

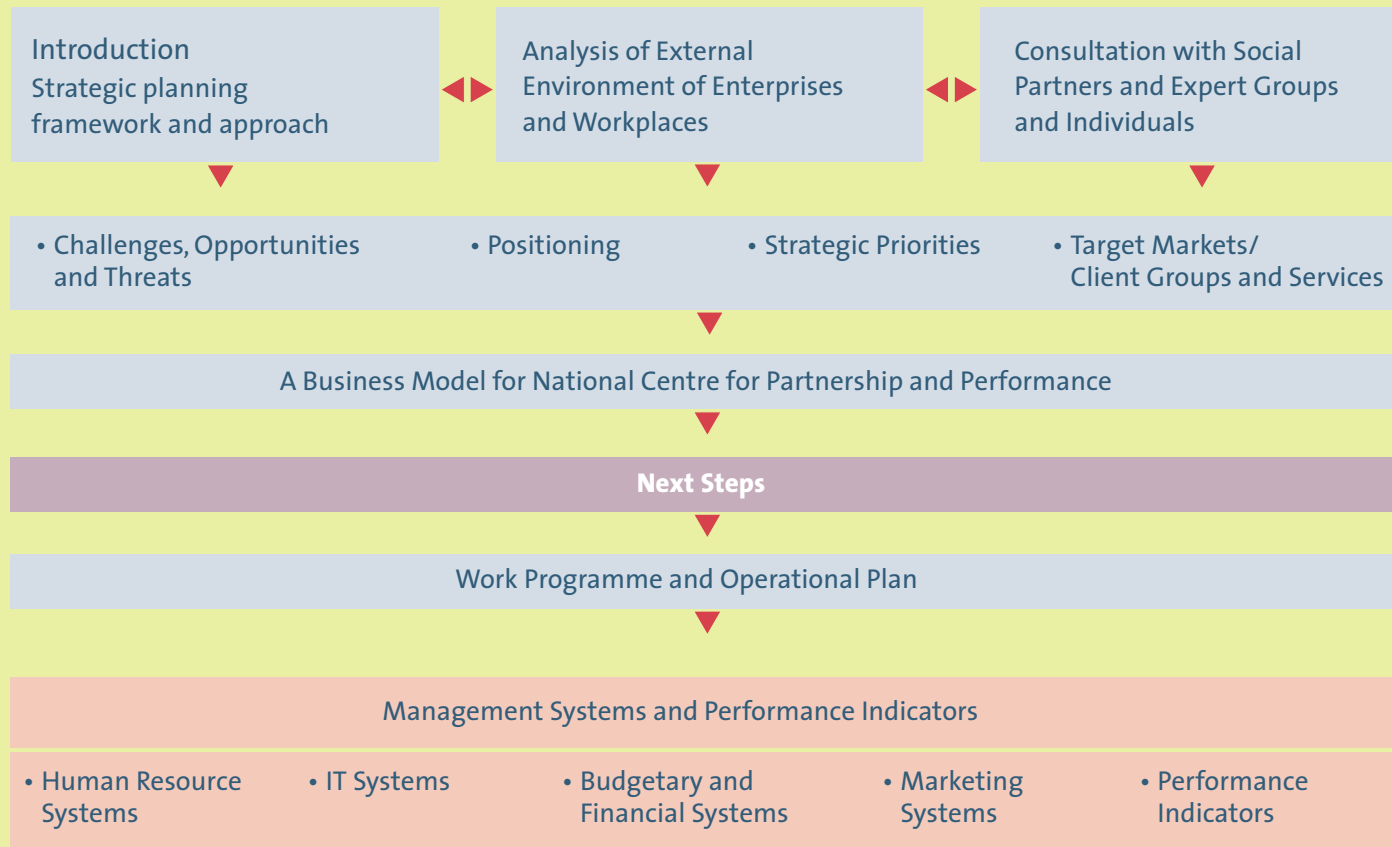
National Centre for
Partnership + Performance

Strategic Planning Discussion Document
Executive Summary

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Strategic Planning Framework



Section 1

Introduction

As a new organisation the *National Centre for Partnership and Performance* is in the process of developing a strategic plan. This document is an executive summary of a more extensive discussion document, which presents a background analysis and develops initial proposals for a strategy for the Centre. The strategy, as outlined, reflects major trends in the external environment and the themes and issues that arose in an extensive consultative process. It sets out a vision for the Centre which is bold and ambitious but which appears warranted both in the light of the external challenges and the expectations and concerns of those who participated in the process of consultation.

The strategic planning framework and a timeline of the strategic planning process are set out in this document.

The External Environment

An extensive external environmental analysis was conducted by the National Centre for Partnership and Performance will open. The aim of this analysis was to identify the main trends in the environment and their likely evolution over the medium-term. The focus was on the implications of trends for enterprises and workplaces and for partnership at these levels. The following areas were considered:-

- The macro-economy, competitiveness and adaptability
- Changing work preferences
- Labour market and workplace challenges
- Developments at EU level
- The political, social and public policy environment
- Developments in Irish industrial relations

The external analysis has identified the major trends in the environment in which the National Centre for Partnership and Performance will operate. These trends constitute the key drivers of the new strategy of the Centre and will frame the context within which it works and sets its priorities in both the short and medium terms. These key drivers are summarised opposite.

A key driver is that of changed economic circumstances and a projected sharp economic downturn. A major challenge for the Centre, therefore, is to demonstrate the relevance of partnership in conditions of declining growth and growing economic uncertainty.

Key drivers

- ▶ In the short-term, businesses, employers, employees and trade unions face the challenge of adaptation and flexibility in the context of a sharp economic downturn. The medium-term challenge involves building capacity, improving productivity and maintaining competitiveness in the context of a return to full employment and high growth, accompanied by rising cost pressures.
- ▶ The public services are faced with the most significant programmes of modernisation and reorganisation in their history.
- ▶ The public utilities are also in the throes of the most significant programmes of restructuring in their history and will continue to face strong pressures for adaptation arising from deregulation, liberalisation and in some cases from major investment programmes.
- ▶ Progressively growing numbers of people in employment value work that allows them scope to participate in various ways in job-based and organisational decision-making.
- ▶ Developments in markets, production processes and technologies, changes in the structure of economic activity and changes in the basis of Ireland's competitive advantage have increased the premium attached to updating the skills of the workforce.
- ▶ Progress in promoting life-long learning requires the development of workplace regimes permitting employees access to part-time, distance and block release programmes as well as being responsive to workplace-based learning and programme delivery.
- ▶ Pressures have developed for flexible working options in response to competitive demands on employers, work-life balance issues affecting employees and changes in the physical and social infrastructure in which work and employment are enmeshed.
- ▶ Policy initiatives are being undertaken by the EU in a number of areas impacting on workplace partnership, including information and consultation, financial participation, life-long learning and new forms of work organisation.
- ▶ The general industrial relations climate is more turbulent and uncertain than at any time for more than a decade. Some have suggested that the current model of tightly centralised national pay agreements may be nearing the end of its shelf-life and that future pay fixing arrangements may need to provide for greater flexibility and closer links between pay determination and performance at enterprise and workplace levels.
- ▶ The advent of benchmarking in the public services involves the most significant change in public sector pay determination in half a century and may again trigger a review of the links between pay, performance, modernisation programmes and prevailing industrial relations processes and arrangements.
- ▶ There appears to be a growing sense among those centrally involved that existing policies, practices and institutions in the spheres of work, employment, industrial relations and dispute resolution require a new guiding vision. Such a vision would focus efforts to reconfigure the existing framework in support of competitiveness, better public services, higher living standards and new employee and social priorities.

The Consultation Process

As part of the development of a strategic plan, the Centre engaged in an extensive process of consultation with the Social Partners and with a wide range of national organisations and businesses involved in the areas of promoting partnership and performance. The organisations invited to participate in the consultation process fall into six broad groups.

1. The Social Partners
2. National industrial and economic policy agencies
3. Agencies charged with dispute resolution
4. Public sector bodies involved in education, health and local government
5. Private enterprises
6. Expert bodies

This process of consultation yielded a rich and diverse range of issues for consideration by the National Centre for Partnership and Performance. The dominant and most notable theme was the lack of a clear definition of partnership and a coherent rationale behind its promotion.

Among the issues, which emerged from the process of consultation, are the following:

- ▶ All of the participants in the consultative process expressed the need to define more clearly and concretely what partnership is, to articulate its value and its meaning and relevance in the context of the modern workplace. They felt that the National Centre for Partnership and Performance needed to create and lead a debate about the benefits of partnership in order to build a vision of its role in the workplace of the future.
- ▶ The most striking message arising from the process, particularly in the eyes of employers, was the need to 'make the business case' for partnership. There is a need for evidence based analysis which will show the links between partnership and performance and promulgate the successes in ways that are meaningful and relevant to a variety of audiences and settings.
- ▶ The focus of industrial policy is to build Ireland's national competitive advantage on the basis of the adaptability and flexibility of its enterprises and the creativity and high skill level of its workforce. It is evident from the consultation process that the Centre will be in a position to contribute to wider industrial policy objectives.
- ▶ Unions felt that partnership ought to encompass strategic areas and that employees and unions needed to be brought more fully into core decision-making processes in the enterprise. Many expressed the view that union members did not possess a sufficient understanding of what partnership is about, what it can achieve and what their role in the process should be.
- ▶ The Centre is regarded as well placed to address some of the problems highlighted by identifying and articulating the relationships and dynamics that should characterise the modern workplace. Many felt that it may also be well placed to lead a debate on the need to modernise industrial relations practices and to assist in the development of policies which support and reward good practices in the workplace and foster a culture characterised by trust and mutual respect.
- ▶ A number of the organisations consulted were faced with major and far-reaching programmes of organisational change, some involving the restructuring of entire sectors. Even where senior managers were well disposed towards partnership, they faced doubts and dilemmas as to how such programmes might or should be linked to ongoing partnership initiatives. Sometimes similar concerns were apparent among the immediate champions of partnership in these same contexts.
- ▶ A number of the bodies consulted made specific comments concerning partnership in civil service departments and the Strategic Management Initiative. Progress across the sector and with respect to the SMI was seen to be uneven. Structural arrangements were seen to dominate the partnership model.
- ▶ A number of those interviewed expressed the view that the Centre could play a role in circumstances of chronic industrial relations difficulty. However, it was also felt that the Centre needed to examine its role in such areas carefully.
- ▶ Many expressed the view that an important priority for the Centre should be to ensure that partnership is mainstreamed in the education and training curriculum in business schools and union education.
- ▶ The process of consultation identified a number of issues that should receive particular attention when the Council begins to prioritise areas for deliberation, in particular gaining agreement on more flexible systems of financial reward such as gain-sharing. Many also raised the question of developing performance-related pay in the public services.
- ▶ A number of those involved in the consultative process expressed concern that the Centre should be sufficiently well resourced to have a real impact on the major issues identified as needing to be tackled.

An emerging role for the National Centre for Partnership and Performance

The role for the National Centre for Partnership and Performance emerging from the process of consultation is one that is more challenging and ambitious than that which was envisaged at the outset of the process. The most strident concern of those interviewed was that the Centre would begin to develop an overarching vision for partnership and provide leadership in defining the 'workplace of the future'. The absence of what many called 'the bigger picture' was a constant strand and it was felt that the Centre was well placed to play a path-finding role. The role for the Centre that emerged from the consultation process can be outlined under the following broad categories:

- ▶ **Leadership:** Scoping out a new direction and developing new models of participation and practice in the workplace was seen as a major priority.
- ▶ **Responding to major change and policy initiatives:** The Centre needed to provide direction and proactive planning with respect to partnership as organisations begin the process of major change and restructuring.
- ▶ **Facilitation:** The Centre has an important role to play in facilitating and brokering agreements between parties such as IBEC and ICTU in partnership areas and surrounding implementation of EU policy.
- ▶ **Highlighting partnership in the workplace:** Much of the confusion about partnership resides in the association of workplace partnership with the national partnership structures and procedures. The distinct role of the Centre in deepening partnership and performance at enterprise level should be clearly articulated.
- ▶ **Supporting partnership in a diverse economy:** It was emphasised that there was no one model of partnership and that the Centre should address the needs of different constituencies and foster a series of models both unionised and non-union.
- ▶ **A partnership fund:** The availability of a national fund in support of partnership was seen as an effective means of priming the pump of innovation on the ground. The value of such a fund in providing resources for companies and unions to acquire expertise and training to initiate partnership projects may need to be examined.
- ▶ **Research:** The Centre should direct its resources towards high-quality research and analysis. This would provide the foundation for the identification of best practice in the workplace, for establishing a sound business and mutual gains rationale for partnership, and for developing guidelines for the adoption of a partnership approach.
- ▶ **Avoiding intensive operational involvement:** Most, but not all, interlocutors felt that the resources of the Centre would not be best employed in supporting individual companies and organisations through the provision of direct training and facilitation support on an enterprise basis. This level of operational involvement would be impossible to sustain and would require the Centre to make choices in serving some requests at the expense of others.
- ▶ **Supporting facilitators and trainers:** The Centre needs to develop a national training strategy that would identify areas of strength and weakness and gaps in current delivery and availability of trainers. The Centre might work with facilitators and with the training sector to identify priorities for further professional development.
- ▶ **Collaboration with other agencies:** The potential for collaboration exists within all six groupings interviewed, the Social Partners, the Industrial and Economic Policy Community, Agencies charged with dispute resolution, Public Sector Bodies and Expert Bodies. Specific proposals have been identified for strategic collaboration and joint ventures involving all of these groups.

Positioning and Strategic Priorities of the Centre

4.1 Positioning

Positioning the Centre concerns identifying the 'space' it should occupy in support of partnership and performance in light of the external challenges that have emerged, the issues that surfaced during the consultative process and the work being undertaken by agencies and organisations with complimentary concerns.

It is proposed to position the National Centre for Partnership and Performance in terms of the following set of eight major attributes.

► **Repositioning partnership:** The Centre should promote partnership by consistently and emphatically identifying the contribution it can make to the realisation of national strategic priorities. This implies that the Centre should promote the 'mainstreaming' of partnership, wherever possible, into the core operations of businesses and public service organisations, as well as into the design of work, reward systems and organisational processes and structures.

► **Path-finding and leadership:** The Centre should seek to adopt a path-finding role, to provide leadership and to develop a vision of the future of work, employment and industrial relations in the context of Ireland's economic circumstances and prospects. Such a vision can provide a coherent intellectual and policy framework to guide public policy across multiple agencies, frameworks and initiatives concerned with individual elements of policy towards competitiveness, work, employment and industrial relations.

► **Making partnership practical:** The Centre must be both visionary and practical. In the latter respect it should aim to influence developments on the ground in significant ways.

► **Strategic focus:** The Centre should seek mainly to 'steer' rather than to 'row'. Its primary emphasis should be strategic rather than operational. It should be concerned with path-finding and leadership, with identifying priori-

ties, with developing programmes to assist those directly involved in promoting partnership and improving performance, and with providing guidance and resources for significant partnership initiatives. It should not seek to become involved – on an intensive or ongoing basis – with facilitating partnership initiatives in firms or workplaces. Such a role would consume its resources in an inappropriate and unsustainable manner.

► **Differentiation with respect to national agreements:** The mandate and support provided for the Centre by the Social Partners will be critical to its success. However, The Centre should seek conceptually and institutionally to differentiate its mandate and focus from national-level social partnership. Only in this way can it overcome confusion with respect to its role and communicate that its mandate extends beyond the national agreement and will remain in being in the absence of any successor to the current social partnership agreement.

► **Broad appeal:** The Centre must be independent and enjoy broad appeal. It must reach beyond the core institutions and constituents of social partnership to encompass areas of business and employment across a wider terrain.

► **Evidence-based advocacy:** The Centre should seek to engage in evidence-based and experience-based advocacy of partnership and its role in improving performance and delivering mutual gains. Generalised or normative advocacy will simply meet with scepticism, cynicism or disinterest. Research should be independent and rigorous and geared towards assessing the situation with respect to partnership as it exists.

► **Supporting multiple models:** The Centre's role is not to support or privilege any particular model or models but to support multiple models where these can be shown on the basis of evidence and experience to contribute to performance and the achievement of mutual gains

4.2 Strategic Priorities

Consistent with its positioning, a series of strategic priorities should guide the work and operational programme of the Centre. These should influence the design of its organisational and support structures, provide focus for its operational programmes and be underpinned by the Centre's management systems. These strategic priorities are outlined as follows:

▶ **Identifying and disseminating best practice:**

Through the development and dissemination of case studies and learning materials, the Centre should concretise partnership and its benefits for the parties directly engaged in organisational change. The Centre should consider initiating and supporting innovative partnership-based projects with manifest potential for wider learning, dissemination and use.

- ▶ **Deliberative priorities:** The National Centre for Partnership and Performance should establish itself as an independent and authoritative voice with respect to the future of work, employment and organisational change in Ireland. It should deliberate with respect to the foundations of partnership activity in firms and workplaces, with a view to influencing public policy and practice in ways that deepen partnership and widen its appeal.

The consultative process and environmental trends point towards the following as examples of areas in which deliberation might helpfully be undertaken:

- Forms of gain-sharing and their tax implications.
- The practical effects of EU directives and policies.
- Reward systems and performance in the public services
- Models of work, employment and dispute resolution in essential services.

- ▶ **Proactive facilitation:** In circumstances deemed to be of national significance, where partnership initiatives affecting the economy as a whole arise in key sectors, companies, organisations, or in the context of major and radical change programmes, the Centre should be available to play a proactive facilitation role. In providing proactive facilitation the Centre should not replicate the role of the national agencies involved in dispute resolution and the promotion of good industrial relations. Nor should it become a step in the dispute resolution process, a fire-fighting service or a provider of crisis intervention. Nor should the Centre become involved in the provision of operational facilitation on an intensive or ongoing basis.

- ▶ **Developing a national training strategy:** The Centre should develop a national training strategy in support of partnership. This should be aimed at increasing the skills and competencies of those directly involved in introducing and managing partnership initiatives as well as of those involved in facilitating such initiatives.

- ▶ **Auditing and review:** The Centre should develop a programme aimed at the provision of an auditing and review facility for ongoing partnership initiatives. This should identify an appropriate methodology for assisting the parties to partnership to assess its contribution and effects. It should identify how such a programme can best be delivered, whether by

external consultants or other facilitators, or through an alliance with an existing agency or agencies.

- ▶ **Assisting conflict-prone organisations:** The Centre must endeavour to find ways of providing assistance with the potential for significantly improving conflict-prone organisations over the medium-term and long-term; adding value to the work of other agencies, and avoiding encroachment on the work of other agencies, or displacement of the Centre's own strategic remit.

- ▶ **Analysis and commentary:** The Centre should conduct or commission a review of international and Irish studies dealing with the contribution of partnership to performance and mutual gains across a wide range of organisational contexts. It should also examine how progress nationally can best be benchmarked over time and should develop a national partnership research strategy in dialogue with external researchers and with research agencies active in the field.

- ▶ The National Centre for Partnership and Performance should engage in regular commentary, analysis and review to promulgate the case for partnership.

4.3 Key Constituencies

If the Centre is to be positioned in the way outlined and to pursue the mission and strategic priorities described, its success will be predicated on influencing a number of key constituencies. These can be thought of as the main 'markets' for the services to be provided by the Centre. They are identified as follows:

- ▶ **Chief executives and senior managers:** It will be important to raise consciousness of practical and viable partnership models among this group and to acquaint senior managers with the contribution partnership can make to organisational transformation and to efforts to build capacity and secure competitive advantage.
- ▶ **The industrial policy community:** The contribution partnership initiatives have made and can make to efforts by multinational subsidiaries to renew their mandates and move higher up the value chain needs to be communicated to executives charged with promoting industrial development in the FDI sector. The contribution to competitiveness of partnership and of partnership-based production systems and modes of service delivery must also be communicated to executives charged with capacity building in indigenous companies.
- ▶ **Educators and trainers:** It will be important for its long-term success that partnership becomes part of the core curriculum in business schools and trade union education, and that research and analysis on partnership is widely disseminated through mainstream education.
- ▶ **Parties directly involved in organisational transformation and change:** A number of groups occupy critical front-line roles in programmes of change and transformation. Front-line groups need to be influenced by the

Centre's initiatives in order for these to inform and shape the handling of change and transformation. Among these groups are the following:

- Partnership champions
- Human resource managers
- National and branch-level trade union officials
- Middle-level and supervisory managers and lay union representatives
- Partnership facilitators

- ▶ **Public policy community and expert public agencies:** The National Centre for Partnership and Performance must work with and through a variety of public policy and expert agencies. These include government departments, agencies directly involved in advising on economic and social policy, agencies involved in dispute resolution and the promotion of good industrial relations, agencies concerned with upgrading skills, furthering equality and safeguarding health and safety in the workplace.

Single and multiple alliances will need to be developed with these agencies around specific aspects of the Centre's work and to provide channels of distribution for the Centre's programmes and initiatives.

- ▶ **Opinion formers:** The Centre needs to deliver a clear and compelling message to expert commentators and columnists regarding the nature and benefits of workplace partnership and its relevance in the context of change – in markets, in the basis of competitive advantage, in employment and in workplaces.

Mission and Business Model

The mission of the National Centre for Partnership and Performance should reflect the core contribution it can make in the 'space' in which it will be positioned and should guide the Centre's strategic priorities and programmes. Such a mission might encompass the following key elements:

The National Centre for Partnership and Performance should refocus partnership and re-establish its momentum around key national strategic priorities. These involve adapting to ongoing competitive challenges and the new challenges involved in the economic slowdown, modernising the public services, creating competitive advantage and promoting work arrangements that are flexible and responsive to changing employment and social priorities. The Centre should be path-finding, pointing the way to new models of employment, work and industrial relations better suited to Ireland's current circumstances and prospects and to its social objectives. It should adopt a strategic focus, set priorities, guide change and facilitate partnership-based initiatives. It should seek to develop a broad appeal across Irish business and employment. The Centre should support multiple models of partnership and be guided by evidence and experience in its assessment and demonstration of their contribution and effects.

5.1 Core business

Consistent with the mission and strategic priorities outlined the core business of the National Centre for Partnership and Performance can be portrayed as: articulating a vision of the workplace of the future; leading deliberative processes and driving policy development in support of partnership and performance; influencing organisational change and innovation based on partnership; providing the intellectual capital for learning and training materials; engaging in proactive facilitation in support of major programmes of change and restructuring and assisting major national and EU initiatives focused on partnership; identifying strategic training priorities, programmes and models of programme delivery; and engaging in commentary, benchmarking and review based on research evidence and experience.

5.2 Strategic collaborators

While it is not possible at this stage to be definitive, the Centre should consider entering a small number of the following strategic alliances, involving clearly focused links with strategic collaborators, in mission-critical areas of its proposed strategy.

► **Strengthening the foundations of workplace partnership:** The Social Partners, particularly IBEC and ICTU have provided leadership in the development of workplace partnership through their individual and joint initiatives. They enjoy well-established channels of distribution and influence for the dissemination and implementation of partnership-based innovation. The Centre should explore with them the development of a strategic agenda aimed at strengthening the foundations of workplace partnership.

► **Building capacity and developing competitive advantage:** The Centre might explore the possibility of developing strategic collaboration with Forfas and its major agencies, IDA and Enterprise Ireland. This could focus on harnessing workplace partnership in support of organisational change and the aims of industrial policy. Programmes and executives in Enterprise Ireland and IDA could be supported through identifying ways in which partnership could be used to build the capacity of indigenous firms to compete internationally and to support the efforts of the Irish subsidiaries of multinational companies in mandate renewal.

► **Aligning partnership and industrial relations:** The Centre might consider linking with the Labour Relations Commission, the Labour Court and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment with a view to analysing trends in industrial relations, work, employment and human resource management and deliberating with respect to the contours of a new model providing a better alignment between partnership and industrial relations and more suited to Ireland's economic and social priorities.

► **Modernising and improving public service delivery:** The Centre might collaborate with the Strategic Management Initiative with a view to promoting the mainstreaming of partnership in core programmes of public service modernisation in central government departments and in local government, health and education.

► **Development of learning and training materials:** The Centre's core business involves the provision of intellectual resources and expertise to design case studies and learning materials for use in supporting partnership initiatives and in partnership facilitation and training. The resources required and the skills involved in producing these case studies and learning materials – in some instances involving multi-media ICT – might best be sourced through collaboration with outside bodies whose mission is to promote training or to supply leading edge education and training materials.

- ▶ **Mainstreaming partnership into the curriculum:** Among the possibilities that should be considered here are the formation of an alliance with a single major business school with experience in management and trade union education, or forming an alliance with a consortium of business schools, such as the business schools in the Conference of the Rectors of Irish Universities (CRI). The focus would be on developing curricula and learning materials for use in mainstream management and trade union education in relevant institutions.

5.3 Joint ventures

No comprehensive opening list of possible joint ventures is attempted in the strategic plan. However, an outline of what might be called 'indicative' joint ventures might focus further planning in this area:

- ▶ **With LANPAG and the Health Service Partnership Forum:** Scope exists here for the development of a methodology for reviewing progress against objectives in partnership initiatives and its application to drive forward partnership initiatives in health and local government.
- ▶ **With the Advisory Service of the LRC:** Scope exists here for the joint development of an intervention model to guide the initiation of partnership in LRC client organisations.
- ▶ **With the Equality Authority:** Scope exists for developing and strengthening the partnership basis of equality audits and action plans, with a view to the joint promotion of equality proofing with respect to business and human resource policies and practices.
- ▶ **With the Social Partners:** Scope exists for reviewing and updating partnership training models and diagnostic tools developed under the ADAPT Programme.

- ▶ **With the Health and Safety Authority:** Scope exists for joint research examining whether the adoption of a partnership approach towards the work of health and safety managers and safety representatives may be associated with a better health and safety record, particularly in high-risk industries. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this may be the case.
- ▶ **With the Training and Consulting Sector:** Scope exists for a joint venture focused on the development of advanced skills training for experienced partnership trainers and facilitators, covering areas not commonly accessed at present and learning experience in other countries where voluntary partnership arrangements are well developed.

5.4 Outsourcing

Among the areas in which the Centre might consider outsourcing arrangements are the following:

- ▶ Research studies and services should be outsourced from multiple providers, leaving the Centre free to focus on identifying research priorities, commissioning projects and disseminating and applying research results.
- ▶ Projects in such areas as training, accreditation, benchmarking, review and support for innovation based on partnership may be conducted on an outsourcing basis.
- ▶ Library and information services could be outsourced through access to database providers and through an appropriate relationship with a major university library.
- ▶ Marketing and communication services could be outsourced.
- ▶ Conference organisation and management services could be outsourced.

5.5 Executive staff

The National Centre for Partnership and Performance is currently in the process of recruiting professional staff in the following key areas:

- ▶ Research, analysis and policy development.
- ▶ Training, facilitation and support.
- ▶ Project initiation, development and support, monitoring and review.

It is expected that additional professional staff will be required in the near future to fulfil the role of the Centre arising from the strategic planning process and to address the strategic priorities as outlined.

5.6 Structures

Council

The Council will fulfil a number of overarching responsibilities and it will act as the forum for discussion and deliberation on key strategic issues relating to partnership and performance. It will provide a supportive national framework to deepen partnership and build organisational capability and increased flexibility at enterprise and workplace levels. Agreement is needed on a range of issues at national level. These include new work practices, increased organisational flexibility, work-live balance issues, childcare, life-long learning, new systems of financial and other rewards and new ways of improving performance and competitiveness at enterprise, industry and national levels.

Council substructures

The positioning, mission and strategic priorities of the Centre require the creation of a knowledge-intensive organisation, capable of drawing on the expertise and experience of a range of agencies and groups. This capability will be developed through the following substructures envisaged for the Centre. These structures are outlined in the enclosed table.

- ▶ **Expert Group:** It is envisaged that the Centre will establish a High-Level Expert Group as a substructure of its Council to harness the expertise of a range of organisations and to provide a forum for collaboration and planning. These will include representatives from key agencies such as The Labour Relations Commission, the Labour Court, Forfás (IDA and Enterprise Ireland), FÁS, and other expertise with particular relevance to the work of the Centre.
- ▶ **National Forum on Partnership and Organisational Change:** In providing support for organisations in strengthening partnership and increasing organisational capability, the Centre will establish a National Forum on Partnership and Organisational Change. This forum will include representation from the key organisations in the private and public sectors, in unionised and non-union firms, with experience of promoting organisational change through partnership. The forum will provide an opportunity for representatives from the different sectors to share ideas, to consider different approaches, to address barriers to progress and to identify the factors which will lead to success.
- ▶ **Research Network:** The Council will also create a Research Network drawn from universities and other organisations to advise on and participate in the Centre's research activities, and to determine priorities. The network will assist the executive and will work with the National Co-ordinator for research and policy development in commissioning and conducting research and collaborating with the Social Partners and relevant agencies in various research initiatives. It will also be the forum for analysing, and deliberating on relevant findings from new and existing studies at national and international levels.

Council

17 members



Expert Group

Composition

IBEC
ICTU
LRC
LRC Advisory Service
Labour Court
Forfas
IDA
Enterprise Ireland
Fás
Equality Authority
Health and Safety Authority
IPC
ETS
CIPD

National Forum on Partnership and Organisational Change

Composition

Civil Service/
Departments
Health sector
Education Sector
Local Government
Public Enterprise
Union
Non-union
Multi-national
Indigenous
Small, large enterprises
Services
Manufacturing
Professional

Research Network

Composition

Universities
Research agencies
Institutes
IBEC
ICTU

Next Steps

The following are the steps that might be taken following the issuing of this document to the Council of the Centre.

1. The Council's reflections on the document and their feedback and recommendations are important in shaping the strategy to be formally adopted by the NCPP. Early meetings of the Council will be focused on discussing the document and agreeing the content of the strategic plan.
2. When the Council has issued its recommendations on the strategy, it is envisaged that the next phase of its work will be to consider an operational plan and work programme in support of the strategy.
3. The Executive will also present proposals concerning the management systems to be adopted to support the implementation of the plan. These will also identify performance indicators, which can be used to assess progress under the strategic plan.
4. The substructures outlined will also be convened to support the work of the Council and Executive.
5. The Centre will seek to recruit more professional staff in the light of the strategic priorities identified and the roles outlined. The recruitment and deployment of new staff will reflect the core business of the NCPP and the competencies required to drive the core business.
6. It is expected that the Centre's Strategic Plan will be formally launched in the Spring of 2002, and the Centre will then proceed with the work programme developed to support the strategic priorities contained in the plan.

Timeline for Strategic Planning Process

May / June '01

- Guidelines on role and agenda of the Centre as set out in *Programme for Prosperity & Fairness and Partnership at work in Ireland*

July / August / September '01

- Consultation with social partner organisations and expert bodies
- Preliminary drafts of sections of Strategic Planning Discussion Document

October '01

- Consultative process completed
- Discussion document on Strategy drafted
- Document presented to Council

November / December '01

- Council feedback and recommendations concerning Strategic Plan Discussion Document
- Documents on work programme, business plan and management systems to be prepared for Council
- Strategic plan to be finalised

February – March '02

- Expected launch of National Centre for Partnership and Performance Strategic Plan

