Effective partnership working to reduce inequalities

A partnership collaboration brings together people from different organisations to work on mutually beneficial outcomes and common interests.  It is often prompted to enable the delivery of outcomes of any type, which may not possibly be achieved by a single agency.

The inequalities challenge facing public services is complex, interconnected and dynamic and stems from national and local policies and their supporting delivery systems. Any inaction on inequalities in one part of the system often cancels out or reduces the impact of the good work in other parts of the system.

Partnerships offer a way to respond to this type of complexity in a flexible manner and provides a platform that enables partner organisations to better cope with the levels of uncertainty and the related inequalities which surround public services.

Effective partnerships play a key role in creating opportunities to reduce the impact of inequalities on communities through power-sharing, collective responsibility and accountability and the sharing of resources and expertise.

Partnerships aimed at tackling inequalities must be considered as one of other complementary actions. They should not be the sole approach. They do not just happen and are not a quick fix.

They require careful considerations from planning and setting goals; choosing the most appropriate type of partnership that will achieve those goals; managing relationships; to evaluating the impact which the partnerships have on inequalities for individuals, communities and population groups.