



**Vision 21  
Malvern Hills Partnership**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE  
AND  
PROTOCOLS**

**January 2004**

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### **Purpose of Terms of Reference and Protocols**

As the Local Strategic Partnership for the Malvern Hills District – the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership draws together common aims and aspirations. Members speak and act jointly on vital issues for the district, establish and follow best practice and share information. To do this effectively it is important to be structured.

The Partnership has therefore agreed to the following Terms of Reference and Protocols to ensure that this happens as effectively and efficiently as possible.

The content of the Terms of Reference and Protocols will be reviewed annually to ensure they remain relevant to the working of the Partnership.

# **Summary of Purpose, Key Tasks and Shared Values of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership**

## **1. Name**

- 1.1 The name of the Local Strategic Partnership for the Malvern Hills District is the **Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership**.

## **2. Purpose**

- 2.1 To improve the overall quality of life within the Malvern Hills District by harnessing the energy, expertise, assets and resources of both partner organizations and local communities.
- 2.2 To improve the quality and responsiveness of local public services by bringing together both the providers and users of services.
- 2.3 To provide a forum for debate and decision making around those key issues and most challenging problems that really matter to local people, such as crime, health, housing, transport, jobs and education – the problems that matter to local people.
- 2.4 To provide an ‘umbrella’ under which other local groups and partnerships can work together, flourish and network.

## **3. Key Tasks**

**To develop the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership into a dynamic and influential strategic partnership so that we can:-**

- 3.1 Support Malvern Hills people in developing a long term shared vision for the future of the District.
- 3.2 Help translate this vision into a community strategy that identifies a common agenda, key themes, clear priorities and achievable outcomes and has wide spread community ownership.
- 3.3 Agree action plans and a common performance management system within the context of the community strategy that identifies and helps deliver the most important things that need to be done locally.
- 3.4 Present a united voice on the strategic and cross cutting issues for the Malvern Hills District both within the region and nationally in order to secure the well being of the area.

- 3.5 Secure better co-ordination and integration of the different plans, partnerships and initiatives so they help to deliver the local services needed.
- 3.6 To promote the social, economic, health and environmental well being of the Malvern Hills District.
- 3.7 Secure and manage strategic external funding.

## **4. Shared Values**

- 5.1 We share a set of values that will affect the way we develop and implement the community strategy and are applicable to all partners in their work for the Malvern Hills Partnership.

### **We believe:**

- ↻ In listening to and involving local people and local communities.
- ↻ In responding to the changing needs of local communities.
- ↻ That procedures, decisions and actions must be properly communicated.
- ↻ In reducing inequalities in those geographic communities, groups and individuals where needs are greatest.
- ↻ In treating people with equality and valuing diversity.
- ↻ In encouraging new ideas and ways of working.
- ↻ In working together with honesty, integrity, openness and purpose.
- ↻ In making the best use of skills and resources.
- ↻ In striving for 'the best' in all that we do.
- ↻ In learning from others; and
- ↻ In making sure that decisions will benefit both present and future generations.

## **5. Status**

- 5.1 The Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership is a non-statutory, non-executive Partnership.
- 5.2 It has no independent legal status and is based on goodwill and a shared common purpose.
- 5.3 Members of the Partnership are equal partners although it is recognized that their contributions may differ.

## **6. Geographical Area**

- 6.1 The Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership covers the whole area within the administrative boundary of the Malvern Hills District.

## **7. Structure**

7.1 The outline structure of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills partnership is given below but for diagram please see Appendix 1.

- ↳ Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership Forum.
- ↳ Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership Strategic Board.
- ↳ Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership Themed Working Groups.

## **8. Members of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership**

8.1 Membership at all levels of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership should reflect key sectors and interests within the Malvern Hills District. There should be an appropriate balance between the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.

## **9. Partnership Forum**

### **9.1 Purpose**

- a) To be the overall membership body of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership.
- b) To bring together organizations, groups, communities and individuals who are committed to improving the social, economic, health, safety and environmental well being of the Malvern Hills District.
- c) To be an inclusive forum that stimulates an exchange of views about issues affecting the District and identifies ways they may be addressed
- d) To promote the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership
- e) To share and celebrate best practice
- f) To provide a point of accountability for the Partnership Strategic Board although the Forum does not have any formal decision making powers

### **9.2 Methods**

Belonging to the Partnership Forum will provide members with the opportunity to:

- a) Attend the annual Conference where progress on delivering the Malvern Hills Community Strategy will be reported and changing priorities and expectations will be debated and reviewed.
- b) Participate in consultation exercises to ensure that community needs and priorities are continually fed into the appropriate theme working group's work programme.
- c) Receive regular updates on partnership activity.
- d) Be involved in community projects where appropriate.

### 9.3 Meetings

- a) The Partnership Forum will formally meet once a year at the annual Conference.
- b) Members of the Partnership Forum will be invited to participate in other activities, which may involve the convening of a meeting.

### 9.4 Membership

- a) Membership of the Partnership Forum is open to all organizations, groups, communities and individuals who are committed to working for the well being of the District.
- b) To become a member all applicants must sign up to the Partnership's shared values set out above.

### 9.5 Accountability

- a) To the people of the Malvern Hills District through their own groups, communities and organizations.

## 10. Partnership Strategic Board

### 10.1 Purpose

- a) To champion the vision, policies and priorities of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership.
- b) To lead the community strategy process for the District including monitoring of performance.
- c) To oversee the implementation of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Community Strategy.
- d) To connect the work of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership with the Worcestershire Partnership where appropriate.
- e) To connect the work of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership with Parish Plans where appropriate.
- f) To promote the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership.
- g) To act as a 'voice' for Malvern Hills locally, regionally and nationally.
- h) To promote community well being and sustainability within Malvern Hills.
- i) To maximize the opportunities for external funding which meets the needs of Malvern Hills District.
- j) To update the Community Strategy regularly.

### 10.2 Methods

- a) To identify and respond to strategic issues that need to be delivered or co-ordinated at a District level, relating to the social, economic, health and environmental well being of the District.
- b) To contribute to shaping and focusing services in response to community aspirations and needs.

- c) To influence their respective organizations/agencies at a strategic level to effect improvements in the planning, procurement and delivery of services and initiatives.
- d) To align plans/strategies/service delivery and resources in line with the community strategy.
- e) To establish performance management arrangements to oversee the implementation of the community strategy.
- f) To make links, where appropriate, with priorities in the Worcestershire Partnership Community Strategy.
- g) To promote joint working/identify the gaps between partner agencies and the reshaping of individual agency resources to the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership's agreed priorities and outcomes.
- h) To co-ordinate the structure and 'split' of bids for funding.
- i) To determine a best fit of the local agenda against national and regional policy requirements.
- j) To receive high level performance reports from the theme working group chairpersons at each meeting that will identify key issues including any problems and suggested actions to resolve them.
- k) To actively scrutinize the work of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership and all its component parts, promoting change and challenging convention where necessary.
- l) To appoint a 'champion' for each theme working group and to represent this group's work at a Strategic Board level.
- m) To represent the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership at local, regional and national level.
- n) To hold a Partnership Conference each year to which all Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership members are invited.
- o) The Communication and Consultation Group will ensure regular, effective communication with the Partnership Forum.

### **10.3 Meetings**

- a) The Board will meet at least six times a year.
- b) An annual timetable of meetings will be arranged.
- c) Once a year it will elect an independent (non local authority) Chairperson and two Vice Chairpersons who will have a term of up to three years and stand for re-election each year. The chairperson or his/her nominated Vice Chairperson will also chair the Board and meetings of the Partnership Forum.

### **10.4 Membership**

- a) Membership of the Strategic Board will be reviewed annually.
- b) Members of the Strategic Board should be the Chair, Leader, Chief Executive, or appropriate senior representative of their organisation or sector who has the standing and authority to commit their organisation to a course of action or a decision. It would therefore be appropriate for the Strategic Board to invite a member to relinquish their place on the Strategic Board when they no longer hold that office or fulfil the criteria.

- c) Change of Membership should be notified to the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership Co-ordinator.
- d) Membership of the Board will include a broad mix of the community.
- e) Membership of the Board will be approved by the Partnership Forum.

## **Observers**

- ↳ Government Office of the West Midlands.

## **10.5 Accountability**

- a) Members of the Strategic Board are accountable to the wider community of Malvern Hills through the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership Forum.
- b) Members of the Strategic Board are also accountable to their own organizations and networks.
- c) The Strategic Board is a non-executive body, which relies on trying to achieve consensus amongst the organizations and sectors represented. Therefore members of the Group will be asked if they can support particular proposals but it is not the case that an overall majority is regarded as binding on all organizations.
- d) Board members must satisfy themselves that they have a mandate for their position from their organisation either because the power is delegated to them or the body with executive powers in their organisation has considered and made a decision on the matter.

## **11. Theme Groups**

It is accepted that each theme working group will develop its own way of working, however the points below should apply to all theme working groups.

### **11.1 Purpose**

- a) To lead on the development, delivery and monitoring of priorities, actions and targets of the community strategy on behalf of the Strategic Board.
- b) To comply with statutory guidance where this exists.
- c) To ensure clear connections exist between the community strategy and other local strategies.
- d) To provide a channel for representation and communication to the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership Strategic Board and Forum, local communities, appointed and elected members, local partnerships and groups and other participant organizations.
- e) To develop a means by which the Community, especially hard to reach groups can continually shape the community strategy.

## **11.2 Suggested Methods**

- a) To publish and implement action plans to deliver key priorities and targets as set out in the community strategy.
- b) To identify responsible officers to lead the implementation of the action plans.
- c) To identify and co-ordinate resources to achieve key priorities and targets.
- d) To monitor performance and spend of action plans.
- e) To promote the work of the theme group in accordance with the Partnership's branding .
- f) To provide for the open exchange of views and information from all sectors represented at its meetings and ensure local awareness and knowledge of key issues.
- g) To establish subgroups as appropriate.
- h) To continue to address cross cutting issues with other theme groups. The Chairperson will meet with the other Theme Working Group's Chairs on a regular basis to take these matters forward.

## **11.3 Meetings**

- a) An annual timetable of meetings will be arranged.
- b) A chairperson and vice-chairperson will be elected annually.

## **11.4 Membership**

- a) The Theme Group will bring together representatives from the Public, Private, Community and Voluntary sectors and beyond that can provide expertise or have an interest in the Group's area of work.
- b) There will be occasions when specialist in certain fields will be required to support the Group.
- c) The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring membership is inclusive and has the relevant skills and expertise for delivering the Group's priorities and targets.

## **11.5 Relationship to Strategic Board**

- a) To produce an annual action plan based on the priorities identified in the community strategy and or other relevant strategies and guidance to ensure its implementation and review.
- b) To ensure the action plan and specific measures relating to the themed area are monitored and reviewed.
- c) To report to the Strategic Board barriers or problems that cannot be resolved by the Group or issues that need a 'steer'.
- d) To produce an annual report for consideration by the Strategic Board.
- e) The Strategic Board will appoint a 'Champion' for each theme working group who will be responsible for representing their group's work at Board level.
- f) The Chairperson will provide a single point of communication to the Strategic Board.

## **11.6 Relationship to the Partnership Forum**

The Theme Group will encourage Partnership Forum members:

- a) To participate in consultation exercises to ensure that community needs and priorities are continually fed into the community strategy.
- b) To be involved in community projects where appropriate.
- c) To keep updated on partnership activity by receiving regular updates.
- d) To attend the annual conference to debate future priorities and issues affecting the District.

## **11.7 Accountability**

- a) The Theme Group is accountable to the Strategic Board.
- b) The Theme Group is a non-executive body which relies on trying to achieve consensus amongst the organizations and sectors represented. Therefore members of the Group will be asked if they can support particular proposals but it is not the case that an overall majority is regarded as binding on all organisations.
- c) Group members must satisfy themselves that they have a mandate for their position from their organisation either because the power is delegated to them or the body with executive powers in their organisation has considered and made a decision on the matter.

## **12. Elected/Appointed Member Involvement with Theme Working Groups**

- 12.1 To balance the need for appropriate representation and effectiveness, membership of each Theme Working Group shall include:

### **Malvern Hills District Council – Elected Members**

The Portfolio Holder with responsibility for the areas of activity associated with the Theme Working Group.

### **Public Sector (Appointed Members)**

A Board level representative from each of the Strategic Board Public Sector Partner organizations.

### **Voluntary and Community Sector (Appointed Members)**

A representative from each of the Strategic Board Voluntary and Community Sector Partner organizations.

### **Business Sector**

A representative from each of the Strategic Board Business Partners.

- 12.2 Names of representatives must be forwarded to the Partnership's Support Co-ordinator so that theme working group leaders can be advised accordingly

- 12.3 It is entirely at the discretion of Strategic Board Partner organizations as to whether they wish to use their Elected and Appointed Membership allocation on each theme working group.
- 12.4 Membership of Elected and Appointed Members will be reviewed annually.

## **GENERAL OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

### **13. SUBSTITUTIONS**

- 13.1 It is important that in order to maintain representation and continuity members of the Strategic Board and Theme Working Groups should attend meetings regularly. However a named deputy may be designated to attend in place of a member when required, although ad-hoc substitutions are not acceptable.

### **14. ATTENDANCE**

- 14.1 All members of the Strategic Board are encouraged to aim for 100% attendance at meetings. Any member of the Strategic Board who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without a reason acceptable to the Chairperson will be asked to appoint a replacement.

### **15. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**

- 15.1 Meetings will be conducted in line with normal good practice for debate. Remarks will be directed through the Chairperson with all members being given a reasonable opportunity for their views to be heard. Any remarks should relate to issues and not individuals. Partners have agreed to adopt a Code of Conduct which will support effective partnership working and is set out in Appendix B.

### **16. DECISIONS AND VOTING**

- 16.1 Decisions at meetings will normally be made by general agreement of those members present, namely consensus. Therefore members will be asked if they can support particular proposals but it is not the case that an overall majority is regarded as binding on all the organizations. If consensus is not achieved, the matter should be referred to the next most senior group for resolution. Should it become necessary at the Strategic Board to take a vote, a simple show of hands should be taken. Each partner organisation will have one vote.

### **17. URGENT DECISIONS**

- 17.1 If an urgent decision is required which cannot wait for the next scheduled meeting of the Strategic Board, a special meeting should be arranged. If this

is not practical the Chairperson in discussion with the Vice Chairperson and another member may take a decision. The decision will be reported to the next scheduled meeting.

## **18. CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

### **Definition**

18.1 A conflict of interest can arise when a member of the Partnership may gain or be perceived potentially to gain, financial, commercial or personal/organisational advantage as a result of partnership business.

### **Declaration of interests**

18.2 When a member of the Partnership has an interest in a matter arising at a meeting, (s)he should disclose this to the Chairperson, who will decide whether the member should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is being considered. The minutes should record the matter and the decision.

## **19. AGENDA**

19.1 All scheduled meetings should be conducted in accordance with an agenda. For all partnership meetings, an agenda and accompanying papers will be circulated at least five days in advance of the meeting. Any additional items may only be introduced onto the agenda by agreement of the Chairperson.

## **20. MINUTES**

20.1 Notes of meetings will be taken and decisions recorded. All matters will be recorded and made public unless the Chairperson determines that there is a personal, financial or contractual reason why the issue should remain private. Draft minutes will be circulated within five days of the next scheduled meeting. Agreed minutes will then be placed on the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership website.

## **21. PRESS/MEDIA ARRANGEMENTS**

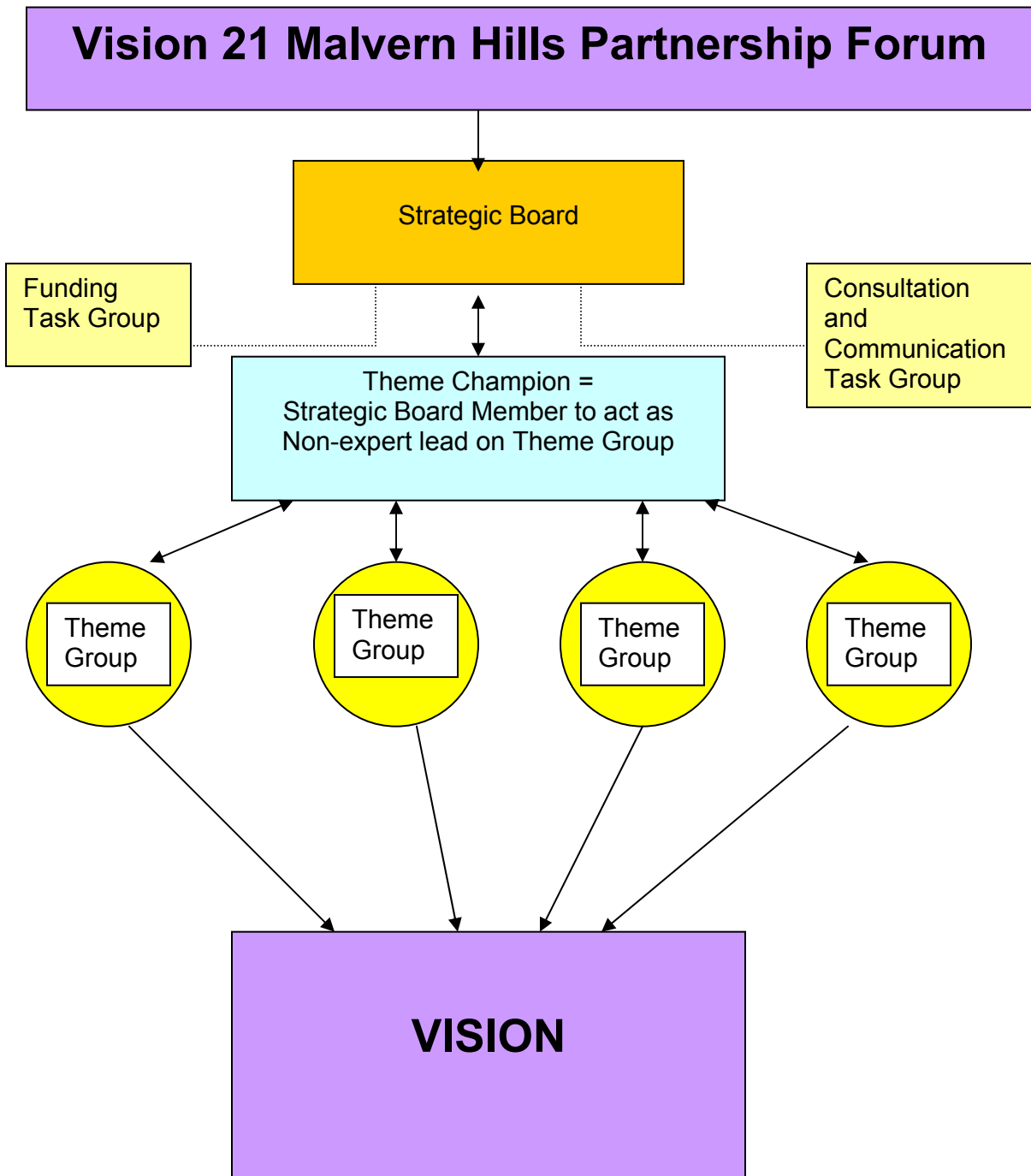
21.1 The Chairperson of the Strategic Board or the Vice Chairpersons in their absence will deal with Media enquiries about the Partnership's work and the Partnership Support Co-ordinator who will liaise with partner representatives accordingly.

21.2 Press releases issued on behalf of the Partnership will be directed to and issued through the Partnership Support Co-ordinator. All partners must adopt this procedure.

## 22. **INFORMATION SHARING PROTOCOLS**

- 22.1 Existing information sharing protocols will be used where necessary.
- 22.2 Development of other information sharing protocols may need to be considered where existing arrangements are not robust enough.

**Vision 21 – Structure**  
**APPENDIX 1 – STRUCTURE DIAGRAM OF THE PARTNERSHIP**



## **APPENDIX B – CODE OF CONDUCT**

Partnership have agreed to adopt the following code of conduct to support effective partnership working:-

- a) We recognize that by joint working we achieve a more powerful voice, increased resource allocation and an opportunity to deliver better services.
- b) The organizations and groups that make up the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership commit themselves to work together for the mutual benefit of the District and Malvern Hills people.
- c) We recognize that the strength of the Malvern Hills Partnership is in its diversity and the way it listens and brings together views.
- d) We accept the principle that certain partners need to lead on certain issues.
- e) We support open working, transparent communications and decision making by the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership.
- f) Representatives of the Vision 21 Malvern Hills Partnership must accept responsibility of feeding back to other partners and colleagues.
- g) We accept that each partner must be made accountable for their contribution to achieving targets and performance.
- h) Successful partnership working depends on mutual trust and respect for both individuals and the organizations they represent.
- i) This respect requires open discussion to resolve difficulties and conflict; and
- j) We must value each partner's contribution and strengths and expertise they bring to the table.