



6 Rules for Successful Shared Service Partnerships

**Division of
Local Government Services**

Rule 1: Know your own mind

- It is not always entirely clear what each partner around the table wants
 - ✓ Figure it out in advance
- Politically and managerially, each partner needs to know what it wants to achieve – and why
 - ✓ Is there potential for commitment?



Rule 2: Know your partner's mind too!

- Work with who you know
 - ✓ Start with confidence
 - ✓ Forge lasting partnerships based on a shared set of ambitions

OR

- Learn about your partner and their culture
 - ✓ Develop a relationship – let it evolve



Rule 3: Take the leap, but look first

- Courage to commit to a partnership is essential
- Find a great partner by:
 - ✓ Conducting a thorough analysis
 - ✓ Creating a sound financial plan
 - ✓ Establishing commitment
- Leadership with a focus on delivery
 - ✓ Someone must take the lead – focus on outcomes



Rule 4: Agree in advance

- Don't put off hard stuff until the last minute
 - ✓ Can cause partnerships to fall apart just before or after the agreement is signed
 - ✓ Know your concerns; and address them up front
- Know what you are getting into
 - ✓ No surprises on either side
 - ✓ Business case and agreement must identify costs and benefits
- Have an exit strategy
 - ✓ Create dispute resolution process
 - ✓ Have a break-up plan – just in case



Rule 5: Take opposition seriously

- Sharing services can result in substantial change
 - ✓ Identify potential obstacles and be prepared to mitigate them
- It's more than job's changing – it's people too
 - ✓ People see careers at risk – on both sides
 - ✓ Commit to addressing the real worries faced by the people affected
- Sharing services are not always “soft” options



Rule 6: Invest in the relationship

- Doesn't end when the agreement is signed
- Contract management is critical
 - ✓ Plan to meet and discuss it regularly
 - ✓ Then do it
- Good governance depends on resources, capacity and a positive attitude
- Prepare the parties for a culture that drives improvement and innovation

