**CSIT**

A toolkit to help the culture, sport, green space & tourism sectors to

***re-group, survive & re-grow the services for the community***

Document 3.7

**Self-Assessment of ‘Collaborative Working’**

**Assessing & understanding your organisation or partnership’s current strengths & areas for improvement**

***“He who asks the questions cannot avoid the answers”***

A Cameroon proverb!

Version 2, July 2011



**Introduction**

The *Red* *Thread* Self-Assessment tools enable you to focus on one or more *threads* running throughout the CSIT Benchmark, which represent vital subjects for the culture, sport, green space & tourism sectors. The *threads* are based on the *Vision for Excellence* shown in Document Two and contain ‘key features’ from the CSIT [[1]](#footnote-1)Benchmark.



**What are you working towards by using this Collaboration Red Thread?**

*Excellent organisations proactively seek, create & sustain mutually beneficial collaborations with public sector, commercial sector & civil society organisations to achieve enhanced efficiency & value for money, increased innovation, a ‘total place’ approach to services and mutual peer challenge & support at organisational, team & individual level.*

Self-Assessment method

The Collaborative Working Self-Assessment can be conducted by a single organisation or an existing partnership (the process of conducting a collaborative Self-Assessment can, in itself, enhance the partnership). The organisation or partnership should establish a cross-functional Self-Assessment Team, responsible for reaching a consensus on current strengths & areas for improvement and planning improvement projects. This should take approximately one day.

The following process is recommended (adjust this to suit your specific needs & style – it is your Self-Assessment!):

1. Take one section at a time (e.g. ‘Preparing the ground’, ‘Establishing partnerships’, etc)
2. Individually (i.e. each Self-Assessment Team member by themselves) consider the ‘key features’ shown on the Self-Assessment Questionnaire, reading the words carefully, and decide which of the following statements best reflects the organisation or partnership’s current progress for each ‘key feature’:

***a = Not yet***

***b = We are in the early stages of developing this***

***c = We partly do this***

***d = We do all of this, most of the time***

***e = We have been doing all of this for a few years - we have assessed & refined our behaviour in this area***

Shade or tick the appropriate box.

1. When everyone has completed this for the section, discuss your perceptions and reach a team consensus on ratings, strengths & areas for improvement (focus the discussions on the disparities)
2. Move on to the next section and repeat the process
3. When you have completed this, review your Self-Assessment and discuss & agree the following:

**What are the most significant areas for improvement?**

**What themes run through your Self-Assessment results (‘golden threads’ & ‘fault lines’)?**

**What are the few underlying causes of most of the areas for improvement?**

**Health Warning!**

**Remember that self-assessment is not a competition, a points-scoring exercise, a ‘blame game’ or a way to improve your image; it is merely an exercise to help you to agree priorities for improvement.**

Self-Assessment Questionnaire

| Ref | Key Feature | Tick the appropriate box | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Preparing the ground** | | | | | | |
| 1 | Leaders and other staff have a full understanding of what partnerships are and how they help achieve strategic outcomes & value for money | a | b | c | d | e |
| 2 | Partnership decisions shape & focus strategy, policies & services, and the implications on partnership arrangements are at the forefront when policy and budget decisions are taken | a | b | c | d | e |
| 3 | Leaders ensure that people have the capacity to explore and make the best use of opportunities for collaborative working | a | b | c | d | e |
| 4 | The competencies & knowledge required for collaborative working are established and incorporated into learning & development programmes | a | b | c | d | e |
| 5 | Leaders establish shared vision and strategic outcomes in collaboration with public, sector, commercial sector & civil society organisations | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths | | | | | | |
| Areas for Improvement | | | | | | |
| Establishing partnerships | | | | | | |
| 6 | Organisations develop & maintain understanding of the role & capabilities of all culture, sport, green space & tourism providers in the area, including the commercial & public sector & civil society organisations | a | b | c | d | e |
| 7 | Leaders proactively identify & seek strategic, development & delivery partnerships from the public sector, commercial sector & civil society to help achieve vision, service outcomes & value for money, bearing in mind the required capabilities (see above) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 8 | Leaders are actively involved in key strategic partnerships, including those with commissioning responsibility (e.g. health, adult social care & children’s services), and work with other innovators in local problem solving exercises | a | b | c | d | e |
| 9 | Leaders conduct cyclical rigorous evaluation of the options for delivering the services through formal collaboration with commercial organisations, other public sector bodies, existing & new non-profit distributing organisations & civil society organisations, and identify the options which will achieve the desired outcomes in the most effective, efficient & economic way | a | b | c | d | e |
| 10 | Leaders proactively develop cross-boundary collaborations between public sector providers to explore opportunities for shared support functions & shared management | a | b | c | d | e |
| 11 | People are clear about the status & role of partnerships, the decision-making responsibilities allocated to them, and are confident to devolve decision making to them | a | b | c | d | e |
| 12 | People actively develop personal relationships, shared values & true *synergy* (i.e. shared commitment, passion, ideas & action to achieve the same goals) with partners | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths | | | | | | |
| Areas for Improvement | | | | | | |
| Developing a joined-up approach which makes the best use of collective resources | | | | | | |
| 13 | Organisations work together to develop a coherent, integrated approach to consulting the community, which avoids duplication & over-consultation | a | b | c | d | e |
| 14 | Organisations review & take advantage of joint facilities and investigate all opportunities to co-locate the services in other buildings (e.g. integrated leisure & wellbeing centres, etc) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 15 | Organisations proactively develop partnerships & consortia, involving civil society organisations, commercial and other public sector organisations to develop and implement joined-up, cross boundary services for the community | a | b | c | d | e |
| 16 | Organisations work with partners from the public & commercial sector & civil society organisations to communicate & market the services in a joined-up way | a | b | c | d | e |
| 17 | Organisations collaborate to provide mutual challenge & support for Self-Assessment & improvement planning | a | b | c | d | e |
| 18 | Organisations take advantage of joint learning & development programmes, sharing of knowledge & practices, job shadowing and peer coaching & mentoring within partner networks | a | b | c | d | e |
| 19 | Organisations work together to explore & secure external investment into the services provided by all delivery agents & consortia to help achieve strategic outcomes (so that organisations in the same area are not rivals for funding streams) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 20 | Organisations works together to present an integrated & unified presence to potential commissioners of the services and to build relevant relationships with these bodies | a | b | c | d | e |
| 21 | Organisations explore all relevant opportunities for making available spare capacity in office facilities to partners through commercial arrangements | a | b | c | d | e |
| 22 | Organisations explore joint use of facilities & equipment with partners to ensure they are used to capacity | a | b | c | d | e |
| 23 | Organisations develop long-term procurement partnerships with suppliers and work together to obtain improved purchasing agreements | a | b | c | d | e |
| 24 | Partners are engaged in organisational improvement, change and service development activity, generating innovation and making the best use of their knowledge & experience | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths | | | | | | |
| Areas for Improvement | | | | | | |
| Collaborative service delivery | | | | | | |
| 25 | Leaders view the whole delivery system through the eyes of the community and act on this to develop joined-up, seamless & easy-to-use services | a | b | c | d | e |
| 26 | Leaders identify, develop, manage & improve the ‘end-to-end’ processes which cut across the operations of partners, to create seamless & responsive services, minimise non-value adding activity and remove waste | a | b | c | d | e |
| 27 | Organisations aim to resolve customer enquiries or complaints at the first point of contact and avoid ‘passing’ customers from person-to-person within delivery partnerships (when they have asked for information or made a complaint) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 28 | Technology is used to support collaborative working | a | b | c | d | e |
| **Strengths** | | | | | | |
| **Areas for Improvement** | | | | | | |
| **Maintaining the partnerships** | | | | | | |
| 29 | People within partnerships communicate in an open & meaningful way to ensure everyone has the information they need to make the most of the collaboration | a | b | c | d | e |
| 30 | People maintain commitment, energy & resources to make the partnerships successful | a | b | c | d | e |
| 31 | Leaders understand, anticipate & respond to the present & future priority needs & expectations of partners | a | b | c | d | e |
| 32 | Organisations support partners to understand the relevance of the services to overarching & intermediate outcomes and to act as mutual advocates of services | a | b | c | d | e |
| 33 | People actively maintain & develop the personal relationships with partners and resolve any conflicts & tensions | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths | | | | | | |
| Areas for Improvement | | | | | | |
| Review & improvement | | | | | | |
| 34 | Adequate and compatible systems are in place across partner organisations to generate the information needed to measure performance in relation to shared outcomes & priorities | a | b | c | d | e |
| 35 | Performance information is communicated widely with partners | a | b | c | d | e |
| 36 | Joint Self-Assessment is conducted (e.g. using CSIT) and joint improvement plans are implemented | a | b | c | d | e |
| 37 | The value of partnerships is reviewed and the necessary changes are made | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths | | | | | | |
| Areas for Improvement | | | | | | |
| Results | | | | | | |
| What do our partners think of how well we build & sustain partnerships?  To what extent are our partnerships achieving shared outcomes (what do the results tell us?) | | | | | | |
| Strengths | | | | | | |
| Areas for Improvement | | | | | | |

**What are the most significant areas for improvement (bearing in mind what is required to survive & thrive in the future?)**

**What themes run through your Self-Assessment results (‘golden threads’ & ‘fault lines’)?**

**What are the few underlying causes of most of the areas for improvement?**

1. This version of CSIT has been designed and developed in association with Steve Wood [steve-wood@talktalk.net](mailto:steve-wood@talktalk.net) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)