

Solihull Partnership Governance Framework

This framework sets out the purpose and remit of the Solihull Partnership. It provides the arrangements for the way that the Partnership operates and the accountability structure that underpins decision making by the Partnership.

The framework also recognises the evolving nature of Partnership working in Solihull and provides a flexible and pragmatic governance arrangement, which will allow the partnership arrangements to mature and respond to change. The framework will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that partnership arrangements remain fit for purpose.

1. Purpose:

- 1.1 The Solihull Partnership is a strategic partnership of public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations working together towards a vision for Solihull by 2018 ***where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer, and more prosperous.***
- 1.2 This vision recognises the significant inequalities gap experienced by people who live in Solihull and partnership priorities are targeted at narrowing this inequalities gap.
- 1.3 The Partnership is made up of a number of strategic partnership boards, some statutory in nature while others are non-statutory. In all partnership boards, senior representatives from a range of organisations come together voluntarily to work in partnership and make a difference to outcomes for people in Solihull.
- 1.4 The Partnership operates within a commissioning environment to secure value added through working together to commission and deliver services in Solihull.

The Partnership deploys three key approaches to support this purpose:

- a **Planning and Commissioning**, against the vision for Solihull and the agreed priority outcomes where a multi-agency approach will be more effective than single agency;
- b **Stakeholder Involvement**, to inform and involve the public and other stakeholders at every stage of Partnership business, and develop shared and inclusive responsibility in delivering the vision for Solihull and the agreed priority outcomes;
- c **Performance Management** to provide support and challenge against the priority outcomes securing the most effective use of resources to deliver against priorities and narrow the inequalities gap.

2. Key Functions and Responsibilities:

- 2.1 In broad terms, the function of the Partnership, and all the partnership boards that operate

under the umbrella of the Solihull Partnership, is to set the strategic leadership and direction for Solihull as a Borough. Within this strategic leadership, there is a responsibility to set intelligence led priorities for the borough based on a strategic assessment of needs and assets for the borough, along with ensuring delivery against those priorities to demonstrate improvement in outcomes. Each partnership board pulls together partners with a specialist knowledge and experience that can provide this strategic leadership within a particular commissioning and service area. The Partnership is responsible for:

- a Promoting working in partnership, where our cooperation adds value to the way services are commissioned and delivered in Solihull and ensure achievements through partnership working are celebrated.
- b Promoting the strategic vision for Solihull as well as securing partners commitment and action to deliver this vision.
- c Agreeing the priority outcome areas partners will work collaboratively on to narrow the inequalities gap within the borough.
- d Securing the strategic alignment and integration of plans and services to ensure multi-agency working adds value to improving priority outcomes.
- e Providing stewardship for the delivery of the strategic vision for Solihull and the underpinning priority outcomes, applying appropriate performance management and scrutiny approaches that assure sustained improvements are achieved.
- f Addressing and removing barriers that impede multi-agency working and the integration of services, where these are identified.
- g Keeping its vision, priorities and structures under constant review to ensure these remain relevant.
- h Operating within the principles of the Common Commissioning Framework that ensures a systematic approach to commissioning that is evidence-led and involves key stakeholders in the process.
- i Operating within the principles of the Compact Plus to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to work in partnership with the voluntary and community sector so they are able to engage fully.

3. Partnership Values

3.1 The following Partnership Values will guide the behaviour of partners when working in partnership:

- a **An equal chance for all:** partners will celebrate the diversity within Solihull, building tolerance and respect for difference. Partners will strive to close gaps in outcomes for people in Solihull, and provide routes out of poverty for the least well off in the Borough.
- b **Nothing without the Community:** partners will enable the ideas and aspirations of the community to drive the work of the partnership. This means partners will listen well and actively involve members of the community in every aspect of the

Partnership, including decision making.

- c **Sustainable change:** partnership success will be measured by the improvement of outcomes for people in Solihull that stand the test of time, and delivering good value services. Partners will strive to support Solihull's communities and citizens to be independent, resilient, and ambitious for quality of life.
 - d **Partnership with respect:** partners recognise that working together is the only way to deliver the Partnership's vision. Partners will ensure this is achieved through trusting each other and being open, fair and honest about what we can and can't do. Partners will challenge and learn from each other, make decisions based on evidence and be flexible to change to secure better results. Partners will seek opportunities to work and deliver services together providing improved services from the customer's perspective.
- 3.2 The Partnership operates a code of conduct that provides a general duty of obligation to treat others with respect and brings these values together with the Nolan principles of standards in public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, personal judgement and leadership. The code also underwrites the commitment to disclose any personal interests in the course of the partnership business.

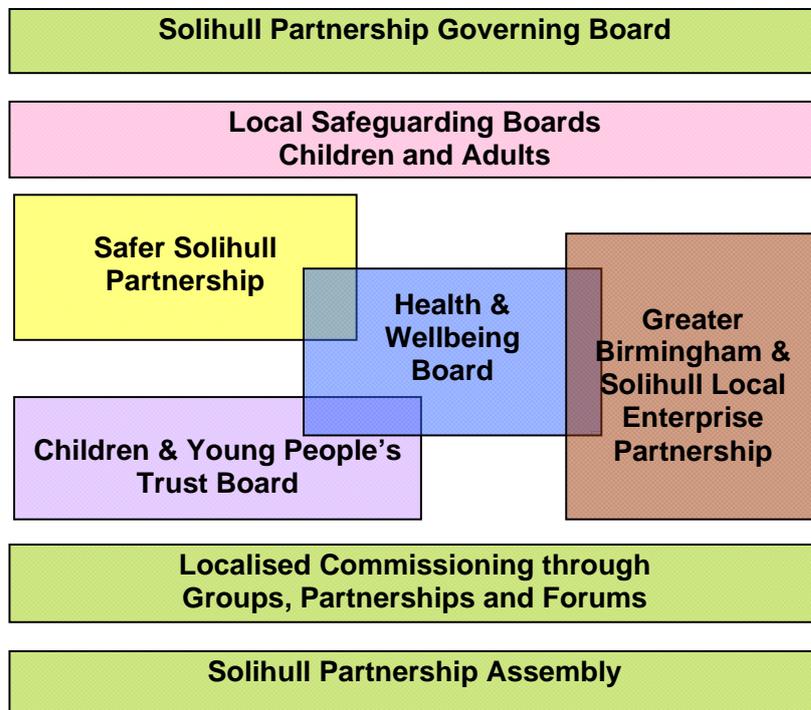
4. Partnership Structures

4.1 The partnership comprises of the following boards and bodies:

- a The Governing Board is a voluntary partnership board that operates as the strategic decision-making and executive body for the Partnership and has overall stewardship of the effectiveness of partnership working in Solihull.
- b The Safer Solihull Partnership: this statutory partnership board acts as the borough's community safety partnership.
- c The Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board, this statutory board has the responsibility for developing and contributing to the delivery of a joint health and wellbeing strategy for the Solihull area.
- d The Local Enterprise Partnership: this sub-national partnership for the greater Birmingham and Solihull economic area is focusing on leading the economic growth and supporting job creation across the area.
- e Children and Young People's Trust Board, is a statutory partnership to promote co-operation between partners to improve outcomes for children and young people aged 0 – 19, and for some young people such as those with learning disabilities and care leavers up to the age of 25.
- f Local Safeguarding Children's Board is a statutory body responsible for protecting children at risk of significant harm, and contributing to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person.
- g The Adult Safeguarding Board is a voluntary body responsible for promoting the

safeguarding and welfare of vulnerable adults and protecting them from the risks of significant harm.

- h Partnership Assembly is an annual stakeholder event, which is made up of representatives of all organisations who have a stake in achieving the vision for Solihull. Its role is to actively develop and challenge the direction and priority outcomes of the Solihull Partnership.
 - i There is also a wide range of groups, partnerships and forums where stakeholders come together to plan and shape services within their area or community.
- 4.2 Each Board has its own terms of reference, which provides details of how the board operates including membership, chairing and meeting arrangements.
- 4.3 The architecture of the partnership structure, illustrated in the following diagram, recognises the principles of partnership working in Solihull that we developed in the review of arrangements in 2011:
- a The structures respect the autonomy of other required partnership arrangements, particularly those that operate on a statutory basis and have statutorily defined accountability structures.
 - b The structures recognise the independence of the two safeguarding boards in order to provide quality assurance of partnership working in respect of protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from significant harm.



- 4.4 The diagram deliberately shows overlap between the various partnership boards. This recognises the interrelationship between the policy focus of each particular partnership as

they contribute to reducing the inequalities experienced in the borough. This overlap also recognises the innate strength of partnership working in Solihull, drawn from the fact that a number of significant community and organisational leaders sit on more than one board within the structure. This allows for additional 'cementing' together of partnership priorities and policies above that cannot be provided through structure alone.

- 4.5 Within the individual partnership boards and bodies identified above there are a number of sub-groups or task and finish groups. These are however, formed only as required to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy and layers in the chain of decision making. In addition, by respecting the autonomy of statutorily required partnerships, the partnership does not put an additional burden on decision making beyond those required.

5. Relationship between Partnership Boards

- 5.1 The partnership also recognises that there are occasions when some of the relationships between these boards should be defined more specifically to agree the role of each in taking forward specific work. In these cases, a memorandum of understanding or protocol will be developed to provide this clarity. For example, there currently operates a protocol between the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Children and Young People's Trust that provides clarity on their individual and joint responsibilities and the reporting arrangements between the two boards.
- 5.2 Whilst the Governing Board is not accountable as the final decision maker, particularly for the statutory boards, it is responsible for the overall effectiveness of partnership working in Solihull. To that end, the Governing Board will seek assurances from other partnership boards and bodies on the work of the boards and the impact they are having on securing improvements in outcomes for Solihull. These assurances will be triangulated through information and feedback from other stakeholders through a range of consultative approaches including the Partnership Assembly. The two safeguarding boards play an important role in this quality assurance of the effectiveness of partnership working, particularly in relation to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. Through reporting to the Governing Board on the findings from quality assurance and audit work they can advise the Governing Board of areas of commissioning and development across the partnership in relation to safeguarding.

6. Accountability

- 6.1 The Solihull Partnership, as a non-statutory body operates as a collaborative body within the legal and statutory frameworks of the individual member organisations. For Statutory Board and bodies their statutory framework will govern their accountability arrangements. In addition, each Partner member of the Solihull Partnership will be responsible through their existing accountability processes to their parent body.
- 6.2 The Governing Board as the executive body for the Partnership has overall stewardship of the effectiveness of partnership working in Solihull. On an annual basis, the Governing Board will receive annual reports from each of the Partnership boards or bodies that provides an evaluation of:
- a The impact the board has made in progressing its priorities and the narrowing of

inequalities in the Borough

- b The effectiveness of the governance arrangements within their board or body

The two Safeguarding Boards will also provide, within their annual reports, an assessment of effectiveness of partnership working based on their quality assurance work with a particular focus on safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- 6.3 The Local Authority will act as the overarching accountable body for the Solihull Partnership providing:
 - a Financial accountability for any pooled funding provided for the Partnership to commission activities and services to improve identified priority outcomes.
 - b Accountability to Solihull residents will be through Elected Member representation on partnership boards and bodies.
 - c External scrutiny of the work of the Solihull Partnership will be through the Council's existing scrutiny arrangements of key policy areas. This includes any existing scrutiny arrangements for statutory boards and bodies, and existing statutory powers of scrutiny through legislation relating to local government, health and social care and community safety.
- 6.4 All Partners will commit to:
 - a Consult and obtain the views of their organisation/sectors and reflect or communicate these at partnership meetings.
 - b Share information from their own organisation/sectors amongst the partnership to support the partnership boards and bodies to be fully informed.
 - c Ensure that decisions or recommendations agreed by the partnership are communicated and acted upon within their own organisation/sector.
- 6.5 To reinforce the lines of accountability and ensure delivery against agreed priority outcomes, each priority outcome will have an identified lead officer who will be accountable for commissioning services, managing delivery and ensuring effectiveness of commissioning and service delivery through performance management.

7. Accountability to stakeholders:

- 7.1 The Partnership will hold stakeholder events to engage with the community, voluntary and private sectors about the service developments and progress in relation to the priority outcomes.
- 7.2 One such stakeholder event is the annual Partnership Assembly, which is made up of representatives of all agencies who have a stake in achieving the vision for Solihull. Its role is to actively develop and challenge the direction and priorities of the Solihull Partnership by:
 - a Informing and consulting the full partnership of stakeholders to the Solihull Partnership;

- b Identifying cross-cutting issues, gaps and overlaps, and informing the development of strategic plans;
 - c Championing the perspective of citizens and communities in Solihull;
 - d Challenging the Governing Board and other partnership working groups on the delivery against the Partnership vision for Solihull and assessing progress against plans to deliver priority outcomes;
 - e Celebrating success and sharing learning.
- 7.3 The Partnership Forums across four localities within the Solihull borough effectively act as more localised and frequent versions of the annual partnership assembly. They are a vehicle for communication and consultation about the Solihull Partnership with a variety of local stakeholders including Elected Members, Parish Councils, residents groups, businesses and faith group representatives, etc. They provide:
- a Opportunities for information exchange and dialogue about the work of the Solihull Partnership between local representatives and local partners
 - b Local stakeholders with a direct opportunity to influence the work of the Solihull Partnership and influence Partnership's priorities
 - c Opportunities to identify how common issues for the locality can be addressed
 - d Consultation channels about significant policy proposals affecting the locality

8. Localised Commissioning and Community Capacity Building

- 8.1 The partnership is actively promoting the development of localised commissioning arrangements to support wider engagement of local people in influencing the services in their area. This will also create strong and more cohesive communities as well as engender greater civic pride. A key area of work for the partnership is to invest in developing community capacity to help communities organise themselves into groups and structures that can then more easily engage with partners to influence and shape services.
- 8.2 The establishment of four partnership forums described in 7.3, provides a vehicle for a wide range of local stakeholders to meet with statutory partners to help shape services in their locality. Meeting three times a year, the agendas are built on priorities identified by the participants with additional partners invited if a particular topic requires it. The meetings are informal to encourage wide participation.
- 8.3 The Partnership has developed a range of approaches and tools to develop the capability of the community to work with statutory agencies. The objectives of this capacity building is to encourage groups to form, so they can:
- a Run their organisations more effectively and professionally,
 - b Work more effectively and confidently with statutory and other partners,
 - c Win greater confidence and trust from their communities,

d Represent their communities more effectively.

8.4 This is a key plank of the partnership commissioning team activity and underpins work on the localism agenda in Solihull. Appendix provides the latest position on community capacity building within North Solihull.

9. Meeting Arrangements:

9.1 Each partnership board or body prepares a schedule of meetings inline with the requirements of their business agenda. The frequency will be at least quarterly to ensure appropriate oversight of progress on their business agenda. Reports to the partnership board meetings will be prepared in a way that enables effective decision-making and policy development with reports circulated at least six days prior to meetings and will be made publicly available (where appropriate) via the web.

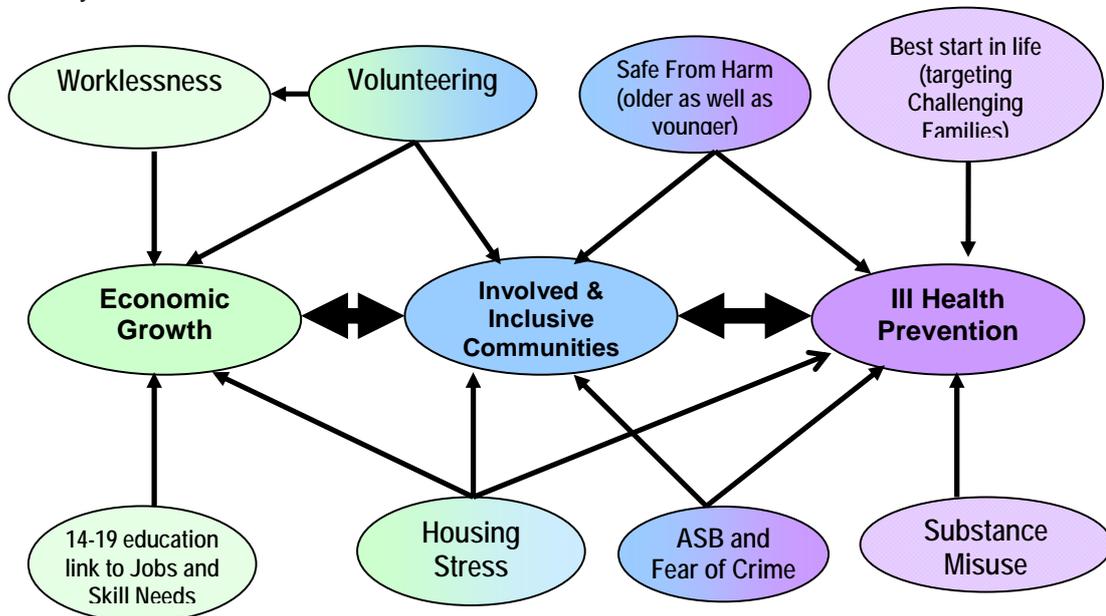
9.2 Partnership board meetings are open to the public unless confidential information is to be disclosed. Observers are not ordinarily expected to take part in the deliberations of the Board or Group unless invited to do so. However observers at partnership meetings who wish to raise issues related to the meeting agenda can gain permission from the Chair prior to the meeting. However, sub-groups or time limited task and finish groups of the Partnership are seen as working groups and as such are not normally public meetings.

9.3 Whenever possible, all decisions will be made on the basis of consensus. However, when a vote needs to be taken, decisions will be taken on a majority basis with the Chair having the casting vote if required. All partnership board members must declare any interest prior to voting. A quorum of 50% of the member organisations will be required to be present for decision taking and voting purposes.

10. Partnership Priority Outcomes 2012

10.1 In 2011 the Solihull Partnership undertook a refresh of its community strategy to look at its priority outcomes moving forward in relation to the vision for the borough. The focus of the review was to identify those priority outcomes that require a step change in improvement to make a difference in narrowing the inequality gap experienced by some within the Solihull Borough. By making a differential impact on these priority outcome areas the Partnership will have an understanding on how it is making progress on narrowing the inequalities experienced in Solihull.

10.2 The following 11 priority outcomes were identified through an evidence-led assessment of need as well as involvement from a wide range of stakeholders, including Elected Members and community representatives within Partnership Forums; as well as an online survey.

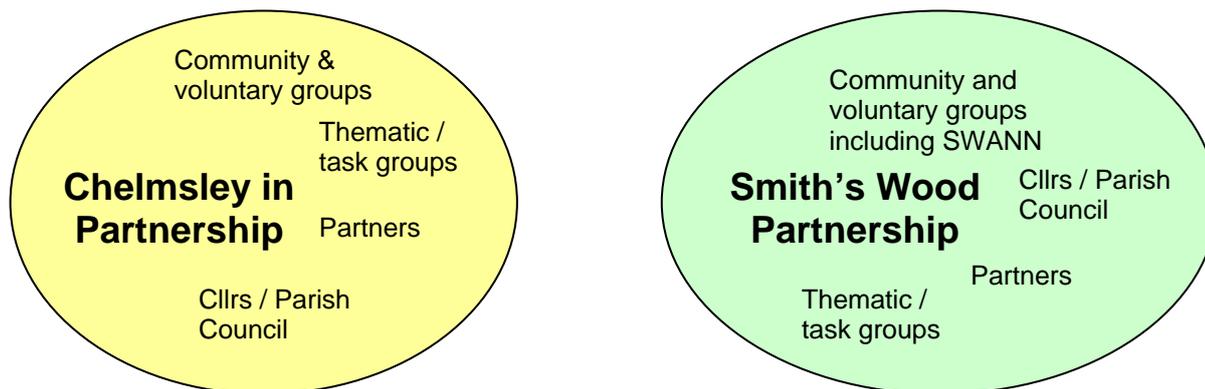


10.3 The priority outcome map above recognises the interrelationship between the 11 priority outcomes. In particular, the three priority outcomes across the middle of the diagram - economic growth, involved and inclusive communities and ill health prevention – provide a clear focus on inequality within the borough with the other priority outcome areas underpinning them to help tackle these inequalities, for example:

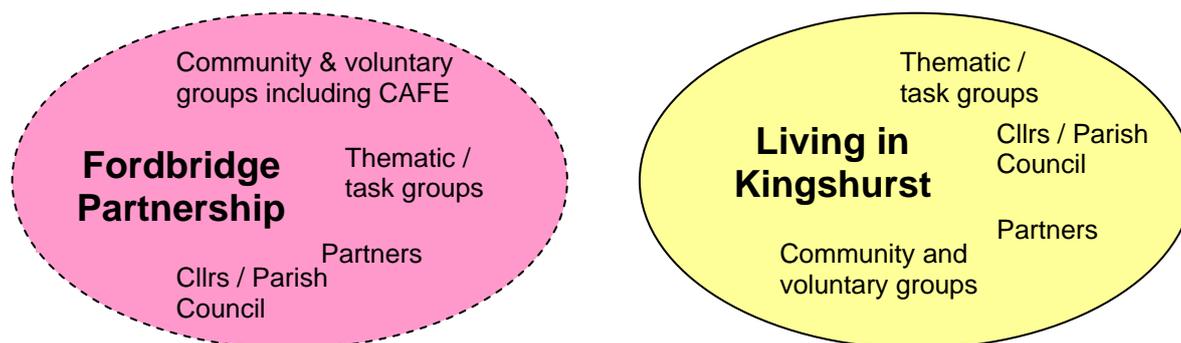
- a **Economic Growth**, identified as the wealth generator, supported by the right 14-19 education to meet future skills needs; tackling worklessness and housing stress to reduce inequality.
- b **Involved and Inclusive Communities**, providing the glue that binds together community well being and resilience supported by tackling fear of crime and anti social behaviour, keeping people safe from harm and increasing community involvement through volunteering.

- c **Ill Health Prevention** is a key outcome addressing health inequalities for our communities, supported by tackling substance misuse, fear of crime and targeted action to give the best start in life and keep people safe from harm.
- 10.4 Each priority outcome has an identified lead officer who is responsible for ensuring the commissioning arrangements are in place to secure effective policies, strategies and services to deliver a significant improvement in outcomes. Plans are in progress to prepare an overarching commissioning plan that captures the headline commissioning arrangements for these priority outcomes.
- 10.5 Once the commissioning arrangements are finalised the accountability structures into the partnership boards will be agreed. There is strong alignment with many of the priority outcomes within the existing priorities of the various partnership boards and bodies; however there are also some that cover the policy responsibility of more than one board.
- 10.6 The Governing Board as well as providing overall stewardship of these priority outcomes has also within its own work programme identified 3 key areas, including:
- a **Challenging families** to provide the leadership required for the integration of services for these families. This recognises the significant opportunity through the national troubled families programme for partners to redesign the way they work together to more effectively support families facing multiple issues. The objectives are to improve outcomes for families and their communities; improve services by providing greater continuity across agencies and opportunities for earlier intervention; and generate financial efficiencies through cost avoidance and increased productivity.
 - b **Action against Poverty** to provide the leadership required to ensure implementation of our ‘Money Counts – Solihull Action Against Poverty Strategy” and that all actions undertaken by agencies have a positive impact on reducing poverty. It also recognises that this is a particular priority as a result of the economic downturn which has increased unemployment, debt and homelessness in the borough. In addition, there is also a need to ensure that our approaches safeguard vulnerable people affected by the welfare reforms and helps people make the transition from welfare to work.
 - c **Involved and Inclusive Communities (including Volunteering)** to provide the leadership required to support wider community engagement and empowerment enabling communities to shape and deliver local solutions to issues that affect them. The objectives are to build the capacity of the voluntary and community sector communities, through stronger voluntary sector organisations, increased participation in volunteering and improved community cohesion.
- 10.7 With the development of the overarching commissioning plan there will be a complementary dashboard, which will identify those key outcome measures that acts as a barometer of progress in narrowing the gap of inequalities within the Borough. The dashboard will have a number of disaggregated measures based on the most relevant feature either: specific population, community groups or geography areas.

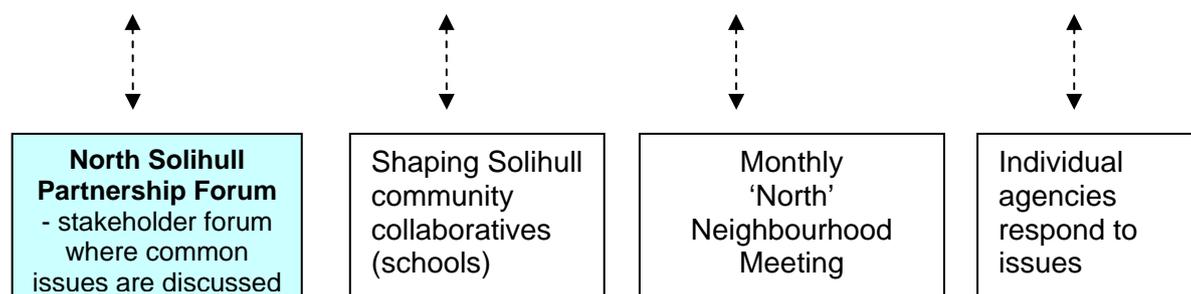
Vision for how communities in the North Solihull Regeneration Area can tackle local issues and influence local services



The vision is for each area to have a resident led partnership that acts as an umbrella for all the activity in the area. Its role would be to agree priorities based on resident feedback, monitor progress in achieving these priorities, ensure communication between groups and provide support / signposting for groups.



These partnerships influence service delivery through 2 way exchange with



Colour code:

- Yellow: Resident led groups exist but have yet to be formally constituted
- Green: Neighbourhood level partnership working has been taking place with the SWANN group but it is planned to create a broader Partnership to ensure a longer term regeneration legacy for the area.
- Pink: A community action group (CAFÉ) has been created but there isn't an umbrella group, even in embryonic form as yet and there doesn't seem to be much appetite for one. The process of designing the new Fordbridge School might act as a catalyst.