

**Getting in on the Act**

**Leadership resources**



**Regional Partnership Board**

**Governance checklist**

# Introduction

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 introduces new requirements on local authorities and their partners, particularly with regard to partnership and collaboration under Part 9 of the Act. This includes the need to establish a Regional Partnership Board in each of seven regions across the country, each with a particular set of responsibilities and priorities. Initial terms of Reference for the Boards shows that they:

* Have a clear remit to be responsible for engaging with local citizens in relation to the delivery of the Act
* See their role as providing scrutiny and oversight of the implementation of the Act
* Provide the co-ordinated response to the regional strategic priorities through an effective regional leadership structure
* Have adopted a range of governance arrangements and structures as to how they will work collaboratively

But a fundamental requirement for all the Boards is to have strong governance arrangements which allow robust decision making, and promote collaboration and integration where needed. This includes making clear whether members have delegated decision-making from their respective bodies or organisations where appropriate. This governance checklist is intended to be used by Regional Partnership Boards to plan and review that their governance arrangements are working effectively.

| Good governance standards | Questions for the Board | What might you need to do? |
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| Have a clear vision – a shared understanding of what its partners are trying to achieve and the difference they intend to create | * Are you clear about your shared vision –  do you have a shared statement of strategic intent? * Does it fit with the intentions of the Act? * Has it been agreed by all agencies? * Is it used to inform the Board’s analysis, planning and review activities? * Is the Board focused on operating strategically and not getting too involved in the operational management decisions? | * Undertake an exercise to review partners’ strategic plans and statements with the purpose of agreeing a common statement covering your shared vision for the future, and your strategic intentions in terms of resource distribution, pooled resources, integrated services, service development and investment |
| Have an effective strategy – the planned achievement of the vision | * Is there a clear shared strategy or strategies which partners are working to? * Is the Board signed up to it? * Is there a regional implementation plan? * Are there clear objectives, plans and timeframes which are understood by all members? * Is it properly resourced? * What will you use to measure how successful you have been in meeting your goals? * How will you inform the Board’s analysis, planning and review activities? | * Review the common or shared plans that partners have in place, and identify any major gaps or weaknesses that need to be addressed * Propose the development of any new or revised service development or commissioning strategies, including the population analysis required by the Act by April 2017 |
| Ensure effective leadership – the means by which the strategy will be taken forward | * Does the Board have the right people on it to ensure that change is led effectively? * Are you clear on the values you share and how you will work together to meet the aims of the Act? * Do partners all play their full part in leading the partnership? | * Propose a Board membership, which will ensure appropriate and proportionate representation * Identify the skills, roles and personal qualities needed from different Board members * Undertake a rigorous selection or appointment process to ensure that that the right individuals are recruited * Specify and make arrangements to provide any necessary training or practical support needed to ensure that all members can play their active part in the Board * Arrange for in-depth individual needs analysis and a personal development plan for each member |
| Have good assurance arrangements to check that the partners are able to deliver the strategy to plan, manage risk, work within the law, deliver safe, quality services and have a proper grip on resources of all kinds for which they are accountable | * Have you mapped and understood what factors may impact on how successful the board is in achieving its aims and objectives? (e.g. other legislation, financial pressures) * Are the review arrangements of the Board sufficient to ensure that the implementation of strategies and plans are tested rigorously? * Is the Board confident that its priorities are being addressed by all partners and will be delivered in the timescales required? | * Appoint an officer to take responsibility for making sure the Board arrangements are designed and delivered effectively * Complete a set of guidelines for members, which specifies the Board’s role in relation to planning, risk analysis, key legislation and resources * Ensure that this is made available to all members and that they are clear about the requirements |
| Ensure probity – that partners are behaving according to proper standards of conduct and act in an open and transparent manner | * Does the Board have agreed standards of conduct? * Are partners working effectively together  and to these standards? * Are partners confident that they and their colleagues are acting as openly and transparently as possible? | * Develop a set of standards of conduct for Board members, present these to a Board meeting and ensure that all members commit to these requirements * Ensure that the standards are a key part of any recruitment activity |
| Good stewardship –partners apply proper care to resources and opportunities for which it is responsible, or can effect | * Is the Board clear about how resources are distributed and used across the health, care and well-being system? * Are its plans and strategies properly resourced and reviewed regularly? * How well do you understand, and can map, how your Board links with other governance arrangements in the region, and at a local level? | * Include a summary of resources and a map of links between the Board and other governance arrangements in the region in the guidelines for members |
| Avoid conflicts of interest | * Are partners clear about what might constitute a conflict of interest in its meetings and does the Board have arrangements to manage this? | * Ensure the standards of conduct include statement about how to identify and address  and conflicts of interest |
| Be objective, disciplined and logical | * Are meetings managed effectively? Do partners get equal opportunities to contribute? Are discussions and decisions recorded properly? Is the agenda developed to cover the responsibilities of the Board? * Are decisions or conclusions reached on the basis of evidence rather than impression or hearsay? | * Agree arrangements for setting agendas, ensuring all partners have an opportunity to contribute * Chair ensure that careful thought is given to ensuring equal opportunity for contribution, that evidence based analysis is prioritised, and decisions are properly recorded * Undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of the Board |
| Be diligent and probing, holding agencies to account | * Is there sufficient time and information available to the Board to enable it to analyse issues effectively? * Do the right people attend meetings to ensure issues can be raised and questions answered? * Are minutes or notes circulated appropriately following meetings and are agreed actions checked subsequently? | * Ensure that agendas leave sufficient time for  in-depth analysis of key strategic issues * Make sure operating arrangements include protocols on including other contributors, attendance and minute taking |
| Delegate clearly  to sub-groups, committees, etc.,  to deliver actions | * Are the arrangements for reporting, advising or recommending to other agencies and bodies clear? * Can you describe how you will take back decisions and discussions to your individual organisations and ensure they are acted upon? * Does the Board ensure that its advice, reports or recommendations reach the places they are intended and that they are acted upon? | * Make sure there is a clear delegation policy, including which sub-groups or project groups exist in the region, and what the Board should  do to make proposals and recommendations  to them |