

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM PROGRAMME**

**GOVERNANCE - COMMUNITY PLANNING -  
CENTRAL/LOCAL RELATIONS PROJECT**

**PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT**

# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Introductory Note**

- 1.1.1 This Project Initiation Document (PID) will give Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations), and as required by the Terms of Reference, the Strategic Leadership Board, the assurance that the project has established:
- clear terms of reference;
  - an adequate management structure;
  - that sufficient planning has taken place; and,
  - that sufficient resources can be made available.

## **1.2 Purpose**

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this document is to put in place firm foundations for the project by:
- setting out the aims and objectives of the project,
  - defining the scope of the project;
  - setting out the activities, resources, responsibilities and outputs required to facilitate the completion of the project; and,
  - setting out the management structure for the project.

The PID will be the baseline against which Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) and the Strategic Leadership Board can monitor progress and make decisions.

# **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The decisions on the future shape of local government announced by the Minister of the Environment on 31 March 2007, following the review of the local government aspects of the Review of Public Administration, represents a significant change management programme for local government. The Minister has agreed that the implementation of the overall programme will be managed at strategic level by the Strategic Leadership Board supported by three Policy Development Panels comprising elected members advised by senior local government officers and senior departmental officials.
- 2.2 The Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations Policy Development Panel has been tasked with the development of recommendations on policy and implementation proposals in relation to governance, a council led community planning process, and relations between central and local government.

### **3. PROJECT DEFINITION**

#### **3.1 Project Objectives**

- 3.1.1 Whilst there is the potential for the thinking on aspects of one policy area to impinge on the other areas the nature of these work strands is such that it precludes the definition of a single clear high level policy objective or strategic deliverable. Rather each of the strands will need to be viewed as an individual project stream within the overall programme of work for the Panel, with its own specific strategic deliverable, and its own management Terms of Reference.

##### Governance

- 3.1.2 The policy objective in relation to governance is the development of arrangements with appropriate checks and balances that are designed mindful of the need to ensure effective and inclusive local democracy, to protect the rights of minorities, to prevent any direct or indirect discrimination, and to promote the need of equality of opportunity, that will operate in the new councils following their creation in 2011. These would include arrangements to allocate Council Chairs, Deputy Chairs and positions on Council committees and to facilitate cross community decision making. The aim of the new council governance arrangements is to ensure the protection of the rights of all people in Northern Ireland, and provide for fair, transparent and efficient decision making.
- 3.1.3 In the context of this strategic policy objective the management Terms of Reference for this project are defined as:

‘To bring forward proposals for governance arrangements that provide for effective, efficient and transparent decision making by Councils, with appropriate checks and balances, taking account of Councils additional service delivery and community planning responsibilities.’

##### Community Planning

- 3.1.4 The essence of Community Planning is a recognition that the needs of individuals and communities – if they are to be addressed successfully – must be addressed collectively, not separately. The policy objective for this strand is the development of an effective statute-based community planning process, led and facilitated by local councils, that enhances civic leadership and that allows local councils, working in partnership with all sectors, to be at the heart of the provision of high quality, efficient services that respond to the needs of people and communities and which continuously improve over time.
- 3.1.5 The management Terms of Reference for this strand are defined as :

‘To bring forward proposals to effect the implementation of the duty of “Community Planning” and a power of “Well Being” to district councils in Northern Ireland, recognising local diversity and the need to devise approaches suited to local circumstances.’

## Central / Local Relations

3.1.6 The policy objective is the development of appropriate mechanisms to provide for the optimum partnership between central and local government in carrying out their separate but inter-related functions in the provision of efficient and effective citizen centred services.

3.1.7 To guide this project the following management Terms of Reference have been defined:

‘To develop the framework to underpin the formalisation of relations between the Northern Ireland Executive and local government on matters of mutual interest and concern.’

### **3.2 Method of Approach**

3.2.1 The overall project, and the individual work strands, will be managed using the PRINCE2 (Projects in Controlled Environment) standards and associated project controls, in line with best practice for projects in the public sector.

3.2.2 The project will consist of a number of stages as follows:

Stage 1	Preparation of the Project Initiation Document
Stage 2	The development of policy proposals on the three workstrands
Stage 3	The development of arrangements for the piloting of the community planning process
Stage 4	The development of guidance to underpin the operationalisation of the policy proposals
Stage 5	Reviewing the policy proposals in the context of responses to the public consultation process
Stage 6	Post Project Review

3.2.3 The timeframe for the development of the policy proposals to inform the preparation of legislative provisions is constrained by the requirement to have the legislation enacted prior to the creation of the new councils and the timetable for the passage of the legislation through the Northern Ireland Assembly. Accordingly the proposals must be developed by early November 2008. Guidance also needs to be developed and agreed prior to the creation of the new councils in 2011.

### **3.3 Project Scope**

3.3.1 As indicated earlier in this document this project will bring forward proposals for the governance arrangements for the new councils; the framework and foundation guidance for the council led community planning process; and proposals for the formalisation of the relationship between central and local government. It is an integral element of the overall programme for the reform and modernisation of local government.

- 3.3.2 A preliminary examination of the issues to be addressed within the individual work strands suggests that the project will interface with the work of the other Policy Development Panels. For example, arrangements for the assessment of community planning, and the creation, in the future, of Local Area Agreements will be interlinked with the development of Performance Management frameworks. The extent of interfaces with other projects will become clearer as the detailed work progresses and these will be managed accordingly to minimise risks to the successful delivery of the project.

### **3.4 Project Deliverables / Outputs**

- 3.4.1 In meeting the project's objectives the Policy Development Panel will be required to deliver a number of key outputs as follows:

Stage 2 – policy proposals for consideration by the Minister of the Environment on:

- statutory governance arrangements, which meet the agreed requirements;
- a statutory framework for the community planning process and the 'Power of Wellbeing'; and,
- the formalisation of relations between central and local government.

Stage 3 – the development of a framework, and the selection criteria, for the establishment of a number of pilot projects to develop and test the detailed working aspects of the community planning process. The operation of these pilots will inform the development of statutory guidance to support the practical outworking of the overarching framework.

Stage 4 – the delivery of the necessary detailed guidance to support the operationalisation of the new governance arrangements, the community planning process, and the relationship between central and local government.

- 3.4.2 Descriptions of the project outputs are attached at Annexes A - G of this document.

### **3.5 Interfaces**

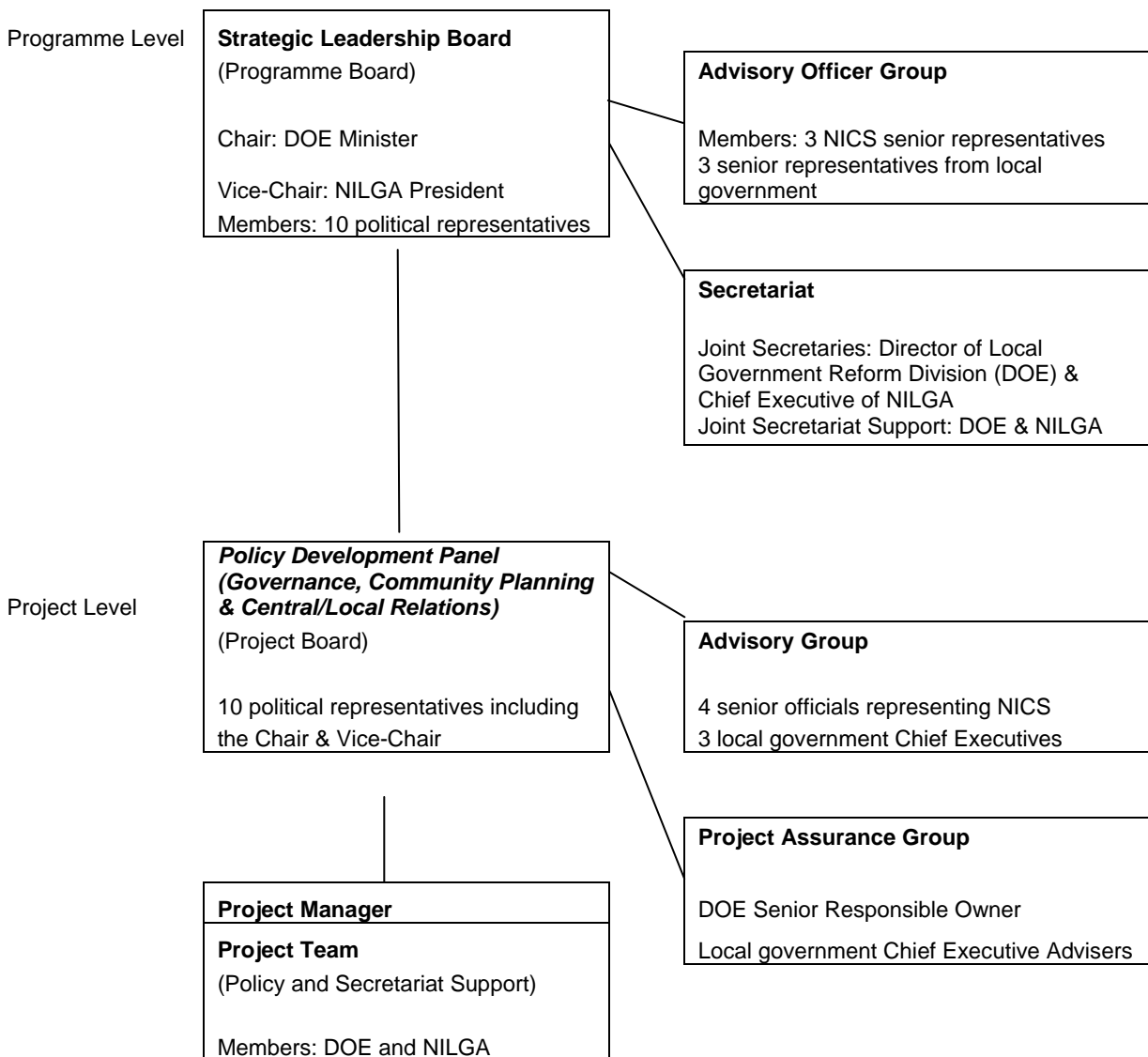
- 3.5.1 The project management team within the Local Government Policy Division of DOE will meet on a regular basis with officers from NILGA, local government Chief Officer advisors to the Panel, and senior colleagues in Departments to advance the work of the Panel in line with the agreed timetable.
- 3.5.2 The project manager will also meet on a regular basis with the Senior Responsible Owner, the Programme Manager, and the project managers supporting the other two Policy Development Panels to consider and develop proposals for the handling of interlinked issues. Any such proposals will be submitted to the Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) for consideration and agreement.
- 3.5.3 It will be important for the elected members of the Panel to seek and articulate the views of their political parties on the work strands being taken forward as part of

the project. The Chair of the Panel will also report and seek the views of the Strategic Leadership Board at its regular meetings during the project.

### 3.6 Project Filing Structure

3.6.1 All papers produced to inform the deliberations of the Policy Development Panel, and those to support its efficient and effective operation will be filed in accordance with the Department of the Environment’s records management procedures.

## 4. PROJECT ORGANISATION



## **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **5.1 Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) - (Project Board)**

5.1.1 Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) is accountable for the success of the project and has responsibility and authority to make decisions on the management of the project and the commitment of resources to it. The Panel manages by exception, delegating the day to day running of the project and the development of material for consideration by the Panel to the Project Manager. The main responsibilities of the Panel are:

- review and approve the PID;
- agree with the Project Manager their responsibilities and objectives;
- agree project and stage tolerances; and
- authorise commitment of project resources.

5.1.2 As the project progresses:

- guide the project ensuring it remains within specified constraints;
- authorise the start of each phase;
- review and approve plans;
- management of risks identified at plan approval stages;
- approval of changes; and
- ensure compliance with policy direction from the Strategic Leadership Board.

5.1.3 At the end of the project:

- assure that all products have been delivered;
- assure all acceptance criteria have been met;
- approve End Project Report;
- authorise Project Closure; and,
- approve Project Evaluation Review.

### **5.2 The Project Manager**

5.2.1 The Project Manager has the delegated authority to run the project on a day to day basis on behalf of the Policy Development Panel within the agreed constraints.

The main responsibilities of the Project Manager are:

- to deliver agreed products to required specification and quality according to the planned timetable, and within any approved expenditure limits;
- direct and motivate the project team;
- project manage and plan all stages of the project;
- agree delegations and project assurance roles;
- prepare project, stage and exception plans and agree with the Policy Development Panel;
- manage business and project risks (includes contingency planning);
- produce the Project Initiation Document;
- liaise with members of associated projects or programmes;
- monitor progress, expenditure, resources, initiation of corrective action;
- keep the Policy Development Panel informed of deviations in plans and associated action (Change Control) – any changes to be approved by the Panel;

- preparation of highlight reports for the PDP;
- liaise with PDP to assure the direction and integrity of the project;
- prepare End Project Report;
- identify and obtain support and advice necessary for the management, planning and control of the project; and,
- responsibility for project administration.

### 5.3 Project Assurance Group

5.3.1 Project Assurance has responsibility for independent monitoring of all aspects of the project's performance and products. Specific responsibilities of Project Assurance are to:

- assure the Panel members needs and expectations are being met or managed;
- assure that risks are being controlled;
- keep the project in line with the agreed Project Plan;
- inform the project of any changes caused by external events; and
- ensure adherence to quality assurance standards.

## 6. PROJECT PERSONNEL

### 6.1 Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations)

Name	Organisation	Function
Cllr Joanne Bunting	Elected Member	Project Chair
Cllr Sean Begley	Elected Member	Vice-Chair
James Hutchinson	DOE	Senior Responsible Owner

### 6.2 Project Manager and Project Team

Name	Organisation	Team Role
John Murphy	DOE	Project Manager
Nora Winder	NILGA	Lead local government Officer
Damian McKeivitt	DOE	
Lynn McCracken	DOE	
Sinead Kelly	NILGA	

### 6.3 Project Assurance

Name	Organisation	Position
James Hutchinson	DOE	Senior Responsible Owner
Liam Hannaway	NILGA	Lead Local Government Chief Executive
John Briggs	NILGA	
Ashley Boreland	NILGA	Chief Executive SLB link

## 7. PROJECT TOLERANCES

- 7.1.1 Given the constraints outlined above in relation to the timetable for the passage of the legislation through the Assembly and the associated preparatory stages the first phase of the project must be completed as set out in the programme plan. There is therefore only very limited tolerance within this phase. This relates to the potential rescheduling, within a few days, of any postponed meetings. The exceptions to this are the meeting to agree the emerging proposals for submission to the Strategic Leadership Board, and the discussion on the final proposals.
- 7.1.2 There is greater flexibility on reaching agreement on proposals during subsequent stage when guidance is being developed and the community planning pilots are being taken forward. The limiting factor is the timetable for the introduction of the Bill and the laying of any associated subordinate legislation in the Assembly to meet the operative date for the commencement of the legislative provisions.

## 8. PROJECT CONTROLS

- 8.1.1 Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) assumes overall responsibility for the control of the project and will receive information from the Project Manager (and the Assurance Group) to enable it to fulfil this role.
- 8.1.2 The major controls for Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) are:
- Project Initiation – to ensure that, before resources are committed to the project, everything involved in the project has been agreed: project objectives, roles and responsibilities, project scope and boundary, project controls. A Project Initiation meeting will be held to agree this PID and give approval to move to the next stage.
  - End Stage Assessment – Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) only commits to one stage of work at a time. This assessment approves the work to date and provides authority to proceed to the next stage.

- Highlight (dashboard) Reports – provided by the Project Manager to Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) on a regular basis to report progress during a stage. The Highlight Reports for this project will be produced monthly and will contain details of progress to date, achievements in the current period and achievements expected in the next period, details of actual or potential problems and suggestions for their resolution.
- Exception Reports – notification by the Project Manager to the Project Board that the stage or project plan will deviate outside tolerance limits. This details the problem, outlines the available options and identifies the recommended option.
- Mid-Stage Assessment – this assessment is held between the PDP and the Project Manager after an Exception Report or a significant milestone to determine how the project will proceed.
- Project Closure – the PDP formally closes the project, confirming that it has been completed.

8.1.3 The Panel will report progress to the Strategic Leadership Board on a regular basis through the submission of Highlight Reports.

## **9. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

9.1.1 A Communications Plan will be developed that links with the Communications Strategy that has been developed for the overall reform and modernisation programme. This will ensure that the sector and other interested stakeholders are kept informed of developments, through the regular NILGA updates, the DOE website, and the joint DOE / NILGA Newsletter.

## **10. QUALITY PLAN**

10.1.1 The quality requirement for this project is the production of clear comprehensive project outputs on a timely basis. The Quality Review process will check to identify any errors, omissions, misunderstandings, ambiguity, and non-compliance with the overarching policy direction set out in the Minister of the Environment's Statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly on 31 March 2008 on the future shape of local government.

10.1.2 A Quality Management System to be used in the project will be developed for endorsement by the Panel. This will include the following elements:

- a set of standards to be applied to the production of project outputs;
- a quality assurance procedure for all outputs;
- procedures to facilitate project issues;
- procedures to facilitate change control; and,
- the implementation of a consistent structured document management system for selected outputs produced by the project.

## **11. INITIAL PROJECT PLAN**

11.1.1 A high level Project Plan outlining the main stages of the Project has been included at Annex H.

## **12. INITIAL RISK LOG**

12.1.1 A detailed Risk Log and a strategy for managing the risks will be developed for endorsement by the Panel and the Strategic Leadership Board. An initial appraisal suggests that the key risks will relate to the following issues:

- the timescale for the development of policy proposals;
- availability of elected members to engage in the project;
- availability of project team personnel;
- continuity of personnel as the project progresses;
- availability of financial resources to fund any required research / consultancy support;
- effective engagement by councils in the community planning pilots;
- effective engagement by departments and other key sectors in the community planning pilots; and,
- availability of funding to support community planning pilots.

## **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

**Workstream: Governance**

**Product: Policy Proposals**

### **1. Product Purpose**

To detail policy proposals for governance arrangements that provide for effective, efficient and transparent decision making by Councils with appropriate checks and balances.

### **2. Composition**

The proposals will cover issues including:

- decision making structures
- proportionality
- checks and balances
- standards
- transparency
- citizen engagement.

### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing desk research and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

### **7. External Dependencies**

None exist as the process has been internalised through the direct involvement of elected members and council officers.

## **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

### **Workstream: Community Planning**

### **Product: Policy Proposals**

#### **1. Product Purpose**

To articulate policy proposals for the overarching framework for the council led community planning process and the associated 'Power of Wellbeing'

#### **2. Composition**

The proposals will cover the following issues:

- a definition of community planning
- structures and models
- the duty on councils
- the duty on government departments and other specified bodies
- reporting arrangements
- the provision of guidance
- the establishment of bodies
- legislative provisions for a 'Power of Wellbeing'

#### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

#### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing desk research and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

#### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

#### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

#### **7. External Dependencies**

None exist as the process has been internalised through the direct involvement of elected members and council officers.

## PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

**Workstream: Central / Local Relations**

**Product: Policy Proposals**

### 1. Product Purpose

To articulate policy proposals for the formalisation of relations between central and local government.

### 2. Composition

The proposals will cover the establishment of any proposed structure(s), their membership and remit.

### 3. Format / Presentation

A formal structured report.

### 4. Derivation

The report will be produced referencing desk research and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

### 5. Responsibility

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

### 6. Quality

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

### 7. External Dependencies

None exist as the process has been internalised through the direct involvement of elected members and council officers.

## **ANNEX D**

### **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

**Workstream: Governance**

**Product: Draft Guidance**

#### **1. Product Purpose**

To support the operationalisation of the governance arrangements through the provision of subordinate legislation or guidance.

#### **2. Composition**

The draft guidance may cover such issues as:

- outline corporate governance structures and arrangements
- a Standing Orders framework
- a Constitution / Citizen Contract framework

#### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

#### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing desk research and engagement with the sector, and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

#### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

#### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

#### **7. External Dependencies**

None identified at this stage.

## **ANNEX E**

### **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

#### **Workstream: Community Planning**

#### **Product: Programme of Community Planning Pilots**

##### **1. Product Purpose**

To provide a framework for the piloting of the community planning process that will inform the preparation of subordinate legislation and guidance to underpin the operation of the process when the new councils are established.

##### **2. Composition**

The proposals will cover the:

- identification of need for appropriate subordinate legislation.
- identification of other bodies to be specified in subordinate legislation.
- development of statutory guidance.
- testing various processes and methodologies for consultation and engagement in the community planning process.
- production of an agreed Community Plan.
- development of monitoring and reporting arrangements.
- evaluation of Pilot Programme.
- identification of capacity building needs across all sectors.

##### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

##### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing the work of the Taskforce Sub-group and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

##### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

##### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

##### **7. External Dependencies**

None identified at this stage.

## **ANNEX F**

### **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

**Workstream: Central / Local Relations**

**Product: Draft Concordat**

#### **1. Product Purpose**

To set out proposals on a framework to underpin the effective relations between central and local government.

#### **2. Composition**

The proposals will cover such issues as:

- a framework for working arrangements between central and local government on matters in which they have a mutual interest;
- arrangements for administrative co-operation and exchange of information

#### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

#### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

#### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

#### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

#### **7. External Dependencies**

None identified

## **ANNEX G**

### **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

**Workstream: Community Planning**

**Product: Draft Guidance**

#### **1. Product Purpose**

To support the operationalisation of the community planning process.

#### **2. Composition**

#### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

#### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing the analysis of the outcomes of the community planning pilots and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

#### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

#### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

#### **7. External Dependencies**

## ANNEX H

### PROJECT PLAN

<b>Period</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Jul – Oct '08	Develop policy proposals on <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• governance arrangements,</li><li>• the community planning process, and</li><li>• central / local relations.</li></ul>
Nov '08	Submit policy proposals to the Strategic Leadership Board
Nov '08 – Mar '09	Development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• framework and criteria for Community Planning pilots</li><li>• Concordat to underpin formalisation of central / local relations</li><li>• Guidance on governance arrangements</li></ul>
Apr '09	Consider responses to consultation on policy proposals  Recommendations on any amendments submitted to the Strategic Leadership Board  Commencement of initial planning for community planning pilots
May – Jun '09	Finalise arrangements for community planning pilots
Jul '09 – Jun '10	Monitor community planning pilots and address issues that emerge.
Jul '10 – Sep '10	Evaluate outcomes from community planning pilots
Oct '10 – Nov '10	Develop and refine community planning Statutory Guidance proposals.