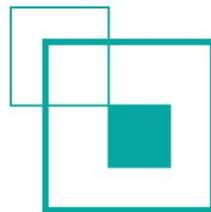


Five Steps to Better Outcomes



Learningto
Deliver

West Midlands Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnership

West Midlands **LGA**
local government association

**Centre of
Excellence**
West Midlands

Five Steps to Better Outcomes: Delivery Planning for LAAs

This delivery planning guide seeks to assist local partners in making a success of Local Area Agreements, working out how best to achieve community outcomes. It is intended to strengthen partnership added value and improve results – based on effective use of evidence and partner resources.

Part 1 provides the **model** and the key questions on one page.

Part 2 describes the **process** involved in getting the most from the model.

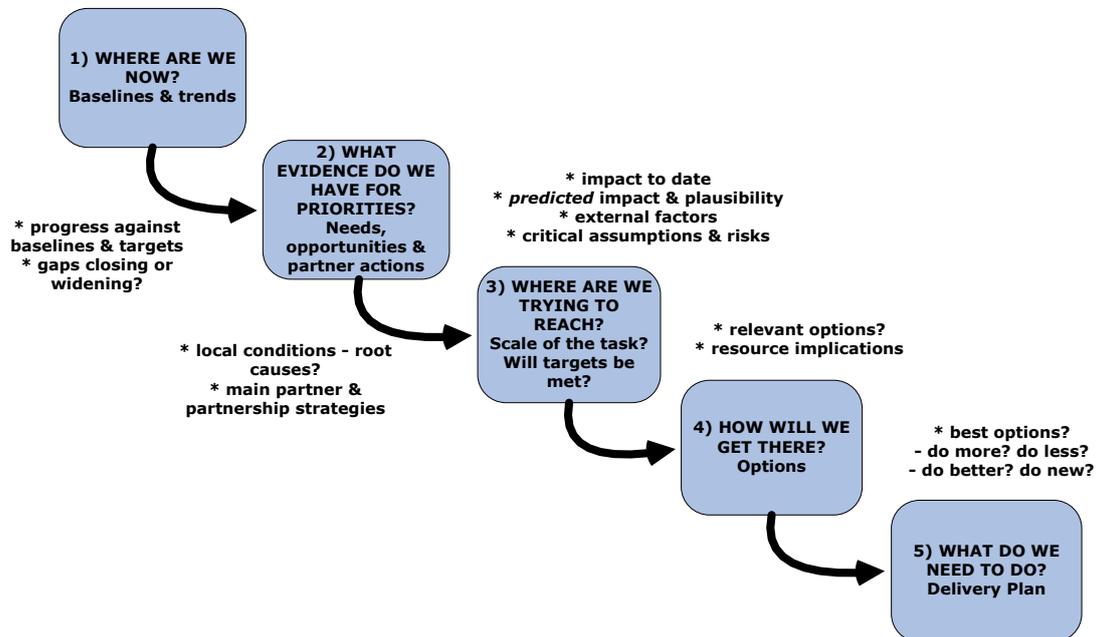
Part 3 sets out the **questions** to ask at each stage, along with **tips** and **information sources**.

The guide also provides an **outline for peer review** and **links to further resources** on outcome planning, target setting, policy proofing, and improvement tools.

This guide was written by Derrick Johnstone, as an assignment for the Department for Communities and Local Government. It has been adapted for use by Learning to Deliver, the support programme for Local Area Agreements in the West Midlands.

For further information about the guide, its use and latest developments, contact Derrick Johnstone (derrick.johnstone@educe.co.uk) or David Galliers (dgalliers@wmlga.gov.uk)

1) Five Steps to Better Outcomes – Core Questions



STEP 1. WHERE ARE WE NOW? Current performance and trends
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are we performing against local, sub-regional, regional and national indicators and targets? • How do we compare with other areas?
STEP 2. WHAT EVIDENCE DO WE HAVE FOR PRIORITIES? Needs, opportunities, actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What priority needs do we need to address? Area-wide? More local? Target groups within the population? • What are the nature and causes of these problems? What barriers and opportunities do we need to address? • What current strategies and interventions address these needs?
STEP 3. WHERE ARE WE TRYING TO REACH? Forecasting whether targets will be met
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective are current strategies and interventions? • How likely is it that current interventions will achieve the objectives/ targets? • What is the scale of the gap to be filled? • What critical factors and risks affect likely performance?
STEP 4. HOW WILL WE GET THERE? Options appraisal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What options do we have for improving performance in achieving our objectives? • What evidence do we have that these will be effective? • What should we favour, and why?
STEP 5. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW? Revised actions for the Delivery Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What actions do we need to take to improve performance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ new interventions? ◆ upscale or downscale existing interventions? ◆ improve existing interventions?

2) Five Steps to Better Outcomes: getting the process right

I Introducing 'Five Steps to Better Outcomes'

This delivery planning model is a guide to assist local partners in making a success of Local Area Agreements, working out how best to achieve community outcomes.

It is intended to strengthen partnership added value and improve results, based on more effective use of evidence and partner resources.

The model is designed to help facilitate the planning process, including gaining partner understanding and buy-in. It can be used at different geographical levels, addressing specific LAA outcomes, or adapted in focusing on localities within the LAA area such as priority neighbourhoods¹.

This document introduces the Five Step model, and is accompanied by a template which can be used/ adapted to help to structure the plans produced.

Reaping the benefits of LAAs

LAAs are central to improving the effectiveness of partnership working, providing an opportunity for partners to plan and work together to achieve more than they could individually. This is the ultimate goal of achieving **greater impact**, the most important aspect of LAA added value (Figure 1).

Figure 1 LAA added value from a local perspective



¹ It draws on substantial experience amongst LSPs in Neighbourhood Renewal Fund areas and on developments across LAA themes including commissioning for health and social care and children and young people's services. In turn these draw on concepts such as 'results-based management' and 'outcomes-based accountability' see, eg, www.resultsaccountability.com

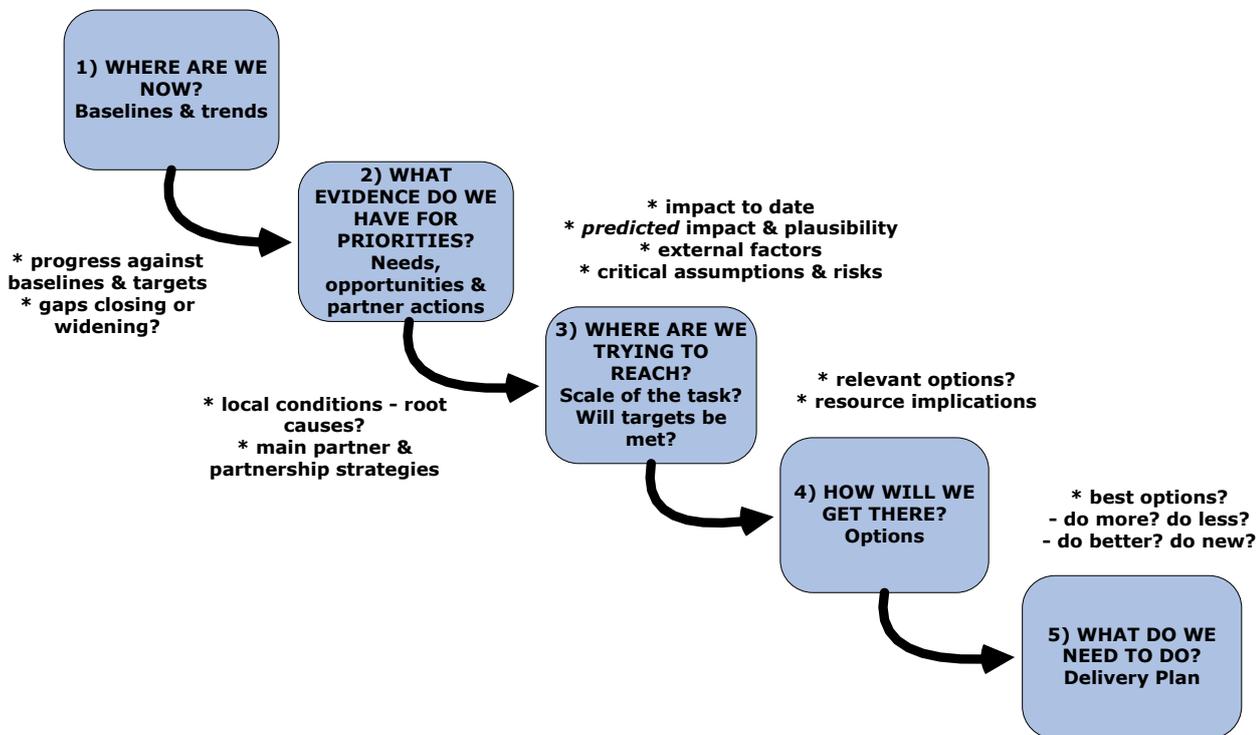
LAAs can also be the mechanism for adding value in the eyes of local partners through:

- acting as a spur to innovation, **finding new and better ways** to manage partnership working and deliver services, not least through harnessing *mainstream* resources more effectively in pursuit of common goals
- providing a means for **aligning resources** to achieve better results
- gaining *efficiencies* in use of resources, **reducing costs**, eg, in administering separate funding streams and in performance management and reporting, or **sharing resources**, eg, on research, analysis and performance management or on common IT systems

The 5 Step Process

The model has five steps, working through from the current position on a given LAA outcome or set of outcomes to a delivery plan with priority actions and partner commitment.

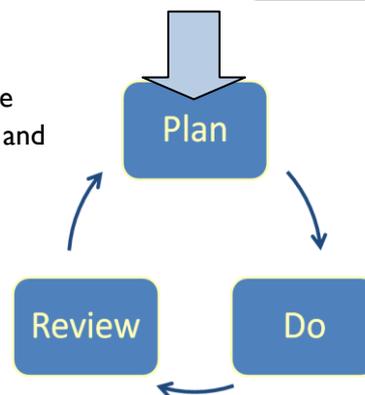
Figure 2 5 Step Delivery Planning Model



These steps are outlined in more detail in section 2.

The steps form part of a **cyclical approach** to performance management: the ‘Plan’ box in the Plan-Do-Review process, and are intended to kick-start more robust partnership ways of working.

They also cover the preparatory work needed for strategic commissioning of services.

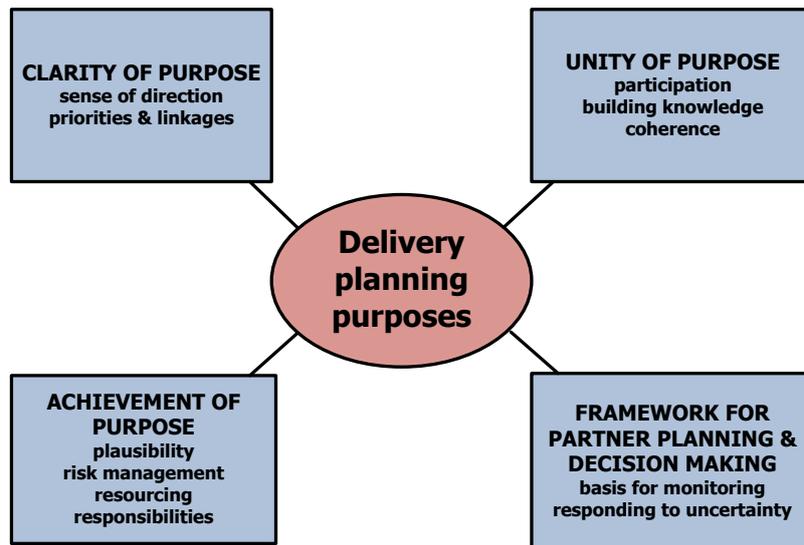


Benefits of Delivery Planning

A structured approach to LAA delivery planning will provide benefits in:

- clarifying **common purpose** across partners, establishing shared priorities and strengthening linkages
- generating **unity of purpose**, through active partner participation, building shared knowledge and promoting greater coherence in what partners do
- helping to ensure **achievement of purpose**, considering critical matters such as:
 - ♦ the plausibility of proposed activities/ interventions
 - ♦ resourcing
 - ♦ partner responsibilities
- providing a **framework for partner decision-making**, as an input to individual partner business planning, joint monitoring and responding to unexpected developments

Figure 3 Purposes of Delivery Planning



In striving to achieve better outcome-based targets, there are **significant risks to be managed** – all the greater where reward funding may be at risk and where community expectations of improved performance are high.

Outcomes by their very nature are to varying extents outside the direct control or influence of partners – but represent what’s important for local communities.

Judging how well partners identify and manage risks in working together to achieve outcomes lies at the heart of the new system of Comprehensive Area Assessments.

The place of evidence in delivery plans

Focusing on outcomes demands more of the evidence that partners bring to bear in working together. How do partner activities contribute to achieving outcomes, not just delivering specific

outputs? What are successful outcomes, how do we measure them, and do we have good enough baselines to be able to tell if we really are making a difference?

Good use of evidence is especially important in a partnership setting, in:

- determining what needs to be done
- mobilising support behind this
- demonstrating success
- learning and improving

By 'evidence' we mean the information needed to develop, deliver and improve strategies, policies and interventions – especially that which turns visions and aspirations into objectives and activities which are concrete, achievable and manageable.

Making good use of evidence in delivery planning is likely to require:

- articulating and questioning assumptions behind what's done at the moment
- working through differences in perspective, interpretations, theories and values:
 - ♦ what does the data show? – and what lies behind this?
- building common ground about what needs to be done and why

For delivery planning, it is especially important to have:

- good quality information about *needs and opportunities* to be addressed (drawn, eg, from administrative data sources, qualitative and quantitative research, and feedback from service users and other local people), down to fine level where considering inequalities amongst groups and neighbourhoods
- data on the nature, scale and fit of existing partner activities and how these contribute to outcomes
- *evaluation evidence* on what activities are proving effective
- a *grasp of wider research and evaluation* to spark innovation and help plug gaps in what purely local data can provide
- *skills in analysis and presentation* – especially to provide the platform for discussion and decision-making

Getting the process right

Delivery planning can be a demanding process. Indeed if the greatest value is to be gained from the process it *will* stretch those taking part, and offer the reward of satisfaction from achieving more impact.

Good results depend on:

- **someone taking the lead** in driving and co-ordinating the delivery planning process
 - ♦ treat the process as a project to manage in its own right
- building and maintaining **momentum**
- **ensuring that participants understand the process** and what they/ their organisation and the communities they serve can gain from their involvement
- **preparation:**
 - ♦ thinking through how to manage the process, including individual planning sessions
 - ♦ ensuring that participants have had time to digest information before each session

- **keeping participants' eyes on the ball** – avoiding digressions, recapping on progress and what needs to be done to reach the destination

Successful implementation also depends on:

- **avoiding 'paralysis by analysis'** and information overload
 - ♦ don't seek perfect answers – build and refine and there will be a better platform for improvement next time round
- **taking things in proportion:**
 - ♦ concentrating on the more significant needs and opportunities where partners can add most value – where is most potential and perhaps the greatest risks
 - ♦ ...while avoiding traps that lead to neglecting the needs of smaller, but particularly disadvantaged groups or neighbourhoods, or the contributions and potential of voluntary and community organisations
- **being prepared to tackle the tough issues** and decisions
- **looking outward** to learn from other areas
- in the plan itself, **keeping the content concise**, with a bulleted narrative, and using graphs to help readers grasp the main points, such as the scale of the task in reaching targets.

Creating the conditions

Gaining the most from delivery planning will require:

- **commitment from the top** – with organisational leaders...
 - ♦ supporting and encouraging staff in engaging in delivery planning – and giving them delegated authority to act
 - ♦ ensuring that staff have the time available – delivery planning is not an add-on
 - ♦ providing advice and taking action where needed to ensure that other parts of their organisation backs them up where needed
 - ♦ pushing for service improvements across the partnership
 - ♦ being demanding of standards of evidence, including process and impact evaluation
 - ♦ ensuring that there are enough resources available to make necessary analytical contributions
- **getting the timing right**
 - ♦ delivery planning timescales that are adequate for the work to be done, though at a pace
 - ♦ delivery plans produced in time to influence individual partner business plans and decision-making cycles
- considering **what else needs to be done to strengthen partnership working**
 - ♦ are there underlying issues and barriers which need to be resolved, and need to be tackled outside the delivery planning process?
 - ♦ are partners clear about what's in it for them to engage fully in the process?
 - ♦ is data sharing encouraged, and are there protocols in place where needed?
 - ♦ investment in joint learning activities
 - ♦ some participants may be new, or less experienced. Consider what briefing, coaching, etc they might welcome to help them play a full part.
- **partners being prepared to challenge each other** – constructively – in seeking better understanding and better solutions
- **taking stock of who needs to be involved**, when, and in what ways
 - ♦ who needs to be consulted?
 - ♦ who needs to be engaged in planning and decision-making, at what stage?

- ◆ are expected roles and contributions clear?
- ◆ conflicts of interest can arise where providers contribute to the earlier stages of the delivery planning process. Their experience and expertise can be very valuable – though they can have vested interests in options appraisal and commissioning

What makes a good delivery plan?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● prioritises what needs to be done● is achievable within a realistic and specified timescale● is plausible in relation the likelihood of achieving intended outcomes● states for each priority:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ actions to be taken◆ clear targets and success criteria● and for each action:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ appropriate milestones/ deadlines◆ responsibility for delivery (lead/support)● estimates resource requirements● sets out arrangements for:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ collecting evidence/monitoring progress◆ evaluating impact

Policy proofing delivery plans

Equality and diversity concerns need to run through delivery plans, to address needs of disadvantaged communities and help partner agencies practise their duties to promote equal opportunities. These relate not just to groups in the population but also to where people live, not just urban neighbourhoods but also pockets of disadvantage in rural areas. At the same time, sustainable development will need to run through plans.

It is essential to establish whether or not there are, or are likely to be:

- significant differences in needs and service take-up
- gaps in evidence relating to people who, for a variety of reasons, are under-represented in datasets and in consultations
- priorities and options for interventions which adversely affect particular groups or areas, or pose specific challenges in delivering services
- significant environmental implications of policy choices

3) Five Steps to Better Outcomes: Steps & Questions

Step I: WHERE ARE WE NOW? Baselines & trends

Key questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are we performing against local, sub-regional, regional and national indicators and targets? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ where there are inequalities targets, are we closing the gap or not? • How do we compare with other areas? • How significant are the performance gaps? <p><i>Also ask:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is performance in line with historical trends, or are significant changes of more recent origin? • What are the main factors behind the trends? • Is progress being made which is not being captured by the indicator data? • Do these data obscure differences for groups of the population or for neighbourhoods/localities?

TIPS

Understanding the data

- Beware the limits to what changes in indicators can tell you. Survey-based measures have margins of error which mean that you cannot be absolutely certain that year on year changes reflect something real rather than statistical.
- Seek to understand how indicator data are derived, and the impact of administrative changes, eg, on client benefit eligibility, on the comparability of data sources over time.
- For some indicators, it may be advisable to use groups or 'baskets' of indicators to give you a more rounded picture of performance – for example, looking at trends across a number of health conditions critical to life expectancy, or looking at changes in overall employment as well as in employment rates
- Look at trends over a few years, not just changes in the most recent data
- Make use of comparator areas to understand how you are performing, eg, using the ONS Area Classification to identify areas with similar characteristics. This may cast new light on the local data. Other 'nearest neighbours' can be used, eg, those produced by CIPFA or the Home Office for police forces and community safety partnerships. The Audit Commission Area Profiles site allows you to choose your own.
- Where possible, use the latest ONS Mid-Year Estimates when calculating changes in rates, to take account of changes in population denominator. Many areas have experienced significant migration and population growth since the 2001 Census, and using such historic data may fail to capture what has really improved or worsened.

Presenting the data

- If the LAA target is phrased in terms of a rate (eg, number of working age benefit claimants), convert this into numbers of people: it becomes easier to see how the target relates to the scale of current services/ interventions

- Home in on the most pertinent data – don't swamp participants in the planning process with too much information
 - ♦ though do cite data sources, time periods, etc – making these explicit can avoid later confusion

INFORMATION SOURCES

- Renewal.net'
 - www.renewal.net
 - ♦ How to use baselines and benchmarks
 - ♦ How to reflect neighbourhood priorities in LAAs (new)
 - ♦ guides to ethnic monitoring data sources: monitoring floor and local targets in employment; education; crime; health; housing; liveability (ORRION - On-line Race Resource for Improving Outcomes)
 - ♦ www.renewal.net/toolkits/OrrionToolkit/Nav.asp?Category=:toolkits:ORRION:Data
 - ♦ Baselines (SELD FAQ)
 - www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Frequently%20Asked%20Questions/Baselines.pdf

Sourcing data

- Data for Neighbourhood Renewal
Website www.data4nr.net and NRU report www.data4nr.net/data4nr_report.pdf, signposting key sources of data for neighbourhood renewal, by policy theme and availability by geographic level and ethnicity
- Neighbourhood Statistics
www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk
- Neighbourhood Statistics Statistical Toolkit
www.renewal.net/Nav.asp?Category=:neighbourhood%20renewal:delivering%20neighbourhood%20renewal:neighbourhood%20statistics
Navigating Neighbourhood Statistics
www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Frequently%20Asked%20Questions/Navigatingneighbourhoodstatistics.pdf
- Floor Targets Interactive
www.fti.communities.gov.uk/fti
- Guide to ethnicity survey sources (ONS)
www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/Info.do?info=link.jsp?page=EthIntroduction.htm

Choosing comparable areas:

- ONS Area Classification for comparator areas (ward comparisons available as well as local authority areas)
www.statistics.gov.uk/about/methodology_by_theme/area_classification/default.asp
- Area Profiles www.areaprofiles.audit-commission.gov.uk
- CIPFA www.cipfastats.net
- Community Health Profiles – produced by Regional Public Health Observatories
www.communityhealthprofiles.info/

Step 2. WHAT EVIDENCE DO WE HAVE FOR LOCAL PRIORITIES? Needs, opportunities & partner actions

Key questions

- What priority needs do we need to address? Area-wide? More local? Groups within the population?
- What are the nature and causes of these problems? What barriers and opportunities do we need to address?
- What current strategies and interventions address these needs?

TIPS

Presentation

- Keep the content of the plan concise – provide detailed information in appendices
- When approaching the exercise for the first time, don't attempt to pin everything down – rough orders of magnitude may be enough to make progress – how far *does* existing provision stack up against needs?

Analysis

- Look beyond single indicators. Analysis of a range of indicators may offer insights which challenge established thinking
- Make appropriate use of statistical and graphing techniques in building the picture and developing common understanding
 - ♦ use techniques such as measures of dispersion (variance and standard deviation), eg, to draw out the degree of inequalities
- Investigate relationships between variables. Correlation and regression can be powerful when used, eg, in looking at economic and social factors affecting crime or health
 - ♦ correlations do not imply cause – but can prompt further investigation to get to the bottom of reasons for changes behind the indicator data. Likewise, simple scatter plots can help identify outlier data worth further inquiry and potential focus for improvement
 - ♦ use regression techniques where you are looking to explain or predict relationships between variables, where one may lead to another

Data gathering

- Use a range of appropriate evidence sources
 - ♦ administrative data – local and national
 - ♦ Census and national surveys
 - ♦ service user feedback
 - ♦ local consultations and research
- There may be local research and analysis carried out for related purposes, which might include, eg, Local Accessibility Plans, PCT work on the wider determinants of health inequalities
- If you find significant information gaps which cannot readily be tackled, flag these up as improvement actions

- Draw on the findings of robust national research and statistics to cast light on local information gaps. Plan ahead for *future* delivery planning rounds, eg, by boosting sample sizes in area-wide surveys to provide more robust data about particular groups or neighbourhoods; or taking steps to improve ethnicity coding and other local monitoring data
- Don't use the Data Protection Act as a barrier to sharing the data needed for delivery planning. Data can frequently be aggregated and anonymised to overcome confidentiality issues

Digging deeper

- Are problems especially marked for some localities or groups (categories of service user/ customer, communities of interest, etc)? “Absence of evidence does not mean evidence of absence.”
- There are techniques which can be used to dig deeper where necessary, eg, in modelling likely incidence of particular characteristics in the populations of small areas (eg, as developed by Drug and Alcohol Action Teams in estimating drug use at neighbourhood level)

Strategies and interventions

- Gather information on interventions/ services delivered by individual partners as well as those funded/ delivered through the partnership
 - ♦ develop the overall picture: how does the range and scale of services match up with the scale and nature of needs?
- Develop understanding of delivery chains: how different organisations play significant roles in engaging clients and delivering services, where there are critical inter-dependencies and where users may be adversely affected by weaknesses in co-ordination of service delivery
 - ♦ further research may be needed into client journeys and ‘significant events’ which make all the difference to user experience of services
- Recognise the contribution of smaller projects (often delivered by the voluntary and community sector).
- Identify the linkages between local and sub-regional regional strategies, to help ensure that interventions are integrated and pulling in the same direction

INFORMATION SOURCES

- Renewal.net
 - ♦ How to gather data
 - ♦ How to analyse data
www.renewal.net/Nav.asp?Category=:toolkits:how%20to%20define%20the%20problem:establish%20the%20evidence
 - ♦ Service delivery (ORRION)
www.renewal.net/toolkits/OrrionToolkit/Nav.asp?Category=:toolkits:ORRION:service%20delivery
 - ♦ Improving Croft and Cowpen Quays (example of local survey sample boost in a neighbourhood management pathfinder)
www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Case%20Study/Improvingcroftcowpen.doc
 - ♦ Baselines FAQ www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Frequently%20Asked%20Questions/Baselines.pdf
 - ♦ Measuring drug use in small areas www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Research/Measuringdrugsmall.pdf

Data sources

- Data4NR: signposts datasets available for targeting, monitoring, priority setting and performance management at a neighbourhood level. www.data4nr.net
- Neighbourhood Statistics www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk
- NOMIS (for access to datasets on employment and enterprise) www.nomisweb.co.uk/
- Regional Observatories www.aro.org.uk
- Regional Public Health Observatories www.apho.org.uk
- Rural Evidence Base (Defra) www.defra.gov.uk/rural/research/default.htm
- ONS Urban/Rural classification www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/nrudp.asp

Statistical analysis

- Neighbourhood Statistics Statistical Toolkit
 - ◆ Finding statistics to build the evidence base
 - ◆ Creating common statistics
 - ◆ How to find out if my area has changed over time
 - ◆ How to find out the characteristics of an areawww.renewal.net/Nav.asp?Category=:neighbourhood%20renewal:delivering%20neighbourhood%20renewal:neighbourhood%20statistics
- Magenta Book (Chapter on 'Is it statistically significant? Statistical concepts, inference & analysis') www.gsr.gov.uk/downloads/magenta_book/chap_4_Magenta.pdf

Data sharing

- Data Sharing for Neighbourhood Renewal: Lessons from The North West (NRU Research Report 18) www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/publications.asp?did=1604

Service delivery

- Delivering Efficiently: Strengthening the links in public service delivery chains (National Audit Office and the Audit Commission) www.nao.org.uk/pn/05-06/0506940.htm
- Delivering Public Services to a Diverse Society (National Audit Office) www.nao.org.uk/pn/04-05/040519.htm
- Experiencing ethnicity: discrimination and service provision www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations/914.asp

Step 3. WHERE ARE WE TRYING TO REACH? Scale of the task? Will targets will met?

Key questions

- How well do current strategies and interventions match up against the scale and nature of needs?
- How effective are these? What critical factors affect performance?
- What is the scale of the gap to be filled in achieving targets?
- How likely is it that current strategies and interventions will achieve the objectives/ targets?

TIPS

Assessing effectiveness of services and interventions

- Assemble available evidence of outcomes, supplemented with output data and other proxy indicators where outcome data is lacking or where improvements in outcomes will take time to manifest (eg, changes in life expectancy)
- Consider the extent to which there are differences in outcomes for particular groups and neighbourhoods
- Draw on the findings of robust national and regional evaluations to inform assessments of impact and generation of options worth considering in Step 4

Reviewing the gaps to be filled

- Take account of the impact of other partnership activity: eg, crime reduction measures on local investment; increased employment rates on child poverty
- Allow for the impact of known policy changes (and also unintended consequences!)
- Make assumptions behind forecasts explicit

Plausibility & risks

- Consider plausibility: how likely are interventions likely to have the desired impact, and on what does this depend?
- Ask, what are the main risks affecting future performance?
 - ♦ which are critical?
 - ♦ which can be managed or influenced locally?

Trends & trajectories

- Analysing trends based on past performance and trajectories (taking account of planned changes in service delivery and possibly external factors) can powerfully demonstrate the scale of the task in achieving targets
 - ♦ Trajectory analysis is more straightforward for some themes than others, reflecting the degree to which partners can influence outcomes. For example, looking at trajectories for worklessness based only changes in local service delivery may miss significant impacts of other factors such as changes in national benefit rules or particular types of job growth in neighbouring areas.

- Scenario planning can help to inform this stage, again by focusing partners' minds on factors influencing likely out-turns, and developing a shared understanding of significant risks and what influences are amenable to local action

Presentation

- Use graphs to help partners visualise the gaps to be closed (and the implications of alternative scenarios)

There may be a need to revisit the earlier analysis – is there good understanding of the reasons behind closing or widening trajectories?

INFORMATION SOURCES

Trajectories & scenarios

- Strategy Survival Guide – includes content on forecasting and scenario development
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/survivalguide/index.asp

Outcomes for different groups

- Ethnicity monitoring: guidance for partnerships on monitoring benefit
www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/publications.asp?did=856

Evaluation

- Renewal.net – content includes:
 - ◆ How to evaluate a project
www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Overview/How%20To/Howevaluateproject.doc
 - ◆ Attributing success after the event (SELD FAQ)
www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Frequently%20Asked%20Questions/Attributingsuccessafter.pdf
- Policy Hub resources on evaluation
www.policyhub.gov.uk/evaluating_policy/
- Magenta Book (Chapter on 'How do you know why (and how) something works? Qualitative methods of evaluation')
www.gsr.gov.uk/downloads/magenta_book/Chap_8_Magenta.pdf
- Value for Money – Treasury guidance
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/BDA/6D/vfm_assessmentguidance061006opt.pdf
- Charities Evaluation Services resources on monitoring and evaluation
www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?pg=315
- *Evaluating Community Projects* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation)
www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859354157.pdf

Step 4. HOW WILL WE GET THERE? Options appraisal

Key questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main options for improving performance? • What evidence do we have that these will be effective? • What should we favour, and why? <p><i>Options may relate to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 'do more': scaling up successful interventions ◆ 'do new': introduce new interventions ◆ 'do better': improving delivery of existing interventions (eg, through improved methods, co-ordination, pooled resources, collaborative delivery) ◆ 'do less': scaling down or withdrawing from particular interventions to free resources for other activities

TIPS

Two levels of options of appraisal

- Distinguish between two levels of options appraisal:
 - ◆ the main *strategic choices* to make
 - ◆ the *selection of projects/ interventions/ activities* likely to have the best returns for partner effort and investment

Agreeing criteria

- Agree criteria for reviewing the strategic choices and project selection, eg:
 - ◆ fit with Sustainable Community Strategy priorities, and with sub-regional and regional strategies
 - ◆ contribution to achievement of wider SCS goals
 - ◆ expected impact (on theme targets, and contribution to achievement to other partnership priorities)
 - ◆ partnership added value
 - ◆ affordability – is there the money and is it value for money against alternatives?
 - ◆ capacity to deliver: are there constraints on successful implementation?
 - ◆ risks – relative to returns, and scope to manage these

Plausibility, resources & risks

- Consider the *plausibility* of options:
 - ◆ how likely are options to succeed?
 - ◆ what is the evidence? (Draw on evidence from within the area and beyond.)
 - ◆ is the underlying logic sound, connecting activities to intended outcomes?
- Consider the resource implications of the different options:
 - ◆ which offer value for money?
 - ◆ do options include early intervention measures which offer better longer-term returns?
- Assess the risks associated with each option
 - ◆ consider unintended consequences

Potential of pilots

- Be prepared to use pilots to test out new approaches – eg:
 - ♦ multi-agency delivery in target locations
 - ♦ new delivery methods
 - ♦ different types of supplier
- ... and build in evaluation:
 - ♦ how will you tell if an initiative is worth scaling up and/or mainstreaming?

Learning from elsewhere

- There may be particular scope to learn from comparator areas where performance has been strong. What are the reasons for this? What lessons can be learnt and applied to fit local circumstances?

Implications of 'scaling down' or 'winding up' options

- Where interventions may be scaled down or closed, consider the ramifications. Does there need to be an exit strategy for organisations affected? Are there implications for staff, requiring redeployment or redundancy?

Scope for third sector delivery

- Consider the potential of third sector involvement in service delivery, and how best to develop the scope for this, eg, in:
 - ♦ enabling third sector organisations to take advantage of procurement opportunities
 - ♦ capacity building which strengthens delivery and encourages cross-sector working
 - ♦ providing small grants to encourage 'grass roots' contributions

Third sector and service delivery

The Government's action plan for third sector involvement in public services expects government bodies to:

- engage with the third sector to build an understanding of users and communities
- consult potential service providers well in advance of commissioning
- put outcomes at the heart of the strategic planning process
- map the full range of potential providers to better understand their potential contributions
- consider the need for investment in the provider base
- ensure contracting processes are transparent and fair, including facilitating sub-contracting and consortia bids where appropriate
- put longer term funding and an appropriate balance of risk into contracts
- seek feedback from users, communities and providers to assess the efficacy of the service

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_service_delivery/

INFORMATION SOURCES

'What works'

- Renewal.net as a source of 'what works' www.renewal.net
 - ♦ How to consider your options
www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Toolkit/Howconsideroptions.doc
 - ♦ How to mainstream neighbourhood initiatives
www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Toolkit/Howmainstreamneighbourhood.doc
 - ♦ How to reshape local services
www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Toolkit/Howreshapeservices.doc
 - ♦ Best Practice Case Studies: Race Equality, Faith Groups & Community Cohesion Issues – LSP Improvement Plans & LAAs (ORRION)
www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Research/Bestpracticecase.pdf

Services innovation

- *Developing the local government services market* (DCLG) reviewing how to promote best value in commissioning through competition and contestability
www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/developinglocal
- *Neighbourhood services: developing the market* (DCLG) highlights scope for new delivery models (eg, area-based commissioning, contracting and franchises) alongside new forms of local governance.
www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/workingpaperneighbourhood
- *Innovation and its contribution to improvement* (DCLG)
www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/innovationits
- *Seeing the Light* (Audit Commission)
www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/NATIONAL-REPORT.asp?CategoryID=&ProdID=687E80A7-C07E-4d2e-9197-D70A9F271463&fromREPORTSANDDATA=NATIONAL-REPORT&area=hped

Options appraisal

- Strategy Survival Guide – content includes
 - ♦ developing, detailing and appraising policy options
 - ♦ multi-criteria analysis
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/survivalguide/index.asp
- *Health Inequalities Intervention Tool* – intended to support PCTs with the greatest health inequalities make progress in increasing life expectancy.
www.lho.org.uk/HEALTH_INEQUALITIES/Health_Inequalities_Tool.aspx
- *Public interventions in the economy* (GLA Economics) Of wider relevance to partnerships in reviewing current activities and options.
www.london.gov.uk/mayor/economic_unit/docs/rationale_for_public_sector_intervention.pdf
- *Changing behaviour to prevent crime* (Home Office) – more widely relevant in looking at policies and options appraisal relating to seeking changes in people's behaviour
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/changing_behaviour.html

Pilots

- *Trying It Out: the Role of 'Pilots' in Policy Making* (Cabinet Office)
www.policyhub.gov.uk/docs/rop.pdf

Performance improvement

- Improvement Network
www.improvementnetwork.gov.uk/imp/core/page.do?pagelid=1
- Performance improvement resources on IDeA Knowledge
www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=76209

Step 5. WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO? Delivery Plan

Key questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What actions do we need to take to improve performance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ new interventions? ◆ upscale or downscale existing interventions? ◆ improve existing interventions? • Who will be responsible for what, over what timescales? • Are actions SMART? • How will we monitor and evaluate?

TIPS

- Are actions SMART?
 - ◆ *specific* (specific to the partnership's objectives and in their wording)
 - ◆ *measurable* (capable of assessment: will you be able to tell whether they have been successfully carried out or not, and to what extent/ effect?)
 - ◆ *achievable* (in relation to resources/ delivery capacity)
 - ◆ *realistic* (and challenging enough to be motivating)
 - ◆ *time-related* (with milestones for delivery and monitoring progress)
- Consider how you will monitor implementation. Comprehensive or something more selective? Bear in mind the significance of individual actions and critical links between them.
 - ◆ how will you keep track of major interventions, especially those where there are pronounced risks to successful delivery?
 - ◆ how will you identify under-performance?
 - ◆ do you have the resources and systems in place for monitoring and evaluation? If not what changes are needed?
- Build evaluation into agreed action, to promote learning and accountability within the partnership – and provide a better evidence base for future planning and improvement

INFORMATION SOURCES

Performance management

- IDeA resources
 - ◆ Performance management
www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=76209
 - ◆ Performance management Community of Practice
www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=4809631
- *Integrating sustainable development into performance management* (Forum for the Future)
www.forumforthefuture.org.uk/government/lrpstrategicmgt_page142.aspx

Commissioning & procurement

- Commissioning Framework for Health & Well-being (Department of Health)
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_072604
- *Beyond Procurement: DH good practice guidance on integrating equalities into healthcare*
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_075724
- *Hearts and Minds: commissioning from the voluntary sector* (Audit Commission)

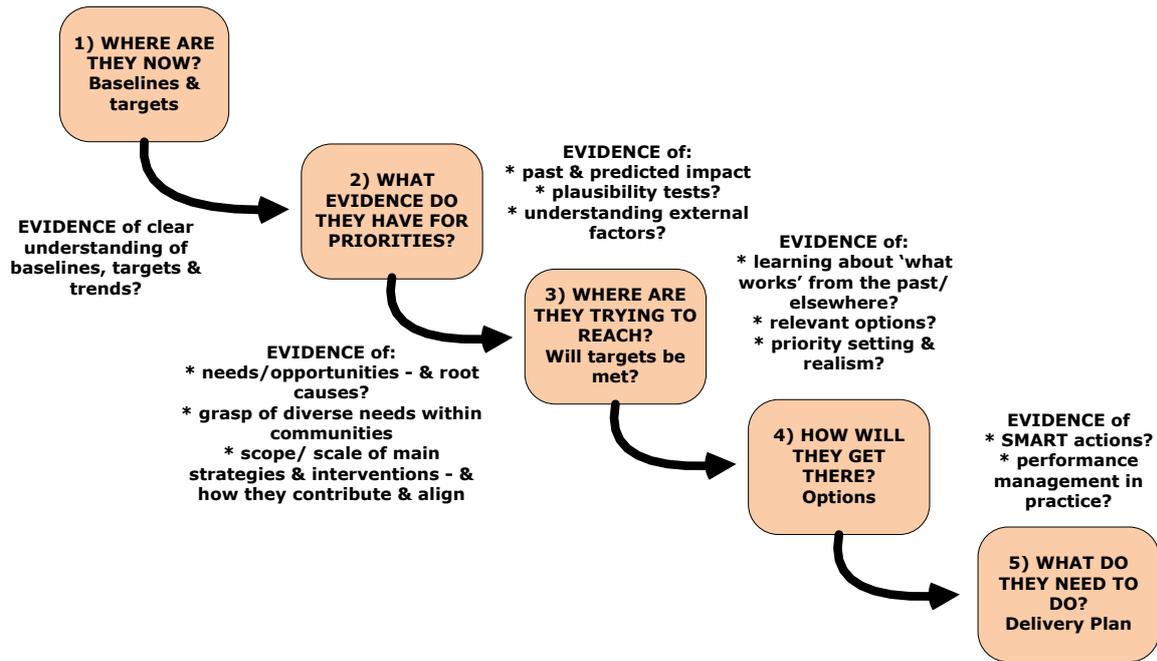
www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/NATIONAL-REPORT.asp?CategoryID=ENGLISH^576^SUBJECT^17&ProdID=418C38AF-0D97-49dd-95D6-EE7E7BA43773

- Joint planning and commissioning – resources for Every Child Matters
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/
- *Loose talk and a hard nut: commissioning for better outcomes* (SOLACE Foundation)
www.sfi.uk.com/publications.htm
- *Supply chain management in public sector procurement* (Office of Government Commerce)
www.ogc.gov.uk/sdtkdev/new_content/supply_chain.html
- *Social Issues in Procurement* – Office of Government Commerce guidance on how policy objectives can be incorporated into different stages of public procurement in ways consistent with legal requirements.
www.ogc.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?docid=1004638
- Sustainable development: public procurement (Sustainable Procurement Task Force)
www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/procurement-action-plan/index.htm

Appendix: Peer Challenge role

The core questions in this guide can be used in peer challenge, where a small team from another partnership works with the partnership to review the robustness of its approach and seek ideas for performance improvement.

Peer Review Questions



More detailed questions can be prepared based on the questions in the Five Steps to Better Outcomes document.

Appendix 2 Other Useful Resources

Outcome planning

- *Turning the Curve* outcomes-based planning toolkit, drawing on experience in Portsmouth, of an approach to engaging stakeholders in reviewing desired outcomes, establishing and understanding baselines, and considering what steps can be taken to ‘turn the curve’ in improving performance. Applied here to children’s services, but more widely relevant. Uses methods developed in the USA by Mark Friedman, author of *‘Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough’*.
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/search/EP00201/
- *Designing for Outcomes* (Care Services Improvement Partnership)
www.csip.org.uk/supporting-delivery/research-and-development/evaluation-resources/designing-for-outcomes.html
- IDeA *Better Results* programme – network promoting outcome-focused planning and practice, drawing on ‘Turning the Curve’ methodology. Includes research report on improving service delivery through outcomes-based accountability.
www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=5046700
- *Regeneration Outcomes: ‘How To’* guide to ‘closing the gap’ action planning in Scotland (Scottish Centre for Regeneration)
www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/cs_012376.hcsp#TopOfPage

Targets and target setting

- Target setting resources on IDeA Knowledge
www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=845670 and www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=1174238
- *Targeting Inequalities* – NAO review of effective practice in setting targets for reducing inequalities www.nao.org.uk/pn/06-07/0607_pmp.htm
- *To the point: A Blueprint for Good Targets* – Social Market Foundation report examining experience in using and measuring national targets in education, health, housing and social justice. Recommendations on how targets should be designed, measured and reported. Summary:
www.smf.co.uk/index.php?name=UpDownload&req=viewdownload&details&lid=128
- *Joint Targets* (National Audit Office) – concerned with international development but with content more widely useful
www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/05-06/0506453.pdf

Facilitation & improvement tools

- *Addressing performance problems in healthcare* – NHS resource for boards and service managers, based on reviews of organisational and performance failure and turnaround in both the private and public sector.
www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4131645&chk=ATB23W
- *Improvement Leaders’ Guides* – guides from the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement on Leading Improvement, Evaluating Improvement, and Improvement Knowledge and Skills.
www.wise.nhs.uk/cmsWISE/Tools+and+Techniques/ILG/ILG.htm
- *37 Practical Improvement Ideas* (CIPFA)
www.improvementnetwork.gov.uk/imp/aio/1052465
- *Industry techniques and inspiration for commissioners*, a guide to planning, procuring and integrating service delivery (Every Child Matters change programme)
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00127/

- *Innovation and its contribution to improvement* (DCLG)
www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/innovationits
- *Learning for Sustainability* – resources to support multi-stakeholder learning
<http://learningforsustainability.net>
- *Organisational Development Resource Document for Local Government* – presents a wide range of OD techniques, assessment and improvement tools, many of which can be applied in a partnership setting.
www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/organisationaldevelopment
- *Seeing the Light: innovation in local public services* (Audit Commission)
www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/NATIONAL-REPORT.asp?CategoryID=&ProdID=687E80A7-C07E-4d2e-9197-D70A9F271463&fromREPORTSANDDATA=NATIONAL-REPORT&area=hped
- *Strategy Survival Guide*
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/survivalguide/index.asp
- *Tools for Development* (DfID)
www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/toolsfordevelopment.pdf
- *Tools for knowledge and learning* – guide to 30 tools and techniques (Overseas Development Institute)
www.odi.org.uk/rapid/publications/Tools_KM.html
- *Putting the Customer First: Lessons from business* (LGA)
www.lga.gov.uk/Publication.asp?printable=true&lsection=0&ccat=28&id=SXEC5A-A7838E00
- *Whole Systems Working: Integrated Care Network guide*
www.integratedcarenetwork.gov.uk/index.cfm?pid=95&catalogueContentID=807
- on *Renewal.net* www.renewal.net – ‘how to’ tools include:
 - ♦ Ranking exercises
 - ♦ Appreciative enquiry

Third sector in service delivery

- *Working with the Third Sector* (National Audit Office)
www.nao.org.uk/pn/05-06/050675.htm
- *Future of Commissioning: Leadership Challenges* (ACEVO and Futurebuilders)
https://www.acevo.org.uk/index.cfm/display_page/Future_of_Commissioning

Policy proofing

- *Renewal.net*:
 - ♦ *Performance Management and Race* (ORRION)
www.renewal.net/Nav.asp?Category=:toolkits:ORRION:Performance%20management
- *Policy Hub resources on impact assessment of policies*
www.policyhub.gov.uk/better_policy_making/impact_assessment_and_appraisal.asp
- *Gender Impact Assessment* (Women & Equality Unit)
www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/equality/gender_impact_assessment.pdf
- *Equality & Human Rights Commission: guidance for the public sector on race, disability and gender equality duties*
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/forbusinessesandorganisation/publicauthorities/pages/businessesorganisationspublicbodies.aspx
- *Rural Proofing the Shared Priorities: a decision makers’ guide*
www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/publications/ruralproofingthesharedprioritiesadecisionmakersguide
- *Rural Proofing* (IDeA)
www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageld=300459