

CONSTITUTION & TERMS OF REFERENCE

CONSTITUTION

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- ### **1. AIMS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

1.1 The Middlesbrough Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership or LSP for Middlesbrough) aims to bring together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to improve the quality of life for all who live in, work in and visit Middlesbrough.

1.2 Partnership members have agreed the Middlesbrough Community Strategy, which contains a shared strategic vision to shape Middlesbrough's future. Working together, harnessing collective resources, and building from a diverse base of representation, knowledge and expertise the Partnership recognises that more can be achieved by working in partnership and that:

- a) We can improve the quality of life for everybody in Middlesbrough.
- b) We can reduce local inequalities and create a more inclusive borough.
- c) Services can work better and more efficiently and be delivered in ways that better meet local demand.

1.3 Middlesbrough Partnership will promote an exchange of ideas, knowledge and information between communities, partners and sectors to develop learning and understanding of needs within Middlesbrough. This will facilitate the identification of gaps in services that the Partnership can then seek to fill through its constituent partners.

1.4 The Partnership will work to promote the interests of Middlesbrough beyond the borough's boundaries with external organisations, regional bodies and Central Government.

1.5 The Partnership will seek to use existing partnerships where they support the Community Strategy and will rationalise partnerships, plans and strategies to reduce the burden on all our partners. Middlesbrough Partnership will ensure appropriate links between itself and other local partnerships and will encourage them to work towards effective community engagement (as set out in the Partnership Engagement Framework).

1.6 The Partnership will make use of appropriate performance management tools and models to ensure year-on-year improvement. It will also work to improve the co-ordination of planning cycles and performance management systems of member organisations and partnerships.

1.7 The Partnership will work to deliver on common priorities, targets, agreed actions and milestones leading to demonstrable improvements against measurable baselines.

1.8 Whilst Middlesbrough Partnership has no statutory powers over its constituent partners or stakeholders, it will seek to exert influence over them to ensure the jointly agreed vision, priorities and actions in the Community Strategy are delivered and the quality of life and well-being of Middlesbrough's citizens is enhanced.

1.9 The Partnership will work with Middlesbrough Community Network to ensure that the Network's membership represents the diverse communities within Middlesbrough.

1.10 Most importantly, the work of Middlesbrough Partnership will be driven by a shared determination to achieve the objectives in the Community Strategy. We should not seek to produce in this document a set of rules to govern how everything must operate: this would be stifling of innovation and participation. Moreover, this document is intended to set out the *spirit* of partnership working intended to achieve common goals and it is within this spirit that the Partnership and its partners should operate.

2 CORE BUSINESS

2.1 Middlesbrough Partnership will consider a strategic and co-ordinated approach to issues that influence the quality of life of those who live in, work in and visit Middlesbrough. In addition to the role of promoting learning and understanding, the Partnership will have a key role in each of the following strategic issues:

The Community Strategy

2.2 The Partnership will be responsible for co-ordinating the implementation, monitoring and review of the Community Strategy, a partnership plan to improve the economic, social and environmental well being of Middlesbrough. This will be the main driver for influencing the use of mainstream resources in the town behind Community Strategy themes.

Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy

2.3 The Partnership will agree and oversee delivery of a local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy to narrow the gap between the most deprived neighbourhoods and other parts of the Borough. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy identifies priority neighbourhoods that are deprived or in danger of falling into decline and sets out a strategic framework for action. In the spirit of rationalisation the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy has been developed as part of the Community Strategy. It will therefore be monitored and evaluated as part of the process for monitoring and evaluating the Community Strategy.

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

2.4 Middlesbrough is a Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) area. The Partnership will agree priorities for the use of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and will oversee its expenditure, in accordance with the agreed Neighbourhood Renewal Fund process. Middlesbrough Council will act as Accountable Body for NRF (as determined by Government).

Public Service Agreements

2.5 The Partnership will be expected to be involved in shaping, supporting and contributing to Public Service Agreements, in partnership with Middlesbrough Council. (PSAs are locally based agreements to meet some specially chosen targets in return for reward grant and additional freedoms from the Government.)

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

3.1 The overarching role of Middlesbrough Partnership is to agree and oversee the delivery of Middlesbrough's Community Strategy and the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. The Partnership will be strategic and will not work at an operational level. The Partnership's role is therefore to:

- a) Operate at a strategic level and comprise individuals who can represent, influence or advise on their sector/organisation.
- b) Oversee the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Community Strategy (including Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Fund).
- c) Co-ordinate the implementation of Community Strategy actions and monitor the impact on Community Strategy indicators.
- d) Shape, support and contribute to the delivery of Public Service Agreements for Middlesbrough.
- e) Take appropriate steps towards rationalising partnerships and area-based initiatives to support delivery of the Community Strategy.
- f) Share information and best practice and develop better understanding of roles and needs in the town.
- g) Undertake an ambassadorial role for the borough and promote the image of Middlesbrough outside its boundaries.

4. ROLES AND AUTHORITY OF THE PARTNERSHIP

4.1 The Chair will:

- a) Chair the Board and Executive. The Vice-Chair will substitute for the Chair when he/she is unavailable.
- b) Ensure all partners have a fair and equal opportunity to participate in Partnership debate and decision-making.
- c) Be able to make emergency decisions within the spirit and parameters of the Community Strategy by either calling a special meeting of the Executive, or with the written agreement of a majority of Executive members.
- d) Seek to progress Partnership business by consensus, but will, when necessary, determine arrangements for voting in Partnership meetings by a simple majority. In these cases, the Chair will have a second or casting vote.
- e) Subject to the voluntary nature of an LSP as set out in legislation and guidance, call other partners, including Action Group chairs, to account on behalf of the citizens of Middlesbrough.

4.2 The Board will:

- a) Elect its Chair and Vice-Chair, from the Board members, on an annual basis (the Vice-Chair may not be from the same organisation as the Chair).
- b) Agree its own membership, in accordance with Government guidance. Any proposals to alter membership must be proposed and seconded by two separate Board members and agreed by a two-thirds majority vote of those present at a Board meeting.
- c) Agree the membership of, and delegate work to, the Executive within the parameters of 5.1.
- d) Elect Action or Sub Group Chairs on an annual basis.
- e) Play a lead role in developing the issues outlined in the sections 'Core Business' and 'Terms of Reference', delegating authority to other parts of the Partnership as it sees fit.
- f) Develop a 'learning' role: an exchange of information on programmes and initiatives to promote better joint working and to identify and fill gaps in service delivery.
- g) Facilitate an exchange of information about each other's organisations, communities and sectors, their objectives and priorities, to help highlight where more joint working might be effective in improving quality of life.
- h) Receive reports and promote brainstorming, idea development and debate on key issues facing the town where opportunities for cross-partner working may derive benefits.
- i) Agree the Community Strategy, including the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, determine priorities for Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, and influence the allocation of other resources accordingly.
- j) Meetings will be open to both the public and media but observers must not take part in the meeting, unless invited by the Chair.
- k) Board agendas and papers will normally be circulated ten days in advance of a meeting and placed on the internet at the earliest available opportunity. Once agreed by the Chair, minutes will be circulated to Board members and placed on the Partnership's web site, normally within 10 days.

4.3 The Executive will:

- a) Monitor the work of the Action Groups, assessing their performance and the Partnership's performance as a whole, against agreed objectives.
- b) Consider and agree proposals prepared by the Action Groups for the programme of NRF spend in Middlesbrough, in accordance with priorities and allocations set out by the Board.
- c) Commission and decommission work to ensure successful implementation of the Community Strategy.
- d) Meet in private (other Board members may observe).

e) Executive agendas and papers will normally be circulated one week in advance of a meeting and placed on the internet at the earliest available opportunity. Once agreed by the Chair, minutes will be circulated to all Board members and placed on the Partnership's web site, normally within 10 days.

4.4 The Action Groups

Action Groups will undertake the following functions within the parameters and guidelines set out in the Action Group Terms of Reference:

a) Determine and maintain membership, ensuring that partners and stakeholders from all sectors have opportunities to participate in Action Group activity, as may be determined by the Board (see also 5.3).

b) Review and monitor the relevant Community Strategy theme, including priority setting, implementation of actions and monitoring of targets within that theme.

c) Report performance and achievements to the Executive and Board as required.

d) Agree priorities and make recommendations for the use of Neighbourhood Renewal (and other similar) funds and monitor projects within the remit of the theme in accordance with the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Allocation Process.

e) Address cross-cutting issues, co-ordinate and reduce duplication of activity.

f) Organise administrative arrangements, including the production of minutes to be placed on the Partnership's web site.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARTNERSHIP

All members of Middlesbrough Partnership will be expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Partnership's Code of Conduct and Equal Opportunities Policy.

5.1 Board

The core membership of the Board will be made as follows (a –g):

a) The Chair of the Partnership

b) Middlesbrough Council (Two councillors and the Chief Executive)

c) One representative from each of the following organisations

- Middlesbrough Primary Care Trust
- Middlesbrough Police
- National Probation Service Teesside
- Job Centre Plus
- Cleveland Fire Service
- University of Teesside
- South Tees Acute NHS Trust
- Tees & North East Yorkshire NHS Trust

- Tees Valley Learning Skills Council
- Connexions Tees Valley
- Middlesbrough College
- Middlesbrough Town Centre Company
- West Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Trust
- **Erimus Housing**

d) Private Sector (five places)
To be allocated to private sector representatives

e) Advisory (one place)
Government Office for the North East

f) Community Council Clusters (four places)
One place per Cluster Group (ie: North, South, East and West Middlesbrough)

g) Community Network (12 places)
To be allocated by Middlesbrough Community Network

In addition:

h)-Action Group Chairs (up to 7 places)
All Chairs of Theme/Action Groups should be Board members. They do not form part of the core membership, but are permitted to vote.

The quorum at Board meetings should be one-third of total membership.

When the Chair of the Board has been elected, his or her organisation or sector may backfill the place on the Board if they wish to do so.

The membership shall be changed only in accordance with the role and authority of the Board as set out above. Board members are permitted to send a named substitute to Board meetings who will be permitted to vote on his or her behalf.

5.2 Executive

The Executive will number up to 14 places and will be made up as follows to ensure a balance between the public/ private sector and the Community Network / Cluster Groups.

- Community Network – 6 places
- Cluster Groups - 2 places
- Private sector – 1 place
- Others – 6 places

Included on the Executive within the places above will be the Chair of Middlesbrough Partnership and the Chief Executive of Middlesbrough Council.

The quorum for meetings of the Executive will be 5 members with at least one representative from the Community Network and one from the public sector.

5.3 Action Groups

The Chairs of the Action Groups have the responsibility to determine the Groups'

membership, in agreement with existing members, within the parameters of the Action Group Terms of Reference. Due regard should be given to:

- a) Ensuring all sectors have opportunity to participate
- b) Strong community and voluntary sector representation
- c) Involvement of appropriate levels of management from partner agencies to ensure the role of the Action Groups is fulfilled.

There should be a core membership (as per the Action Group Terms of Reference) who have voting entitlement but other 'experts' may be co-opted or invited to attend as appropriate.

5.4 Termination of Membership

(a) If a member of the Board, Executive or Action Group fails to attend a meeting of the Board, Executive or Action Group for more than six months consecutively, they shall automatically cease to be a member unless the failure to attend was due to some reason approved by the Chair before the expiry of the six month period.

(b) If the Chair of the Board (or Action Group as applicable) considers that there is evidence that a member may have acted in such a way that contravenes the Partnership **Constitution** or any Policies of the Partnership (including but not limited to the Code of Conduct and Equal Opportunities Policy) then the Chair shall arrange for the Disciplinary Procedure to be implemented.

(c) Notwithstanding the above, the organisation nominating or appointing a member shall have the right, at any time, to terminate such appointment either for conduct or other legitimate and justifiable reason.

6. ALTERATIONS TO **CONSTITUTION & TERMS OF REFERENCE**

6.1 Any proposals to alter the **constitution** or terms of reference must be agreed by the Board with a two-thirds majority vote.

7. DISSOLUTION

7.1 Dissolution will occur if direction and / or guidance to this effect are given by the Secretary of State.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND POLICIES

8.1 The Partnership's **Constitution** and Terms of Reference is in accordance with Government guidance and supported by the following documents and policies:

- Action Group Terms of Reference
- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Partnership Engagement Framework

8.2 These documents can be found in the Partnership Handbook, on the Partnership's web site or obtained from the Partnership Team.

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