

## REPORT TO SSP PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT GROUP

### PAPER H

**SUBJECT:** Data Sharing Protocols - Information and intelligence for the partnership

**Date of SSP Performance Management Group meeting for discussion:** 21 November 2008

**Approximate time to allow for discussion:** 10 minutes

#### KEY ISSUES:

1. Statutory guidance for local partners to cooperate to improve outcomes for communities was published by the DCLG in July 2008: *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities*. The Audit Commission's Comprehensive Area Assessment will judge the effectiveness of partners in this task, through the local government performance framework and progress in meeting Local Area Agreement targets. The guidance also emphasises the priority to be given to developing community engagement through locality working.
2. This work must be underpinned by a shared understanding of the needs of local populations and individuals, reached through effective sharing and use of information and intelligence.
3. Organisations and partnerships are charged to produce a range of needs analyses and strategic assessments as a basis for priority-setting, planning and commissioning to improve outcomes. Examples include the Sustainable Community Strategy and associated Local Area Agreements, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for health and social care, Community Safety Partnerships Needs Assessment, economic needs assessment and the Children's Trust's children and young people needs assessment. There are overlaps and areas of common interest between all of these processes, such as demographic profiling; analysis of deprivation factors and mapping of need across differing geographical boundaries.
4. The capacity to collect, collate, present, interpret and analyse the vast array of data and intelligence available to local partners cannot be provided by any single agency working alone. As well as the need to use common datasets e.g. for population profiling, there is a growing need to understand how factors come together to shape local communities so that social and geographic inequalities can be addressed.
5. Currently there is a variety of informal and formal bilateral and partnership arrangements and agreements in place or in development which are intended to provide a mandate for this type of activity. The effectiveness of such arrangements is mixed as there are technical, legal, ethical barriers to overcome and limited capacity to respond to the many and increasing demands being made.

**WHAT ARE THE PMG BEING REQUESTED TO DO? e.g. make a decision, recommend, consider options etc.**

The Performance Management Group are asked to recommend the following for adoption by the Suffolk Strategic Partnership:

That the family of assessments and analyses outlined above are brought under one information sharing framework to minimise duplication of work and strengthen practical arrangements in support of partnership working.

In order to support this recommendation, PMG and the SSP are asked to approve these actions:

- An Information Sharing Framework to be drafted to provide the overarching protocols for partnership data exchange
- An Information Sharing Board is created to provide governance for appropriate and secure sharing and exchange of data between agencies
- A central database is maintained of all formal agreements for information and intelligence exchange
- An Intelligence Network is created to carry out the practical work of producing assessments and needs analyses, and to provide a forum for research proposals to be considered and intelligence and analysis formulated and shared.
- An appropriate web-based environment for the safe and secure deposit of data is identified as a shared resource for contributing partners, with a front-facing public resource for non-sensitive data and published analysis.

Details of this model are provided in the Appendix 1.

**ARE THERE RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS TO THE PMG?**

There are resource implications for the Strategic Partnership:

- Senior representative from each organisation for the Information Governance Body to meet twice a year
- Partner agencies contribute staff time and resource to attendance and work for the intelligence network forum.
- Contribution to administration and running costs of a web data warehouse.

**CONTACT DETAILS OF AUTHOR:**

Lyn Baran, Head of Research and Intelligence, 01473 264547, [Lyn.baran@educ.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:Lyn.baran@educ.suffolkcc.gov.uk)

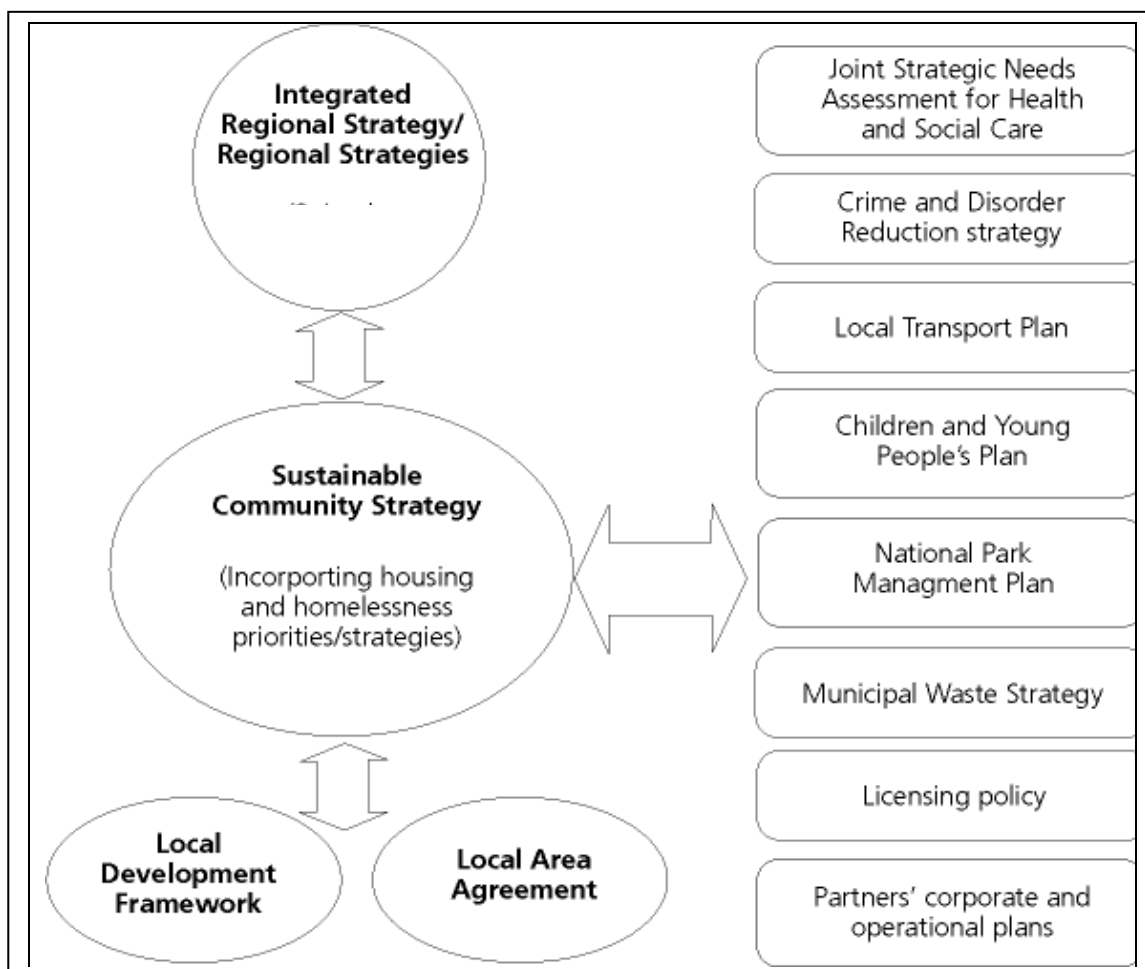
## Background

### Policy framework and links between plans

The policy framework expressed through *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities* proposes that in order to achieve positive outcomes for people and places there needs to be a broadening of local government's remit. Local partners should work together to respond to long-term challenges such as public health, climate change and demographic fluctuations, ensuring continued economic prosperity and environmental sustainability, and building strong societies in which people want to live and work.

In this context the sustainable community strategy guides and is informed by other local plans including Local Area Agreements, Local Development Frameworks, housing and homelessness strategies, regional and sub-regional plans, the children and young people's plan and local and neighbourhood plans.

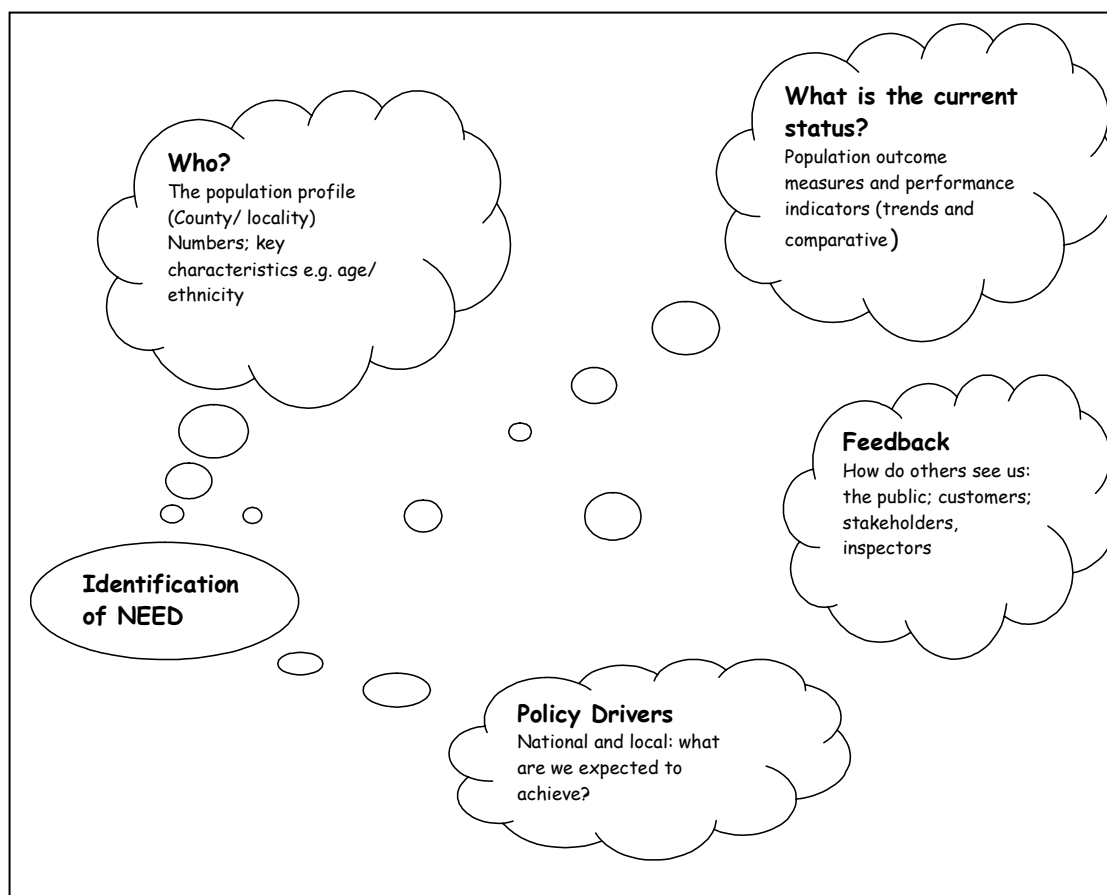
All require comprehensive and thorough analysis of need using data and intelligence garnered through national and local sources.



## The process of needs analysis

Needs analysis can be approached in a number of ways, but some fundamental elements will be common whichever methodology is adopted.

Each requires a definition of the population under consideration (whole county/ locality/all age groups/specific age groups etc.); an analysis of the current status derived from performance data and information; consideration of feedback from external sources which includes customer feedback; stakeholder views and formal inspection reports and all is shaped by the strategic context set by local and national policy.



The range of sources available to feed this process is enormous and includes national, regional and service specific data warehouses, internal management information systems, published research and reports, consultation and survey activity outcomes and intelligence from operational staff.

At the heart of these processes is a need for robust and reliable data which can be relied on and used consistently by partners. The wealth of data and information presents a significant challenge in itself, and as it is subject to change over time, it can be difficult to ensure consistency of figures. Slight changes in definitions or parameters used can easily lead to widely different figures quoted for what is superficially the same subject.

Although there is a growing number of national data sources to support this work, currently few provide sufficiently detailed desegregations to identify inequalities within the population overall, and some have significant time delays.

There is a need to be able to share and interrogate local data drawn direct from organisational Management Information Systems in order to bridge this gap.

More crucially, collection of data is only one starting point for identification of need. Making use of in-year service reports or commissioned research, and ensuring the voice of citizens and service users informs the process demands more than a technical or mechanical approach to this work. High-level analytical and presentational skills are required to identify emerging trends and produce credible analysis which can be used with confidence. In particular there is a need to develop capacity to identify where emerging trends can be linked to specific cross-cutting themes and plans and so support focused and targeted partnership working

Maintaining a core set of data which is accepted and used by partners across the county in the construction of needs assessments, strategic analysis and commissioning plans would be a significant step forward in supporting effective partnership working.

By identifying what this core set of data should be and identifying partners' responsibility for maintaining currency of the data there is the potential to drive up the quality of data shared, reduce duplication of effort and provide a robust basis for further intelligence and analysis. With finite resources within each organisation, it is vital that responsibility and work is shared proportionately so that demand can be managed and quality of work does not become compromised.

This is a fundamental step in providing a basis for the sophisticated development of analysis and intelligence led planning that is expected under the new performance frameworks for public sector organisations.

### **Data sharing / information exchange**

The success of partnership working is therefore dependent on the willingness and ability of partners to share data that is reliable and updated regularly.

There are a number of information sharing protocols in existence between partners in Suffolk and some well-established data exchanges. Some deal with aggregated and anonymised data which is required for strategic decision-making and planning, whilst others are specifically for the exchange of personal, individualised data which is covered by specific legislation. The range and level of activity covered by these agreements in the county is not well understood and there is no over-arching body which maintains an overview of what data is being exchanged, and for what purpose, or checking that this is being done securely and to the agreed schedules.

Nationally, local areas have begun to address this issue in a number of ways. A common feature is the creation of an overarching body which by bringing the various bilateral agreements under one umbrella, identifies opportunities to reduce the workload through avoiding duplication of effort, sets required standards for data quality, specifies frequency of exchange, and provides assurance on data security and use. The latter will grow in importance as the recommendations of the O'Donnell Report on Data Handling Procedures in Government is extended to other public bodies.

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/~media/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/csia/dhr/dhr080625%20pdf.ashx>

An overarching body can take an objective and consistent view on data sharing requests between partners, ensuring that all requests comply with legislative requirements, but ensuring no unnecessary barriers are created. The Data Protection Act 1998 applies limitations to the use and sharing of personal data but it does not prohibit the sharing and use of personal or anonymised information as a general rule.

It is proposed that an **Information Sharing Board** be established within the SSP to provide governance for programmes of work, which rely on partnership data and information exchange. It would ensure that barriers to data sharing are removed within a secure environment and that data sharing activity is legally compliant. (Draft Terms of Reference in Appendix 2)

The work of the Board will be managed within an **Information Sharing Protocol**, which sets out the detailed governance, and legislative boundaries to which the signatories will adhere. (Draft Content Headings Appendix 4)

It is proposed that the practical delivery of work mandated by the Information Sharing Board would be carried out through an **Intelligence Network**. This Network would provide a formal link between relevant data analysts/ researchers from partner organisations to develop, manage and oversee the work programme approved by the Information Sharing Board. (Draft terms of reference Appendix 3)

The Intelligence Network would be responsible for developing and delivering a work programme, which would:

- Support the production and maintenance of statutory assessments and other approved activities reliant on data exchange
- Maintain the refresh schedule for each agreed data element
- Identify the local responsible owner for each data element
- Hold a timetable of planned service reviews and local research which would contribute further intelligence
- Maintain a log of data/ intelligence gaps which the partnership will aim to bridge as resources/ capacity become available
- Identify best practice and effective interventions through participation in regional and national networks and monitoring of relevant intelligence sources.

### **Data hosting**

In order to make the outputs of these activities as a live resource, the use of an electronic portal is essential. This would allow primary data sources as well as the strategic overview and analysis to be stored securely by contributing or authorised partners.

Options could include a site hosted by one of the partners, or, as in some other local areas, development a shared site owned and managed by the local partnership.

It is proposed that identification of a suitable electronic portal is made a priority.

## **How the model would work in practice**

### **1: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** (statutory activity for local authorities and the PCT)

Framed by the Department of Health JSNA Core Dataset and statutory guidance  
PCT and SCC social care commissioners agree additional specific key areas for investigation annually

Data sharing requirements from this specified by JSNA Lead

Agreements written and approved by the Information Board

### **2: Needs Analysis for Children and Young People's Plan** (statutory activity for the Children's Trust Partnership Board)

Framed by the DCSF Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework and the National Children's Plan

Children's Trust agrees specification for needs analysis and requests updates of cluster profiles

Data sharing requirements from this specified by the Children's Trust Planning Lead

Agreements written and approved by the Information Board

### **From planning to action: 1 and 2:**

Intelligence network notes both pieces of work require demographic analysis and mapping of deprivation factors by sub-county areas

Scheduling of this work negotiated with commissioners so that one set of planned mapping and analysis can meet both requirements

Intelligence Network manages the data exchange approved by the Board and produces a timetable of work which supports both statutory activities.

### **3: Neighbourhood profiles - Safer Neighbourhood Team Areas**

*Specification of contents of Neighbourhood Profiles in line with published national guidance*

*Data sharing requirements specified*

*Noted need for demographic/ socio-economic analysis can be provided through work already in progress*

*Information Board approves extending use of these data sets for the SNT Profiles*

*Work added to schedule by Intelligence Network*

*Intelligence Network notes some police data used in neighbourhood profiles would enhance the quality of children and young people's cluster profiles e.g. number of domestic violence incidents where children are present.*

*Negotiation initiated to make this aggregated data available to children and young people cluster profiles.*

## Appendix 1

### An Information Sharing Framework for Suffolk: a model for delivery

#### Proposal

To establish an infrastructure that supports the sharing of information and data.

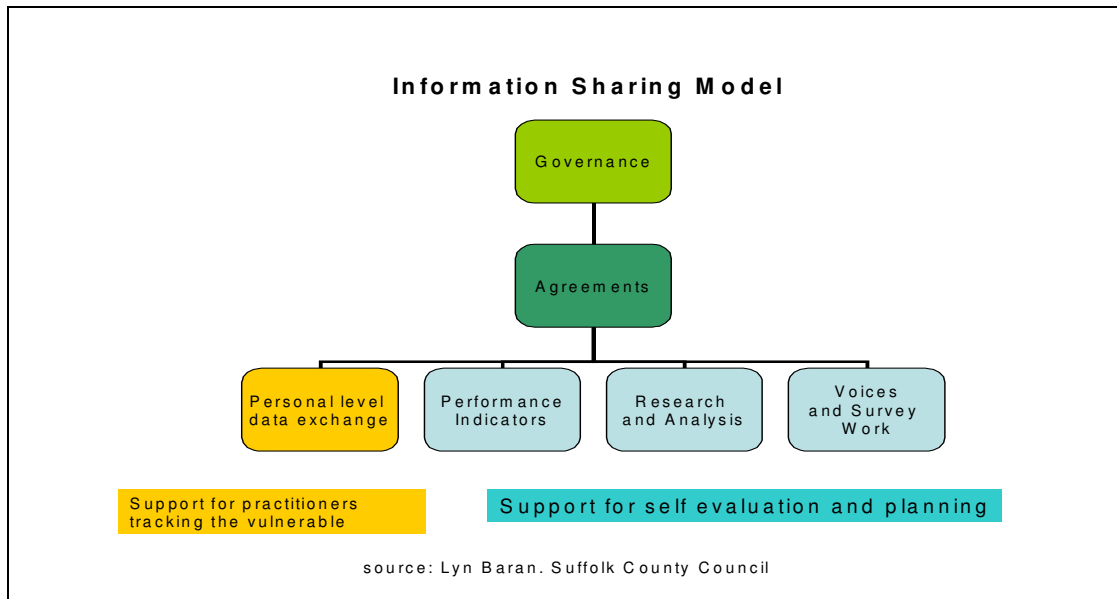
#### Purpose

To support the work of Strategic Partnerships in Suffolk in developing robust needs analysis.

#### Background

Evidence for understanding the needs of communities and agreeing priorities for shared action by partners is predicated on the sharing of data and information. There are technical and organisational obstacles and some legal and ethical considerations, which currently limit this activity. It is proposed that the creation of an Information Sharing Board to provide clear governance arrangements, with work delivered through a partnership intelligence network is a vital building block in removing barriers and improving collaboration.

#### An Information Sharing Model



#### Governance

Governance should be provided through a multi-agency group with representatives from contributing partners with authority to approve data sharing agreements on behalf of their organisation. This is the proposed Information Sharing Board.

## **Agreements**

Formal written agreements specify the detail of what partners will supply and fall into two main categories:

a) Information in support of self-evaluation and planning

- Standard reports
- aggregated information and data e.g. Performance Indicators
- Research and Evaluation
- Voices and Survey Work

b) Personal level data exchange. This is used most commonly to track the vulnerable and is used principally by practitioners with very secure arrangements.

All such agreements need to be very specific. For each item provided, the specification of details such as those in the list that follows ensures clarity of understanding by the provider and the recipients and should ensure that data flows predictably and dependably.

- Source of data
- Mechanism for securing data extract
- Where data is sent to
- Frequency of reporting
- Which data fields are included
- The purpose for which data will be used
- Security/ safeguarding arrangements

This same framework for written agreements could also be used for specific time-bound joint research projects.

Written agreements form the basis of the work plan for the Intelligence Network and would be reviewed annually by the Information Sharing Board to ensure compliance and that data exchange is still required.

## **Data Hosting**

The development of shared IT facilities to host information shared between registered partners (e.g. through password controlled access) is a significant factor in promoting this work. It would provide a single reference point for all joint work projects, with links to partners own web-sites.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Information Sharing Board (draft terms of reference)**

#### **Membership**

Senior representatives from partner agencies mandated to approve data exchange activity between partners. Legal advice may be required from time to time.

#### **Purpose**

To provide governance for information sharing and data exchange between partners, working within an agreed Information Sharing Protocol and to hold partners to account for complying with agreements made under the protocol, including frequency and quality of data provision, security arrangements and appropriate and approved use of data.

#### **Meetings**

Twice a year.

#### **Tasks**

- Oversee the negotiation of data sharing agreements
- Annual approval of data exchange agreements
- Monitor compliance with agreements
- Provide advice on procedures for safeguarding the interests of vulnerable groups e.g. development of memoranda of understanding covering the terms within which shared information can be used in research or evaluative reports
- Mandate the work plan of the Intelligence Network
- Review issues arising from activity undertaken , including a forum for addressing barriers to data sharing
- Consider requirements for new work including allocation of resources when appropriate

## Appendix 3

### Intelligence Network: Membership and Terms of Reference (draft)

#### Membership

- Suffolk County Council Research and Intelligence
- Suffolk County Council Research and Information (Community Safety)
- PCT research / information teams
- Suffolk Constabulary research / information
- District/ Borough representatives e.g. housing
- Head of Consultation

#### Purpose

The intelligence network brings together key partner agencies for the purpose of secure and effective data and information exchange in support of statutory needs analysis and strategic assessment activity. It seeks to maximise the impact of research through pooling collective intelligence and activity in a structured and supportive environment, which recognises the finite resource available within each organisation and the need to minimise duplication of effort. The aim is to provide decision-makers with informed, reliable and robust data and analysis of the needs of our local communities in Suffolk.

#### Meetings

Twice a year to agree and check progress on the annual work plan and provide a forum for sharing current / planned research activity. Additional meetings as required to deliver specific items of work.

#### Tasks

1. Develop and deliver a work programme, mandated by the Information Sharing Board which would:
  - a) Scope the data exchange requirements of partners, detailing the:
    - major assessments or needs analyses requiring support
    - the refresh schedule for each data element
    - the local responsible owner for each data element
    - agreed methodology for secure exchange of data
    - agreed purpose for use of the data
  - b) Maintain a
    - log of planned service reviews and local research which would contribute further intelligence
    - a log of data / intelligence gaps which the partnership will aim to bridge as resources / capacity become available
  - c) Provide a forum to discuss proposed local research and analysis from published research.
  - d) Identify best practice and effective interventions through participation in regional and national networks and monitoring of relevant intelligence sources.

## Appendix 4

### Information Sharing Protocol: Draft Content Headings

This is the proposed content headings of the formal document to underpin the work of the Information Sharing Infrastructure model described above. Where appropriate, bilateral protocols would provide additional detail for specific, usually sensitive, information exchange.

1. Introduction  
(Partnership Context)
2. Statutory duties relating to working together and sharing information
3. Purpose of the protocol
4. Partner agencies commitment
5. Operation of the protocol
  - The Information Sharing Board
  - The Intelligence Network
  - Obligations under the Law
  - The use of personal information
  - The use of information not in the public domain
  - The use of information subject to special controls
  - Process of information sharing – set up arrangements
  - Process of information sharing – maintenance and review
6. Charging
7. Oversight of the protocol
8. Publication of information gathered through this protocol
9. Publication of local audit of needs
10. Future directions