



**Governance and Audit  
Committee**

**Tuesday, 10 March 2026**

**Subject: Annual key partnership review 2026**

Report by:

Assistant Director People & Democratic Services

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

To provide the Committee with updated details of the key strategic partnerships that the Council are involved in and the associated costs.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Governance and Audit are asked to:

- note the details provided of the key partnerships and support the councils approach to partnership working.

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:** None, each partnership assesses its own legal obligations

**(N.B.)** Where there are legal implications the report **MUST** be seen by the MO

**Financial :** FIN/161/26/SSc

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Associated costs for each partnership is managed within the relevant service budget by the responsible officer.

**Staffing :** None – staffing for each partnership is managed within the relevant service by the responsible officer.

**(N.B.)** Where there are staffing implications the report **MUST** have a HR Ref

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :** None, this is related to the governance only and any EDI responsibilities would be considered as part of each individual partnership.

**Data Protection Implications :** None

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:** None although where possible partnership meetings are undertaken digital first rather than in person.

**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:** None

**Health Implications:** None

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :**

**Risk Assessment :**

WLDC is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The monitoring of the key partnerships reduces the risk to the council.

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

Yes  No

**Key Decision:**

Yes  No

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 In 2008 the council introduced guidance on partnerships which set out a corporate approach. This was enhanced in 2019 with the development of a key partnership register along with an Approved Code of Practice (ACoP). This work outlines the current key partnerships, responsible officer and costs of each partnership. This report supports an efficient and effective approach to partnership working across the Council.

## **2. Definition of Partnership**

- 2.1 To provide consistency of approach and common understanding for colleagues involved in partnership working, the following definition of partnership has been used in this review:

*“A joint working arrangement where the partners are otherwise independent bodies; agree to co-operate to achieve a common goal and to achieve it, create an organisational structure or process and agreed programme while sharing information, risks and rewards proportionately.”*

The Audit Commission (2003)

## **3. Annual Review**

- 3.1 The following Terms of Reference were adopted in order to clarify the scope and objectives of the review:
- To review the list of the key strategic partnerships the Council is involved in.
  - To understand which officer is responsible for each partnership and what annual payments are required.
- 3.2 The review entailed an update from Management Team and Wider Management Team to review the partnership register. At this point, all officers are requested to review what partnerships they have and the governance around how this partnership runs.

## **4. Results of the Review**

- 4.1 Out of the 30 key strategic partnerships identified previously in March 2025 the review has established that there are now 25 key partnerships. This involved 20 continuing, 10 no longer partnerships and 5 new partnerships.
- 4.2 The majority of our key partnerships do not involve any annual payment, however 8 partnerships do. These partnerships and their associated annual cost are:
- NK/Rutland/WL Partnership for Website Management and Development - £1,500

- Mappa - £3,000
- WL/LiNK Subsidy Partnership - £9,500
- Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Partnership - £11,000
- Safer Lincolnshire Partnership - £12,500
- Lincolnshire Resilience Forum - £22,000
- WL/NK ICT Partnership - £29,662
- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan - £98,900

4.3 A full list of the partnerships are attached as Appendix A.

4.4 Since 2024/25 Internal Audit has completed a number of audits which involved these partnerships. These include:

- Cyber Security Operations 2025/26
- IT Operations 2024/25
- Environment and Sustainability Strategy Review 2025/26
- Planning Enforcement 2025/26

## **5. Proposed Next Steps**

5.1 To continue with the on-going structured approach to partnership monitoring which entails an annual review of partnerships reported to Management Team.

5.2 To enable this, partnership lead officers are expected to monitor the effectiveness of their partnerships and to justify on-going involvement, assess the likely costs/benefits before becoming involved with a new partnership.

5.3 A partnership register is being developed on Minerva and the results from this review will be added. This register will then be available to the relevant officers to update in relation to further information such as:

- Key outcomes
- Proposed actions
- Officer time
- Type of partnership (statutory/developing policy/managing finances or resources/ liaison or networking)
- Legal obligations

This register can be updated by relevant officers at any time and will be used for future annual reporting. Automated reminders to officers will be in place from 1 April 2026.

## **6. Recommendation**

6.1 Governance and Audit are asked to:

- note the details provided of the key partnerships and support the councils approach to partnership working.

