service

Glossary of Terms (Page 10)

Throughout the document, there are a number of terms that are used and it was felt that it would be useful to provide a ‘Glossary of Terms’ in order to provide further clarification of some of the terminology used within the document.

Gravesham Borough Council
Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements
July 2023

Name of Partnership	Kent & Medway Air Quality Partnership
Responsible Officer	Elizabeth Thornton, Head of Property & Regulatory Services
Lead Member(s)	Councillor Shane Mochrie-Cox, Lead Member for Strategic Environment
Statutory Status	Non-statutory Partnership (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) recognised good practice)
Aims and objectives of partnership	<p>The major aims and objectives of the Partnership are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate a co-ordinated approach through Kent and Medway for the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) obligations placed on local authorities under the Environment Act 1995; • Compile, update and maintain an Emissions Inventory of air pollution sources in and around Kent, to assist with the LAQM process; • Comment on and influence the economic, planning and transport policies within the county so that air quality issues are properly considered and addressed; • Gain an understanding of the health implications associated with poor air quality and the threat it poses to the health of Kent and Medway's communities; • To promote an awareness of air quality issues by working with national agencies, neighbouring authorities, and European partners and to participate in joint initiatives to further the knowledge and understanding of air quality issues; and • Liaise with DEFRA and Government bodies to assist with the implementation of the National Air Quality Strategy.
Expected outcomes	<p>Continued partnership with all Local Authorities across Kent working closely with public health colleagues at Medway Council, Kent County Council and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA – Previously Public Health England).</p> <p>The Partnership is working with Kent Public Health to deliver an Awareness raising campaign around the links between air quality and health. Material for a number of key groups, i.e. professionals/decision makers, business, the general public, children/parents is being developed. This has included a toolkit for schools linked to the national curriculum. It has been completed and is available for wider use.</p> <p>The Partnership has worked with Defra funding to produce a collection of social media messages for use during the year and especially during Kent Air Week in April each year.</p> <p>Opportunities for reduced costs and efficiency gains through joint procurement –such as is currently in place for the Kent and Medway Air Quality Monitoring Network and Local Air Quality Management Reports (LAQM)</p> <p>Opportunities to participate in external funding bids.</p> <p>Dissemination of knowledge and good practice.</p>
Links to GBC Corporate Objectives	<p>Objective #1 People <i>A proud community; where residents call a safe, clean and attractive borough their home.</i></p>

Gravesham Borough Council
Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements
July 2023

<p>GBC Resources (financial, officer, assets etc.)</p>	<p>Six days per year.</p> <p>No financial implications of the Partnership itself; however Gravesham currently pays £5605 +VAT per annum as part of the jointly procured contract for the Kent and Medway Air Quality Monitoring Network.</p> <p>Gravesham assists the Partnership with match funding of Defra grant monies on an ad hoc basis within budget or from S106 Planning contributions made towards implementing the council's AQ action Plan measures.</p>
<p>Partnership membership</p>	<p>All local authorities in Kent, Environment Agency, King's College London, Health Authority, Highways Agency, Kent County Council, Kent Highways, KCC Public Health, UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)</p>
<p>Governance arrangements</p>	<p>The Kent & Medway Air Quality Partnership is an officer group reporting to the Kent Environmental Health Managers Group. As such only minimal governance arrangements are in place relating to terms of reference and frequency of meetings. Minutes are taken from the meetings and reported to all partners. These are not published in the public domain as this has not been considered necessary in the past however they are available to the public on request.</p>
<p>Financial reporting arrangements and timeframe for reporting</p>	<p>Kent & Medway Air Quality Monitoring Network contract awarded in 2021 and financially monitored by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Previous to this Swale Council has been the procurement authority.</p>
<p>Performance monitoring arrangements and details of formal review of partnership arrangements.</p>	<p>An officer from Gravesham BC is included in the Kent and Medway Air Quality Monitoring Network Contract Group which monitors the contract and the performance of the contractor.</p> <p>The AQ Partnership will continue indefinitely.</p> <p>The Monitoring Network will continue as long as it is supported by members at the time of contract renewal. At the current time all Kent authorities (except Dartford and Sevenoaks who are in the London network) are committed to a minimum of a three year data management contract for their monitoring stations.</p> <p>The aims and objectives are currently under review to ensure they include our public health responsibilities.</p>
<p>Risk Assessment</p>	<p>It is not a statutory duty to be a member of the Partnership however it is recognised by DEFRA as an example of good practice which assists in ensuring consistency across the county.</p> <p>It is however a statutory duty to have air quality monitoring data managed and collated and disseminated to the public.</p> <p>The Kent & Medway Air Quality Monitoring Network contract includes this for all members. Dissemination to member, the public, developers and consultants is by the www.kentair.org.uk website.</p>
<p>Safeguarding Obligations</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Equalities Obligations</p>	<p>The council's Air Quality work benefits all however those living in socially deprived areas are more likely to benefit from improvements in air quality as they tend to be most affected and be near busy main roads.</p>
<p>Climate Change Considerations</p>	<p>The work of the Air Quality Partnership and the Climate Change work of the council are intrinsically linked and dependent on each other. They are both about the minimisation of emissions from vehicles, buildings etc.</p>

Gravesham Borough Council
Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements
July 2023

Date Partnership Created / Approved by Cabinet	Partnership created in 1992	Date Partnership Terminates (if applicable)	N/A
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Significant partnership

Other partnership

Gravesham Borough Council
Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements
July 2023

Name of Partnership	Kent Resource Partnership (KRP) Members Board
Responsible Officer	Stuart Alford, Assistant Director (Operations)
Lead Member(s)	Cllr Emma Morley, Lead Member for Operational Services
Statutory Status	Non-statutory partnership
Aims and objectives of partnership	<p>To deliver the objectives of the Kent Waste Strategy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximising the Value of Resources <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To recycle at least 50% across Kent by the end of the strategy period. b. To reduce residual waste collected across Kent. c. No more than 2% of Kent’s waste to go to landfill. d. Joint approach to use of third sector & charities /to deliver reuse of bulky waste. e. Explore the possibility of implementing recycling on the go. 2. Value for Money for Kent Taxpayers <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a joint approach to tackle litter and fly tipping. Working with appropriate partners such as Highways England. b. Sharing resources and providing joint communication campaigns for recycling, littering and fly tipping. c. Joint working to deliver first class health & safety standards across the county. 3. Engagement, Collaboration and Partnership Working <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maximise engagement with national and local government and those operating across the supply chain. b. Produce an annual report that reflects the focus and priorities of the previous year. c. The partnership’s strategy to be fully reviewed in 2023/24. 4. Future Thinking <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Aligning with key policies such as EU circular economy package, environment plan and imminent resource and waste strategy. b. Developing other metrics and means to focus on quality and value of resources. c. Consider requirements to secure infrastructure to enhance and develop the local resource management and waste facilities. <p>Look at the development of a consistent collection specification across all councils.</p>
Expected outcomes	<p>The expected outcomes of the partnership are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen co-operation and joint-working across the councils in the partnership; and • An increased awareness across the county of waste and recycling service including waste minimisation.
Links to GBC Corporate Objectives	<p>Objective #1 People Progress <i>A proud community; where residents call a safe, clean and attractive borough their home.</i></p>

Gravesham Borough Council
Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements
July 2023

GBC Resources (financial, officer, assets etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A budget of £288,250 is available for the Kent Resource Partnership in 2023/24. Gravesham Borough Council contributes £15,000 per year towards this overall budget. Officer and Member time from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder(s) and Director or Assistant Director. 		
Partnership membership	All local authorities in Kent		
Governance arrangements	<p>The Kent Resource Partnership has an Operating Framework in place. The framework sets out the governance arrangements for the partnership as a whole including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting the scope of works for the partnership around three key areas; waste collection and waste disposal functions, street cleansing functions and environmental enforcement functions; Setting out the strategic structure within which the Kent Resource partnership operates; Providing details of the specific governance of the Members' Board; frequency of meetings, agenda arrangements, quorum details, chair and vice-chair selection, decision making process etc.; Providing details of the Officers' Advisory Group and the Operational Review & Improvement Group in a similar fashion to the Members' Board above; and Details of the resources available to the partnership along with the expected contribution from partner organisations. 		
Financial reporting arrangements and timeframe for reporting	<p>The Kent Resource Partnership agrees a Budget Plan and a Delivery Plan on an annual basis.</p> <p>Kent Resource Partnership Members' Board is provided with financial updates three times a year when it meets.</p>		
Performance monitoring arrangements and details of formal review of partnership arrangements.	The Partnership is reviewed annually and performance information is reported every quarter.		
Risk Assessment	--		
Safeguarding Obligations	N/A		
Equalities Obligations	The Partnership works with the community to ensure that all services across Kent are inclusive and accessible for all.		
Climate Change Considerations	Within the Kent Resource Partnership there are actions to increase recycling and work on carbon reduction initiatives whether that be alternate fuelled vehicles or reduced transportation of waste across the County or Country.		
Date Partnership Created / Approved by Cabinet	12 March 2007	Date Partnership Terminates (if applicable)	N/A

Significant partnership

Other partnership

Gravesham Borough Council
Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements
July 2023

Name of Partnership	Licensing Shared Service
Responsible Officer	Elizabeth Thornton, Head of Property & Regulatory Services
Lead Member(s)	Councillor Emma Morley, Lead Member for Operational Services
Statutory Status	<p>Non-statutory partnership.</p> <p>Both councils have a statutory duty in terms of the Licensing function and as such, both partner authorities will retain their decision-making powers relating to licensing matters through the existing committees, Cabinet and full Council just as they do currently. It is only the day-to-day administration and enforcement work of the Licensing teams that will be shared.</p>
Aims and objectives of partnership	<p>The aims and objectives of this arrangement are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added resilience across the two authorities. There will be a larger pool of officers covering both authorities providing additional resilience to cover sickness absence/vacancies or increased workload should this be required. • Availability of specialist skills across both authorities leading to increased efficiency. • Sharing of best practice in the delivery of Licensing Services. • Potential for the expansion of knowledge base of individual officers through greater training and learning opportunities.
Expected outcomes	The key aim of the partnership is to provide a high quality, value for money service that continues to meet the need of the customer (both internal and external) in terms of Licensing Services
Links to GBC Corporate Objectives	<p>Objective #1 People <i>A proud community; where residents call a safe, clean and attractive borough their home.</i></p> <p>Objective #2 – Place <i>A dynamic borough; defined by a vibrant and productive local economy taking advantage of growth in the area, supported by its strong and active community.</i></p> <p>Objective #3 Progress <i>An entrepreneurial authority; commercial in outlook and committed to continuous service improvement, underpinned by a skilled workforce and strong governance environment.</i></p>
GBC Resources (financial, officer, assets etc.)	The Licensing Shared Service is hosted by Gravesham Borough Council, with office accommodation provided at both sites. The Medway Council staff were TUPE transferred to GBC on 01 January 2019.
Partnership membership	Gravesham Borough Council and Medway Council
Governance arrangements	<p>A legal agreement is in place for the Licensing Shared Service which sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agreed TUPE transfer for the officers involved including details of the services that are to be provided under the terms of the agreement; • How service costs are to be calculated and shared between the two partners; • The responsibilities of each partner in relation to management of the shared service; • Arrangements for maintaining confidentiality of information held by each partner; and • Arrangements for the resolution of conflicts/disputes and the termination of the arrangement.

Gravesham Borough Council
Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements
July 2023

	This agreement is backed up by regular meetings between the Responsible Officers of the two authorities to respond to demand and where necessary adjust the level of support required.		
Financial reporting arrangements and timeframe for reporting	<p>The Licensing Shared Service legal agreement sets out the financial arrangements in Schedule 3 of the formal agreement</p> <p>Medway contribute 75% to the overall costs of the shared service, with GBC covering the other 25%.</p> <p>Central support costs/recharges (e.g. Finance, HR) do not form part of the shared service contribution mechanism and are accounted for at their individual authorities.</p> <p>All income for Medway licences received by Gravesham is transferred to Medway in full, quarterly. Income for Gravesham licences is retained by Gravesham</p>		
Performance monitoring arrangements and details of formal review of partnership arrangements.	As detailed above, there are regular meetings between the responsible officers at GBC and Medway Council in order to monitor the overall performance of the arrangement set out within this register.		
Risk Assessment	The risks associated with this arrangement are considered to be 'low' at this time and are detailed within the business case. It should be noted however that risks will be reviewed regularly throughout the implementation of this arrangement to ensure they are identified and, where required, managed/mitigated as necessary.		
Safeguarding Obligations	There are no specific safeguarding obligations as part of this shared service. However the various licensing regimes administered and enforced by the Licensing Team have objectives around the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.		
Equalities Obligations	<p>In terms of customers, all applicants and applications are treated consistently by determining each on its merits and in accordance with legislation and policy.</p> <p>The council's digital/online offering provides an enhanced level of accessibility for applicants and licence holders.</p> <p>The council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy seeks to improve access to, and the quality of, its taxi and private hire services through such means as disability awareness training requirements, and provisions which seek to ensure an appropriate balance of wheelchair accessible vehicles.</p> <p>In terms of staffing, and as an employer, such matters as the restructured service, agile working arrangements, provision of IT equipment, access to training, open door policies, etc. seek to provide equality of opportunity in all aspects of recruitment, work conditions and the working environment.</p>		
Climate Change Considerations	<p>The primary remit of the local authorities in discharging their licensing duties relate to the processing of applications and interventions for non-compliance with legislation and policy. There is limited scope therefore for the shared service to contribute to GBC's overall Climate Change ambitions. Both councils are however able to take, and have recently taken, positive steps to demonstrate their commitments to Climate Change through their respective Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policies by way of emission and age requirements.</p> <p>In the wider sense, the Shared Licensing Service is a lead department in terms of its online/digital offering. This in turn helps to reduce environmental impacts arising from printing/postage/unnecessary use of vehicles for visits by staff and drivers, etc.</p>		
Date Partnership Created / Approved by Cabinet	01 January 2019	Date Partnership Terminates (if applicable)	N/A

Gravesham Borough Council
Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements
July 2023

Glossary of Terms

To provide assistance to officers, Members and members of the public when reading the council's Corporate Register of Partnerships, a **Glossary of Terms** has been developed to provide additional information about the meaning of some of the words included within the register.

Term Used	Meaning
Annual Report	A comprehensive report on an organisations activities over the past year, intended to give shareholders and other interested people information about the organisation's activities and financial performance.
Best Practice	A working method or set of working methods that is officially accepted as being the best to use in a particular business or industry.
CIPFA	The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) - the professional body for people in public finance.
Corporate Plan	A document which sets out Gravesham Borough Council's corporate priorities for a period of years and provides details of the actions to be undertaken towards achieving those objectives.
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) – the UK government department responsible for policy and regulations on environmental, food and rural issues.
Emissions Inventory	An emission inventory is an account of the amount of pollutants discharged into the atmosphere within the area.
FTE	Full-time Equivalent (FTE) – the number of full-time equivalent staff that are working in the partnership.
Kent Environment Strategy (KES)	The Kent Environment Strategy provides a strategic framework for closer cross-sector partnership working between environment, health and economic agendas.
Kent Waste Strategy	A sustainable household waste management strategy that sets out how the Partnership will manage Kent's waste over the next 20 years (Strategy approved in 2007).
Local Air Quality Management (LAQM)	The LAQM process places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas.
National Air Quality Strategy	The National Air Quality Strategy (NAQS) was established as part of the UK Government's 1995 Strategic Policy for Air Quality Management. It uses health based standards as a framework to control the levels of seven designated air pollutants of seven air pollutants that are known to have adverse health effects.
Operating Framework	A guide to a company's/organisation's policies, goals, standards, procedures and training.
Partnership	The council defines a partnership as "an agreement between the Council and one or more independent bodies to work together to achieve the council's Corporate objectives".
Partnership Agreement	An agreement between the relevant partners setting out how the partnership will operate and the commitment each will make to the partnership.
Shared Service Agreement	This is a document which is signed by those authorities participating in a share service and sets out the governance arrangements for the shared service.

Gravesham Borough Council
Register of Partnerships and Shared Working Arrangements
July 2023

Term Used	Meaning
Shared Working Arrangement	Arrangements put in place to jointly deliver services across one or more local authorities.
Significant Partnership	A partnership for which there is a council resource provision of £50,000 or greater or one that is fundamental to the delivery of a corporate objective as established within the council's Corporate Plan. Without this effective partnership therefore, the delivery of Gravesham Borough Council's key corporate goals would not occur. This will also include those partnerships that have been established to deliver legal or statutory requirements on behalf of the council.
TUPE	Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations – the United Kingdom's implementation of the European Union Business Transfers Directive, protecting employees whose business is being transferred to another business.