

One Public Estate Partnership Boards

What is a One Public Estate Partnership Board?

A One Public Estate (OPE) Partnership Board is a strategic forum made up of public sector land and property holders within a specified area.

Its purpose is to allow public sector property holders to work in partnership to explore and identify opportunities for better use of all public land and property. This will involve looking across all public sector assets and explore opportunities for rationalisation, housing delivery, service integration and reduced running costs, then develop initiatives to deliver these objectives.

Partnerships who are part of the One Public Estate programme are required to set up an OPE Partnership Board or utilise an existing public sector property board with strategic local partners to drive delivery of their local work programme.

How does it work?

Possession of the assets typically remains with the owning body however property boards provide the opportunity to share information on strategic objectives and priorities with assets in their ownership with partners and stakeholders. The Board can take a more collaborative approach to the management of assets and delivery of services across the public sector.

What difference can it make?

Public sector bodies are often large landowners in their area and by all organisations using their resources and assets in a collaborative way, they can ensure that decisions made by the partner organisations are of best value and impact on their local area that are in the best interests for the public purse.

Who's on the board?

Partnerships on the One Public Estate programme have a mixture of representatives, dependant on which public bodies are within their Partnership boundaries. OPE Regional Teams should play a key role in the board. OPE Regional Teams are made up of a blended team of Local Government Association (LGA) and Cabinet Office's Office for Government Property (OGP). Your OPE team will be able to:

- Provide access to central government land owning departments
- Access senior government officials to help unblock barriers which are slowing progress
- Provide support and challenge to your partnerships plans and strategy
- Provide access to specialist and technical support, via our Pool of Experts

Key partners who could form membership of your board may include:

- Neighbouring councils
- Central Government departments and agencies, especially those who deliver local services such as DWP/ Job Centre Plus, HMRC, MoJ
- Health bodies including Community Health Partnerships, NHS Property Services, CCGs, NHS trusts
- Police

- Ambulance
- Fire and Rescue
- Educational bodies such as Universities and colleges
- Housing associations
- Or organisations who also support the delivery of local growth priorities and have access to funding to support delivery such as Homes England and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).

In some cases OPE Partnership Boards are not necessarily restricted to public estate holders and can be open to attendance from local housing associations and private sector stake holders in the area.

Consideration should also be given to large quasi-public sector land owning organisations such as the church or large voluntary land owning trusts where strategically important.

Key Outcomes

- Providing cross public sector leadership and governance to delivery your OPE projects
- Enabling senior local leaders to develop collaborative plans and strategy for the public estate in their areas
- To unblock local barriers impacting delivery
- Surplus assets ear-marked for disposal to generate capital receipts which can be used to reduce deficits or re-invested to stimulate economic growth
- Freeing up surplus land for housing and local regeneration
- Identify opportunities for co-location, making better use of space , reducing the footprint of the public estate and leading to revenue savings as costly maintenance and lease costs are minimised
- Opportunities for integration and joint working thereby improving service delivery and customer satisfaction.
- Mapping of all assets, including both leasehold and freehold, can help to identify opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the combined public estate

Top tips

- Cross public sector asset mapping is key. Having a full picture of all public sector assets will allow new opportunities to be developed
- Develop strong working relationships; understand your partner's strategic aims and where they align with your own, work in partnership to deliver objectives
- Local leadership is essential, senior management and political buy in will drive delivery ensuring progress is made
- Working with a large number of partners may make a project more complex but will bring greater rewards
- A shared vision is critical to collaborative working in partnership. There will be projects where not all partners will collaborate if the project does not meet their strategic aims
- Don't create bureaucracy where it is not required. It may be more practical to develop your partnership board through existing structures involving key stakeholders.

Below are some examples of OPE Partnership Boards from councils on the One Public Estate programme

Who: Transforming Bedfordshire Partnership Board

The vision of the Transforming Bedfordshire Partnership is to catalyse and unleash regeneration of Bedfordshire's clustered public assets to drive forward the creation of multi-functional places for the future of our communities.

The Partnership Board was established as a result of the OPE programme and is responsible for its overall success. The Board signs off key deliverables, provides leadership amongst partners and stakeholders and intervenes to remove barriers where necessary.

Representation: The support and commitment from local and national partners is reflected in the strong governance arrangements, programme resources and an excellent delivery team. The Board is chaired by the Mayor of Bedford. The Board has wide representation across both local and central government including Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedford CCG, Network Rail, the NHS, Police and the local college.

Structure: Meetings are held quarterly and supported by the Programme Manager who coordinates the various OPE Projects within the Bedfordshire OPE Programme.

Board Successes: The partnership originally proposed a number of separate projects relating to different public assets within Bedford town centre. Through the Board's discussion and direction, a new approach was agreed to brigade some of these projects together into a broader piece of work focussed on town centre regeneration. OPE funds have been used to produce Masterplans for two areas in the centre of Bedford; Ford End Road and Town Centre South.

Who: Sheffield City Region Joint Assets Board

The Sheffield City Region's approach to OPE is focussed on 'supporting transformation through collaboration'.

Representation: The Board is chaired by Sharon Kemp, CEO of Rotherham Council. The Board has strong representation from its metropolitan districts and local boroughs as well as from Homes England and local health partners with a growing membership that now includes Network Rail, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, DWP, South Yorkshire Police and Fire Estates.

Structure: The Joint Assets Board (JAB) oversees the development of the OPE programme providing leadership to keep the programme on track. The JAB is at present a sub Board of the Housing and Infrastructure Executive Board (chaired by the Mayor of Doncaster) who have sign off on matters and will recommend decisions to the Mayoral Combined Authority/LEP for ratification.

The Board has links to the Sheffield City Region Housing & Infrastructure Executive Board which is chaired by the Mayor of Doncaster.

Board Successes: The Board has overseen a growing number of OPE funded projects, consistently focusing on how projects with a local focus can have wider value for the city region. They have initiated an Estate Transformation Strategy project that involved consultants carrying out a wide ranging consultation to identify where the opportunities for more substantial projects could result in transformational initiatives on the ground. A key element of this was a major stakeholder workshop with over 40 participants that has created a new ambition to work together for broader benefit.

Who: Barnet OPE Board

The London Borough of Barnet (LBB) has an active portfolio of land and property based initiatives. The OPE Board provides a collaborative forum to identify identified new projects

Representation: The Board is chaired by John Hooton, Chief Executive of the London Borough of Barnet (LBB). The Board has strong representation from central government including TfL, Highways England, the local CCG as well Middlesex University and the neighbouring London boroughs.

Structure: Meetings are scheduled quarterly. An OPE Operating Board chaired by LBB's Head of Estates convenes monthly as is attended by workstream leads.

Board Successes: The Barnet Partnership successfully received £70,000 towards the Finchley Memorial Hospital Homes for NHS Staff pilot project. The funding serves as an opportunity to accelerate the delivery of homes for NHS Staff through an innovative new scheme.

Edgware Hospital project is now being worked up to a Stage 1 feasibility with a view to the reconfiguration and redevelopment of the hospital; Various residential development sites have been identified in Burnt Oak as a result of the project in this locality; The Environment Agency have completed a study on the Silk Stream in the Borough; More generally, excellent relationships have been nurtured with the various public sector partners in the Borough.

Who: Greater Manchester Land and Property Panel

Representation: The Board is Chaired by Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). The Board has senior representation from the metropolitan districts with in the Greater Manchester area as well as central government including Network Rail, DWP, Police, Community Health Partnerships and the MOD.

The Board has strategic links to the Greater Manchester Land and Infrastructure Commission, GM Health & Social Care Strategic Estates Board, the Greater Manchester Delivery Unit and local Strategic Estates Groups. The Greater Manchester Delivery Unit manages strategic relationships with external agencies such as NHS England whilst the Strategic Estates Groups provide sub-regional strategic planning capability at a local level.

Structure: Terms of Reference for the Greater Manchester Land and Property Panel have been agreed by GMCA and by the GM Local Enterprise Partnership with meetings taking place every 6-8 weeks. The governance arrangements through which GM will implement its strategic place-based approach to the use of public land and property assets is set out below

GM - OPE Estates Governance framework

