



Economy, Environment, Culture and Housing Executive Board

Terms of Reference

Version 2.0

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1 Background and Introduction

During the first half of 2008, the structure of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in Wigan has been extensively discussed. It was recognised that the LSP structure required change to enable effective alignment with the aspirations of Wigan's new Local Area Agreement (LAA) and to meet the requirements of the 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment. Figure 1 diagrammatically illustrates the agreed new LSP Structure.

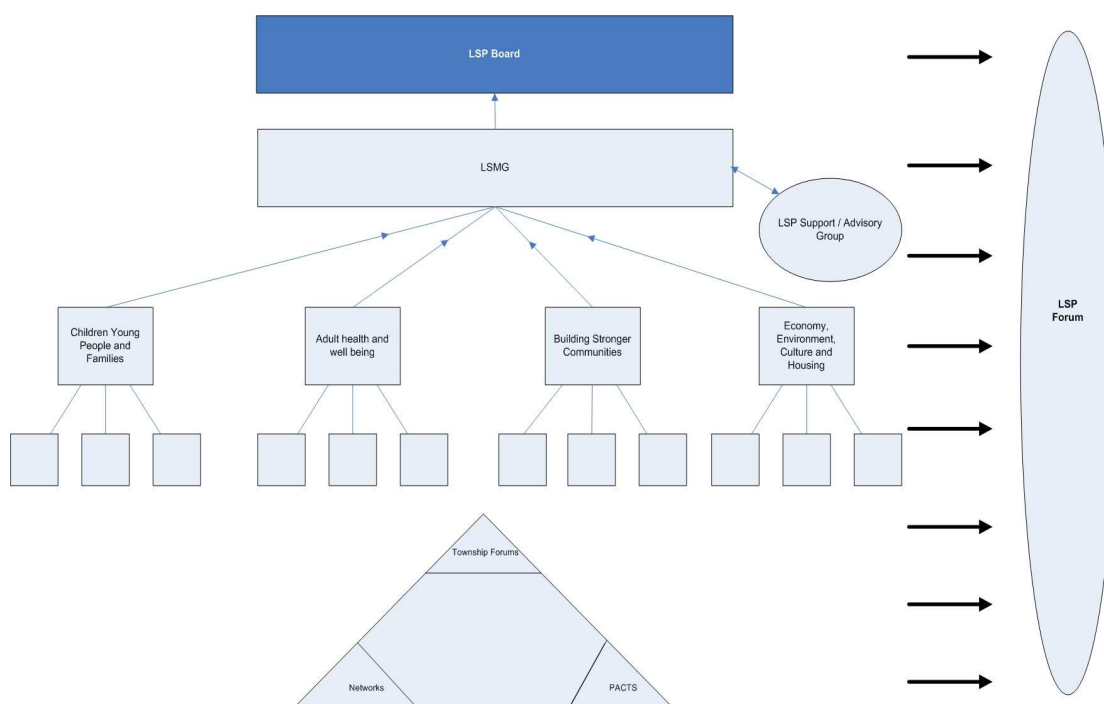


Figure 1 – New Local Strategic Partnership Architecture

One of the principle changes contained within the new structure is the rationalisation of the current 7 thematic partnerships into 4 delivery partnerships that align with the LAA Blocks. This involves the merging of the Wigan Economic Partnership, Environment and Development Partnership, Culture Partnership and Housing Partnership into one delivery partnership.

Proposals for the structure to facilitate this merger are currently being considered and would entail existing partnership structures to initially remain intact under an Executive Board as illustrated in Figure 2. Within the new LSP architecture the Executive Board will have 4 partnership groups.

LSP Architecture

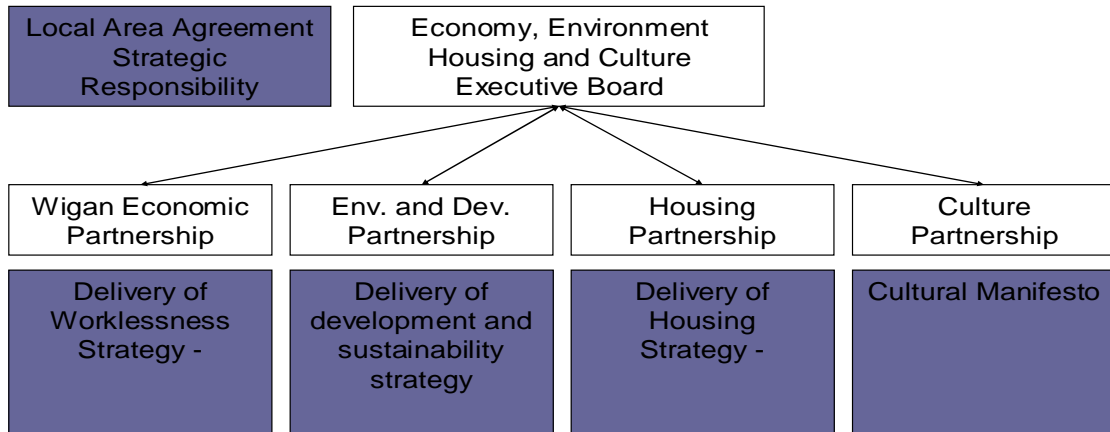


Figure 2 – Structure for Economy, Environment, Culture and Housing Partnership

The purpose of this document is to define clear guidelines about the way in which the Executive Board will work and operate. It is intended to be used a reference for Board Members and in particular sets out the principles of how they should conduct the business of the Board.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

The key roles and responsibilities of the Economy, Environment, Culture and Housing Partnership would include:

- To accept responsibility for the strategic direction of the Sustainable Communities agenda and the local area agreement targets, relative to the four partnerships
- To advise to the Local Strategic Management Board (LSMG) and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Board on strategy and decision making on issues relating to the Local Area Agreement (LAA), Sustainable Communities Strategy and Local Development Framework (LDF).
- To provide clear leadership and direction to the partnerships and to set the priorities and the work framework for these groups
- As appropriate, commission interventions and activity in support of the, priorities, local targets, local priorities, local area agreements and multi area agreements targets.
- To monitor, report, evaluate and review progress being made towards the LAA targets and to provide feedback to the LSP/LSMG on a regular agreed basis.
- To effectively communicate and promote the activities and achievements of the partnership in achieving the LAA Targets.
- To respond and adapt to new and emerging Government policy that may impact upon Delivery Board issues locally.
- To influence the appropriate bodies on the commissioning of services and initiatives as requested by the LSP
- To agree the framework for the communication and promotion strategy on the achievements, successes and lessons learnt both positive and negative.
- To take responsibility of the cross partnership working and representation across the LSP structure
- To annually review with all partnerships collectively the effectiveness of the partnership

The above definitions of roles and responsibilities are currently proposals and subject to consultation. Specific roles and responsibilities within the partnership will also require specific definition and consultation.

3 Board Structure

The structure of the Board will have 9 members, nominations for 8 of these places to come from the partnership structure that will sit under the executive Board. The ninth member to be an independent representative from the accountable body, a member of the Council's cabinet

Each of the four partnerships that sit under the executive Board (Environment, Economic, Culture and Housing) to nominate 2 representatives with a reserve nomination to sit on the Executive Board.

One of the representative to be the chair of each of the partnership and the second and the reserve nomination to be determined by the partnership, the final decision on representation must rest with the partnership.

4 Executive Board Terms of Reference

4.1 Terms of Reference

4.2 Board values and beliefs

The Board will adhere to a common set of values:

- Equal rights and equal responsibilities.
- Commitments to equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or religion.
- All Board Members are accountable for their actions. All actions must work to core principles of fairness, integrity, objectivity, openness, honesty and leadership.
- Effective communication and collaboration between all levels of the voluntary, public and private sectors. This will be achieved through more effective sharing of information and through learning from action.
- Recognition of the added value that all partnerships/fora will achieve by working together.
- Ensure that all partnerships/fora and the wider community are fully engaged in, and feel ownership of appropriate strategies and action plans.
- Include basic principles such as equity and openness.
- The Board is a non-political body.
- Wherever possible, decisions are to be reached on the basis of consensus. Minority views will be sympathetically considered but following full discussion should not prevail over the majority.

5.0 Board Membership

5.1 Principles of Membership

The number of members within Board will balance the need to be inclusive and open for a wide number of partners, with the need to remain small enough to provide effective leadership and decision making. It is recognised that the membership of the Board will include people from different organisations and backgrounds. It is also recognised that members will bring to the Board their own individual expertise and agendas from their partnerships/fora. However, it is expected that the Board will work collectively towards the common goal of supporting the achievement of the LAA Targets.

5.2 Qualities of Membership:

- Members should have a common commitment to improving the Borough for all.
- Members should have a commitment to the purpose of the Board.
- Appointments to the Board need to balance the individuals' ability to contribute with the requirement that key partnerships/fora and sectors need to be represented and involved.
- Individual members should ideally be senior representatives from key partner organisations or sectors.
- Members should have the authority to represent their organisation or sector.

5.3 Responsibilities of membership:

- Where appropriate, members should ideally represent their partnership/forum, and not their specific organisation.
- Members should collectively act in the interests of the wider Borough Community.
- To relay and explain the decisions of the Board within their partnership/fora.

5.4 Substitute members

If a Board Member is unable to attend a meeting then the nominated representative from the relevant partnership may attend. The deputies need to be determined and agreed by the partnership at the nomination stage of the membership proposals.

6.0 Board meetings

The Board meetings are the principle mechanism for conducting the business of the Partnership. Some business may be undertaken using e-mail under written procedures.

6.1 Meeting Schedule

There will be no set meeting schedule. Meetings will be organised to reflect the level of work required. However, it is anticipated that the Board will meet at least quarterly and will align to the LSP meeting schedule.

6.2 Meeting Agenda and Notes

The meeting agenda and papers will normally be circulated at least a week in advance. In preference to formal minutes, notes and action points will be taken at the meeting, and normally circulated within two weeks. Papers need to be engagement and action focussed.

6.3 Confidential Information Disclosure

The Board has a responsibility to effectively communicate both internally and externally. By default, all Board discussions/decisions/information are deemed suitable for public disclosure and meeting notes and information relating to the business of the Board will be publically available. However, it is recognised that in certain circumstances (e.g. commercial sensitivity), Board business may be considered confidential. It is important that any such requests for confidentiality are clearly communicated within the Board to ensure that publicly available notes or information reflect such requests.

7.0 Board Code of Conduct

The Board will maintain and promote the highest standards of conduct and integrity. Each member of the Board agrees to abide by the principles contained within the following Code of Conduct:

7.1 Declaration of prejudicial interests

Members must declare to the Chairperson any prejudicial interest in a matter under consideration by the Board. Prejudicial interests include matters which a member of the public may consider likely to influence that Member's judgement. The Chairperson may use their judgement, or seek the consensus of the meeting, to decide the most appropriate action, including:

- Requesting the Member to withdraw from the meeting
- Allowing the Member to remain in the meeting as an observer, authorised to speak on request.
- Allowing the Member to fully participate in the meeting, but with the prejudicial interest formally noted.

7.2 Declaration of personal interests

Members must declare to the Chairperson, any personal interest in a matter under consideration by the Board. Personal interests include Board matters that may affect:

- The Member personally
- Relatives of the Member
- An organisation employing the Member or their relatives
- An organisation in which the Member or their relatives have a financial interest.

Involvement in the affairs of another public sector organisation or voluntary association by a member of the Board is not automatically construed as an interest.

The Chairperson may use his judgement, or seek the consensus of the meeting, to decide the most appropriate action, including:

- Request the Member to withdraw from the meeting

- Allow the Member to remain in the meeting as an observer, authorised to speak on request.
- Allow the Member to fully participate in the meeting, but with the personal interest formally noted.

7.3 Interests in Other Organisations

Members are required to provide information about any involvement in a public organisation which may be in conflict with the interests of the Board. A public register of such outside interests will be maintained by the Councils Economic Regeneration Office (ERO) under the supervision of the Chairperson.

Members should notify the Chairperson of membership of any organisation that is not open to the public, and which has secrecy about its rules of membership or conduct. Such membership need not be declared on the register.

7.4 Equality

All members, and any person with whom the partnership has a working relationship, have the right to be treated with fairness, equity and without discrimination or harassment. This right is irrespective of their age, gender, race, religion, colour, marital status, sexuality, or any disability.

Board members must promote equality by:

- Not discriminating unlawfully against any person
- Treating others with respect
- Not doing anything which may compromise the impartiality of those who work for or on behalf of the Board.

7.5 Respect for Confidentiality

The Board may from time to time receive information that is commercial sensitive from its members and make decisions on confidential matters. Members must not disclose such confidential information to any parties outside the Partnership, unless authorised consent has been given by the originator of the information.

Members should not prevent an individual from gaining access to information to which that person has a legal entitlement. (Advice on this matter can be provided upon request).

7.6 Disrepute

Members must not conduct themselves in any way that might be reasonably regarded as likely to bring the Board into disrepute. Members must not use their position on the Board to secure personal advantage for themselves or any other individual. Members should take notice of advice given by relevant officers of the Council, Police and other similar bodies together with other guidance from the Local Authority or other statutory bodies.

7.7 Gifts, Favours and Hospitality

When representing the Board, members should not accept personal gifts, favours or hospitality from any organisation seeking a commercial relationship or advantage with the Board, partner organisation or any other organisation represented within the LSP. This will need to follow the processes and procedures of the accountable body Wigan Council

7.8 Contravention of the Code of Conduct

Board members have a duty to report any contravention of this Code of Conduct directly to the Chairperson.

7.9 Complaints and appeals procedure

Board members will be required to follow the processes and procedures of the accountable body Wigan Council.

8.0 Principles of Community Cohesion

8.1 Valuing People in Neighbourhoods

Wigan Borough is made up of many different communities. Some are small neighbourhoods with a strong history. Some are newer and include people of different race, religion and background. All of them are important. The Partnership recognises that the strength and vitality of the Borough depends on local people. We are therefore committed to making the most of what we have locally, encouraging people to feel part of where they live and to contribute to the everyday life and well being of the area. Our principles are:

- We recognise and value what people can contribute because of their different backgrounds and circumstances.
- We support a common vision and want to see all the different communities in the Borough working towards common goals.
- We want to make sure that strong and positive relationships are developed between people of different backgrounds, in the workplace, in our schools and in our neighbourhoods.
- We want to develop a common attitude of zero tolerance of racism and discrimination, making sure that everyone has similar life opportunities.
- We believe that we need to focus our work towards young people to build awareness and tolerance throughout our communities.

9.0 Declaration of Interests form

The Executive Board is part of the Local Strategic Partnership for the Borough of Wigan. It is important that any outside activity of individual members does not conflict with the interests of this Partnership. The Board has adopted a code of conduct to help provide guidance on avoiding conflicts of interest. Board members should complete this form to record their potential conflicts of interest. In case of doubt members should seek advice from the Chairperson or the Councils Economic Regeneration Office. This information will be subject to public disclosure.

I, the undersigned wish to declare that I have the following potential conflict of interest(s) in respect of a business, company, organisation, contract or other matters outside the Board and LSP:

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Organisation / Role _____

Date: _____

Counter Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Organisation / Role; _____

Date: _____