

**Stockton and Darlington Partnership Project
4ps Recommendations and Responses**

Ref. No.	Recommendation	Comments / Actions	Actions undertaken as at 1st May 2008
1.	The review team feel it is important at this stage to articulate how the benefits (savings) realisation programme will work. It would be appropriate to agree at least an outline framework now, on which both Councils can sign up to.	The benefits realisation plan is a key deliverable which has been incorporated into the implementation phase of the project.	A full benefits realisation plan has now been developed. Benefits have been split between, Tangible Non-Financial, Tangible Financial and Non-Tangible. These will be regularly monitored.
2.	There needs to be better linkage with service delivery plans and an indication of the improvements in service delivery that will result from better back office functions. the need to integrate the business cases for the individual strands into the outline case and to make sure assumptions are consistent throughout.	This has been considered and incorporated into the Outline Business Case.	Previously completed.
3.	The business case also needs to distinguish between savings/service improvements to be delivered by the partnership and to which it is committed and further transformational gains which are not being included in the financial model at this stage.	This has been included in the Outline Business Case which clearly identifies potential future transformational gains.	Previously completed
4.	It is advisable that Quality plans are in place by the time the business case is finalised.	Mechanisms to demonstrate quality will be developed during the implementation phase of the project.	There was a process of quality assurance to sign off all plans / strategies and decisions throughout the process.

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5.	The Council has considered the overall outcomes of the Project and these have been articulated and agreed by both Councils. The Business case would benefit, however, from a more robust explanation of how the Partnership Project would help to deliver on the corporate goals of each Council, for example, how the changes in ICT will help to deliver priorities set out in the Performance Improvement Plans.	This has now been incorporated into the Outline Business Case.	Previously completed
6.	The Council should continue to provide staff with a clear and unambiguous message around the Partnership Programme. Regular communication and consultation with staff and trade unions should include progress on key milestones. This will ensure opportunities exist for staff at all levels to actively engage in the process and assist in the development of modern Council Services.	A change management plan and updated communications plan are key project deliverables for the next phase, which will pick up this point	<p>There were regular meetings with Trades Unions.</p> <p>A regular email was sent out by Partnership Manager to ensure all staff were fully aware of progress on implementation. This was supplemented by attendance at a number of staff meetings and workshops throughout the process.</p>
7.	<p>The Councils have produced a Partnership Communication Strategy which sets out a standard approach to how the Project Board will share information. It will also be advantageous to include a communications plan which sets out, with clear timescales, <u>when</u> communications will happen with key milestones highlighted (For example, when key information will be presented between now and the next Cabinet meeting).</p> <p>It would also be appropriate to keep the wider</p>	As Above	<p>Communications plan has been developed and looks at how communications will be undertaken in the future.</p> <p>Key customers were involved throughout the initial implementation such as HR, in the future there will be a range of customer meetings to ensure engagement in all major developments.</p>

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	workforce in each Council informed of progress on the Project and to encourage 'customers' to have input during the transition and implementation phases.		
8.	The Project would benefit from a protocol which captures and records issues as they are discussed and agreed. This protocol would also act as a record of those matters which have been 'signed off' by each Council.	The current issues log is used in the way described, but relies on the project manager being present in the meetings at which issues are identified/resolved. We will devise a more robust process that is not dependent on one individual for the implementation process. This has already commenced with a control mechanism in place for key project documentation.	All decisions made were recorded and approved by the Directors of both Councils.
9.	It would be worthwhile to make further investment at this stage to develop the governance and legal arrangements so as to allow the partnership to be extended at some point in the future. Legal teams need to be involved in the implementation planning and the project plan needs to allow time for detailed governance processes to be developed.	This will be considered at some stage in the future as to do so now could detract from the partnership implementation..	Legal teams were involved in two key stages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staffing matters / transfer to the partnership - development of the legal agreement which included the governance arrangements
10.	The risk log needs to reflect additional risk around single status, communications, possible legal challenge and dependence on a small number of key senior staff	This is now completed.	Previously completed
11.	The Project team should engage dedicated,	Project Board are currently reviewing project	

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	specialist staff immediately to manage staff communication and change management during the consultation process. Senior Management will need to devote time to the consultation process to give it credibility and to provide leadership during a period of change and uncertainty.	resources for the implementation of the project and this will include additional external support to concentrate on these key areas.	Project resources were secured and this released management team to undertake more consultation.
12.	There is still plenty of time to produce a detailed implementation plan but it will help to build confidence if there is a published timetable for its production. Involving line management and their staff in its production will also help both acceptance of the proposals and reduce the project resources required.	Implementation Plans are currently being finalised and will be published when complete.	Detailed plans were completed and monitored throughout.
13.	Disseminate information to all line management to keep them informed about developments so that they can update their staff. They need to be actively engaged early in the overall change management strategies so that there will be a link between what the staff will be doing and what the new partnership wants to achieve. Feedback is as important as downward communication. The transition should be seen as an opportunity to review existing management structures and business processes, improve the delegation and interpretation of management information to business managers and improve customer service (internal and external). Monitor changes in performance for training needs analysis.	Agreed – we will continue to involve staff in the process.	This took place throughout. A transition plan was developed to ensure everyone understood how services would be delivered between the appointment of the staff and the start date of the Partnership. In addition to this, detailed individual transition plans are being developed so that every employee has an individual training plan. Team meetings took place to discuss and agree this approach.

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14.	<p>The role of the Partnership Manager is crucial to the success of the relationship. The review team feel that a clear framework is needed which fully articulated the roles and responsibilities of the Partnership Manager and also the key stakeholders in the relationship. This would provide a clear explanation of how all the key players are going to interact and who is responsible for making decisions.</p> <p>In addition, in order to secure a quality appointment it is crucial for the Council's to decide the profile of the individual they want and the type of role they want them to undertake.</p>	<p>This has been incorporated into the person specification and job description of partnership manager. A recruitment exercise is underway to appoint into this key post.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
15.	<p>The review team would recommend the Council's to invest in maintaining the existing Project Management arrangements through the next phase of the programme. Although there is a lack of capacity to deliver in-house at present, this should be viewed as an opportunity to build future capacity and skills sets by close working with the external advisers.</p>	<p>Agreed – existing project management arrangements will continue in the immediate future.</p>	<p>This happened and skills all now in-house.</p>