

Waltham Forest

Together

Governance Procedures

*(approved at the meeting of the LSP Board
on Friday 4th May 2007)*

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Section 1: Introduction to the LSP and its Structure

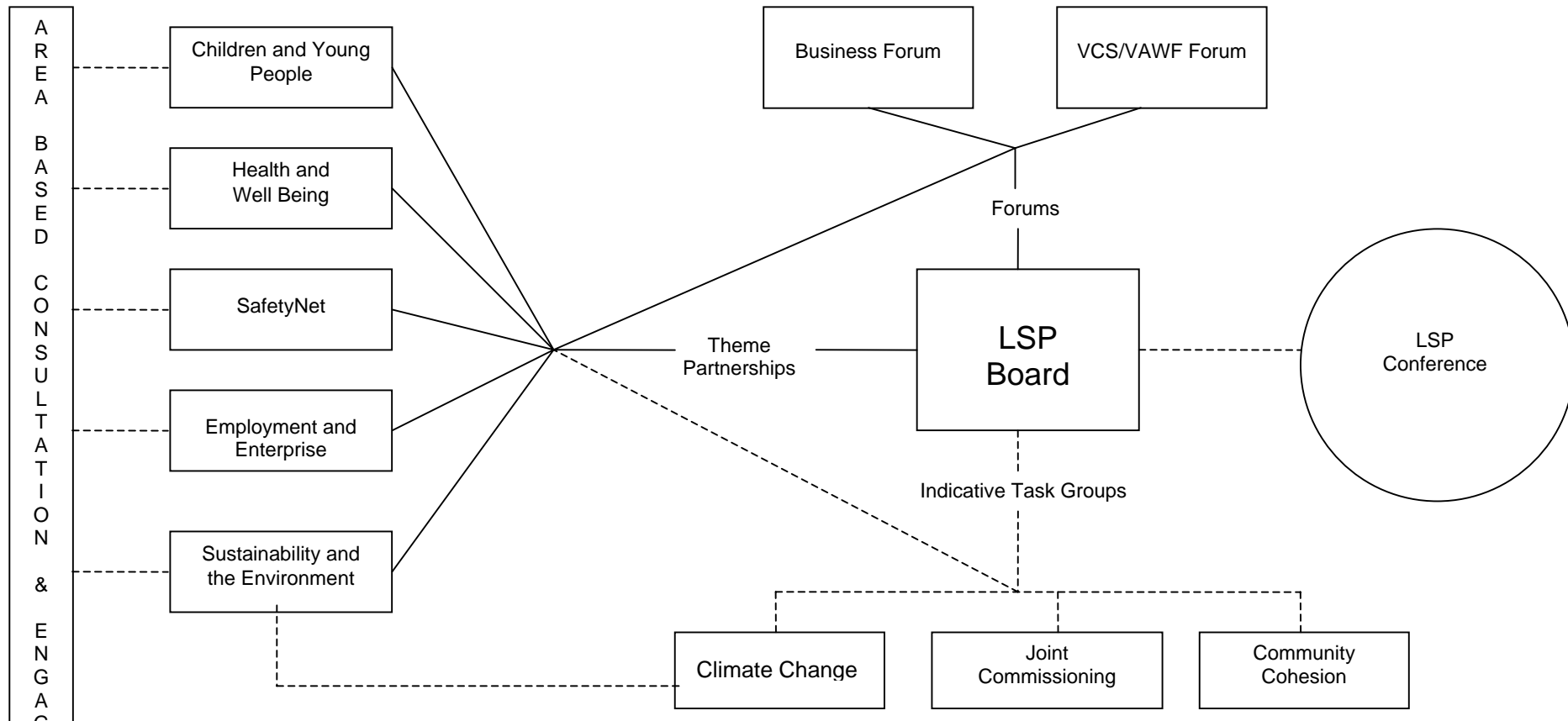
Introduction to the LSP

1.1 Waltham Forest Working Together is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the borough of Waltham Forest. The LSP brings together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors in Waltham Forest for the purpose of working together in order to improve the quality of life for the people of the borough through the provision of better services. The improvements sought will include better educational attainment, more skills, more and better employment, less crime, better health, business growth and an improved local economy and an altogether better environment. The agencies responsible for those services are on the LSP. One particular goal is that people should not be disadvantaged by where they live and so there is a special emphasis on narrowing the gap between the most deprived neighbourhoods and the rest.

The LSP Structure

- 1.2 The LSP structure is shown opposite in diagrammatic form. It is a family of partnerships comprising:
- A Board
 - 5 Theme Partnerships for
 - Children and Young People (termed a “Board”)
 - Crime and Safety (SafetyNet)
 - Health and Well Being
 - Employment and Enterprise
 - Sustainability and the Environment
 - Business and Voluntary / Community Sector Forums
 - An area based consultation and engagement structure
 - An annual conference
- 1.3 It is intentionally a simple and clear structure both for effectiveness and to promote inclusivity particularly amongst those in the wider community who wish to contribute and might otherwise be put off by some more complicated arrangements.
- 1.4 The Board and the Theme Partnerships may establish task groups on a “job and finish basis” to tackle particular issues and will stage events and activities as appropriate. Together with the area based consultation and engagement structure, these are ways in which the wider community can be effectively engaged in issues and in ways that specially interest them.

Waltham Forest – Possible Structure



- Notes**
- (1) Straight lines ___ denote representation and reporting. Broken lines ---- denote reporting only albeit with two way communication
 - (2) The area based consultation and engagement structure will be determined following the review of the Community Councils.
 - (3) The LSP Board and the Theme Partnerships may set up their own "Task Groups" with clear targets and timescales. For example the Sustainability and the Environment Theme Partnership might be expected to establish a task group on "Climate Change" and the LSP Board may wish to have a task group for "Commissioning".

Section 2: Functions and Terms of Reference

The LSP Board

- 2.1 The principal functions of the LSP Board are to oversee the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy as the policy driver and the Local Area Agreement (LAA) as the delivery plan for that policy; to ensure the link to the Local Development Framework (LDF) as the land use guidance for the policy; and to hold the Theme Partnerships and respective agencies to account for performance.
- 2.2 There are two other crucial headline functions. One is to provide the lead in developing “a sense of place” (vision, direction and ambition) for Waltham Forest and the other is to ensure that the LSP really is promoting effective equality of opportunity and community cohesion.
- 2.3 The detailed terms of reference are as follows:
 - (i) developing a long-term vision, direction and ambition for Waltham Forest expressed through the Sustainable Community Strategy
 - (ii) developing and reviewing the LAA and being accountable for its delivery
 - (iii) ensuring that the Sustainable Community Strategy drives spatial planning via the Local Development Framework
 - (iv) approving governance arrangements and protocols about the operation of the LSP
 - (v) agreeing systems and procedures for effective sharing arrangements and collaboration amongst partners
 - (vi) developing the strategic commissioning process and effective delivery arrangements
 - (vii) developing a system of performance management
 - (viii) approving any proposals for changes to the LSP structure and / or membership
 - (ix) ensuring that appropriate equality impact assessments are undertaken and that adequate arrangements are in place for:
 - promoting inclusion and equality of opportunity
 - promoting community cohesion
 - (x) block allocation of relevant funding streams to theme outcomes
 - (xi) monitoring of key targets under the LAA
 - (xii) commissioning of studies, reviews and evaluations of matters that relate to more than one theme partnership
 - (xiii) improving collaboration across theme partnerships (e.g. the establishment of task groups or consideration of services on a client group basis)

- (xiv) holding organisations to account for effective delivery
- (xv) publishing an annual work programme

The Theme Partnerships

2.4 The primary functions of the Theme Partnerships are to determine what actions need to be taken in order to achieve LAA targets and outcomes, to drive delivery and to take corrective action when targets are not being met.

2.5 The detailed terms of reference are as follows:

- (i) developing the thematic input to the Sustainable Community Strategy
- (ii) recommending revisions to the LAA including priority targets, stretch targets and enabling measures (freedoms and flexibilities).
- (iii) monitoring performance of key targets under the LAA.
- (iv) considering exception reports in respect of those targets not being achieved, agreeing corrective action and forwarding an explanatory report to the main LSP Board.
- (v) providing information on performance to the area based consultation and engagement structures (to be established).
- (vi) considering information from area based consultation and engagement structures on local priorities, needs and issues.
- (vii) establishing task groups on a task and finish basis (and in doing so having regard to the need for inclusion, equality of opportunity and diversity).
- (viii) approving proposals (activities and interventions) for agreed priority targets.
- (ix) approving commissioning arrangements for the delivery of agreed activities and interventions and ensuring accountability against what has been commissioned
- (x) driving delivery and implementing plans.

Area Based Consultation and Engagement Structure(s)

2.6 These are due to be established in 2007 following the review of the existing Community Councils.

2.7 They are a crucial mechanism for engaging local people in the work of the LSP and in that respect their most important function is to contribute to the debate about local priorities, needs and issues that would benefit from a partnership approach. This will require identification, analysis, synthesis and referral of relevant issues to the appropriate Theme Partnership and ensuring that the intelligence garnered from residents is collated and utilised to their benefit through service improvements.

Section 3: The Format and Business of LSP Meetings

- 3.1 Both the LSP Board and the Theme Partnerships should at each of their meetings have items on their agenda for the following:
- (i) declarations of interest.
 - (ii) progress on LAA outcome targets (in a standard and user friendly format).
 - (iii) exception reports where LAA outcome target performance is unsatisfactory including the corrective action proposed (Theme Partnerships should be offered an options appraisal; whereas the LSP Board should consider whether the option chosen by the Theme Partnership is satisfactory or whether additional action is necessary including, in particular, some collaborative measures with other Theme Partnership(s) and agency(ies)).
 - (iv) performance on a neighbourhood basis (under a standard format) and, where necessary, proposals for corrective action.
 - (v) presentation(s) (if any – as a more in depth consideration by a Theme Partnership of a particular issue, or by the LSP Board of a particular theme or on a client group basis).
 - (vi) issues, concerns, opportunities which would benefit by a partnership approach.
 - (vii) Communications and impact (this will include implications for the image of the LSP and/or partners).
- 3.2 There will of course be other items from time to time e.g. the LSP Board considering “sense of place” for the Borough and the 6 monthly progress reports on partnership working, spend and performance.
- 3.3 For major exercises like considering the Sustainable Community Strategy and the LAA, away days and group exercises are likely to be the more productive and appropriate way forward rather than the normal 2 hourly meetings.
- 3.4 Outside of normal business meetings LSP Members will also be provided with a learning and development programme to assist them in playing a full role in the process, covering areas such as:
- roles and responsibilities
 - development of the Sustainable Community Strategy; the LAA; the LDF and the linkages
 - strategic commissioning, procurement and delivery
 - floor target action planning
 - performance management
 - evaluation, review and improvement planning
 - partnership and leadership
 - engagement
 - promoting equality of opportunity and diversity through the LSP
 - communications and impact
 - determining a sense of place for Waltham Forest

Section 4: Code relating to the Conduct of Business for the LSP Board and Theme Partnerships

Frequency of Meetings

4.1 The LSP Board and the Theme Partnerships will meet at least 4 times in each year (the year will run from 1st April to 31st March). Additional meetings may be sanctioned by the Chair.

Calendar of Meetings

4.2 A calendar of normal (quarterly) meetings will be provided at the commencement of each year.

Duration of Meetings

4.3 Meetings will not extend beyond 2 hours without the exceptional and specific agreement of the meeting.

Dispatch of Agendas

4.4 Agendas will be dispatched electronically 7 days before the meeting.

4.5 Late items may only be considered if the meeting agrees to do so at the invitation of the Chair.

Press and Public

4.6 Meetings will not be open to the press and public but agenda papers will be publicly available.

Quorum

4.7 The quorum will be one-third of the total membership.

Voting

4.8 Votes will only be cast where a Member requests that a vote be taken. Normally decisions in the “partnership” will be by consensus.

4.9 Each Member will have one vote and in the event of a draw, the Chair of the meeting will have a casting vote.

Final Ruling

4.10 The Chair's interpretation of the code relating to Conduct of Business shall be final.

Section 5: Code Relating to Members

Membership of the LSP Board

- 5.1 The LSP Board comprises the following 10 Members which includes representation from each of the sectors and agencies from each of the theme areas:

Chair (Leader of the Council)

Council: Chief Executive

Police: Borough Commander

PCT: Chief Executive

FE College: Principal

Voluntary and Community sector: 2 reps (one from a service delivery agency and one from Voluntary Action Waltham Forest)

Business Sector: 2 reps – 1 from a large business and 1 from a small or medium enterprise

Children and Young People: Director of Children's Services

Learning and Skills Council London North: Area Director

Chairship of the LSP Board

- 5.2 The Leader of the Council is the Chair unless his or her nomination to serve as a Member is rejected by the LSP Board, in which event the Board will elect a Chair from amongst its members.

“Expert Witnesses” for the LSP Board

- 5.3 The following partners may be called upon to attend LSP Board meetings as necessary acting as “expert witnesses” (but not as Members) for specific items:

Learning and Skills Council

Jobcentre Plus

NHS Trust

London Development Agency

Chairs of Theme Partnerships

- 5.4 Chairs of the Theme Partnerships will be appointed from amongst the Members of the LSP Board (with the exception of the Children and Young People's Board which has opted for an independent Chair who will not be on the LSP Board).

Cabinet (Portfolio) Members

- 5.5 Cabinet (Portfolio) Members will be Members of their respective Theme Partnerships.

Members of Theme Partnerships

- 5.6 The number of members of a Theme Partnership should not normally exceed 12 (the Children and Young People Board is an exception following its separate review and consultation process) and should comprise the key delivery and service agencies.

Competency Requirements

5.7 Organisations invited to nominate Members to the LSP Board or a Theme Partnership will be required to confirm that their nominee has the ability to meet the following competencies:

- think strategically
- understand a business planning process
- communicate and contribute effectively
- provide mutual support, build relationships and trust, be a "partnership" member
- understand representation and accountability within partnership
- appreciate the process for delivery and how it is best achieved
- understand effective performance management
- display an awareness of: equality of opportunity and diversity; and key issues affecting quality of life in Waltham Forest
- listen effectively
- communicate and contribute effectively
- prepare appropriately beforehand (read all papers in advance)
- devote a minimum of ten days a year to LSP related work

Acceptance of Nominations for Membership

5.8 The LSP Board or Theme Partnership has the right to confirm or otherwise reject a nomination for membership.

Nominations for VCS and Business Representatives

5.9 For the VCS and business representatives, the CVS (Voluntary Action Waltham Forest) and the Business Board are asked to offer, if possible, a shortlist of candidates. The nominations are considered by a panel comprising the Chair and Vice-Chair and an appropriate independent person.

Level of Representation

5.10 Organisations are required to nominate their most senior officer or Board Member for the LSP Board and the most appropriate senior officer or Board Member for the respective Theme Partnership; where that is not the case the organisation may be required to explain the reasons (as set down earlier a nomination may, with good reason, be rejected).

Ward Councillors Involvement in the Area Based Consultation and Engagement Structure

5.11 Local Ward Councillors are to be involved in the new area consultation and engagement structure but whilst there will be a reporting line to and from Theme Partnerships there will not be representation which would make the Theme Partnerships unwieldy.

Declaration of Suitability

5.12 To confirm their suitability for a position of responsibility in public life, all Members of the LSP Board must make a declaration that they know of no reason why they should not serve on the

Board and that they will abide by the Nolan principles of public life (set out at 5.13 below) whilst serving on the Board.

Principles of Public Life

5.13 Those who accept a nomination for membership of the LSP Board and/or Theme Partnership(s) thereby agree to abide by the seven principles of public life arising from the Nolan report, which are:

- **Selflessness** Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
- **Integrity** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organizations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness** Holders of public office should be taken as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Register and Declarations of Interest

5.14 The key guiding principle is that when acting as a Board Member, Members must avoid conflicts between their private interests and their public role as a Board member.

5.15 A member must declare:

5.15.1 any interest that a Member has registered under 5.19 and

5.15.2 any interest which affects his/her financial position or well-being (or that of their family, close associates or any person or body registered by the Member under 5.19 below) more than that of the majority of the borough's population.

5.16 Where a Member's interest affects his/her financial position (or the financial position of their family, close associates or any person or body registered under 5.19 below) and is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard is so significant that it would prejudice their judgement of the public interest, they should declare the

interest and withdraw from the room when that matter is considered and not seek to improperly influence that decision.

- 5.17 So far as discussions and decisions at meetings are concerned there will be an item on each agenda requesting declarations of interest but if, for any reason, that opportunity is not taken, a Member should declare their interest before discussion of the particular item in which they have an interest.
- 5.18 Councillor Members are also subject to Waltham Forest's Code of Conduct for Members, which contains equivalent provisions on declarations of interest.

Register of Interests

- 5.19 Every Member will be required, prior to taking up their appointment, to provide details of their employment; any business interests and directorships involvement in political parties or lobbying bodies, management roles in other public bodies and any direct relationship they may have with the business of the LSP.
- 5.20 Councillor Members are already covered by the Council's Code of Conduct and may use their Council register of interests form to satisfy the requirements of paragraph 5.19.
- 5.21 Members are required to ensure that they keep their register of interests form up to date. Notification of changes to the register should be made to the LSP secretariat within 28 days of the change (or the Council's Monitoring Officer in the case of councillor Members).
- 5.22 The LSP secretariat will maintain the register forms for all members. To promote the Nolan principles of openness and accountability, the forms will be available for public inspection upon request. Members will be notified of any such request.

Hospitality

- 5.23 Members should treat with caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality made to them as a Board Member as acceptance can lead to a public perception of the LSP contrary to the Nolan Principles. Board Members are required to declare any gift or hospitality received with a value of at least £25 by completing the attached form at **insert place** and return it to the LSP Secretariat within 28 days of receipt of the gift or hospitality. In addition, where a Member has concern that an offer may be or may be seen as corrupt, he/she should refer the matter to the LSP lead officer within the local authority.
- 5.24 Councillor Members should make their declarations under 5.23 to the Council's Monitoring Officer as part of their obligation to comply with Waltham Forest's Code of Conduct for Members.

Personal Behaviour

- 5.25 Members are required to be courteous and respectful to all persons with whom they come into contact through their LSP work and never to conduct themselves in a manner which could be regarded as bringing the Partnership into disrepute.
- 5.26 If unacceptable behaviour occurs during a meeting, the Chair may request the member to withdraw and subsequently raise the matter with the nominating body.

Non-Discrimination

5.27 No Member shall discriminate against any person or organisation on grounds of perceived difference and Members are expected to take every opportunity to promote equality and diversity in the course of their work on the LSP.

Public Statements

5.28 Individual Members should not make press/public statements on behalf of the LSP. Requests for such statements should be referred to the LSP Lead Officer in the Council who will liaise with the respective Chair about the release of statements.

5.29 Individual Members should not publicly oppose decisions made by the LSP.

Personal Commitment

5.30 In accepting a nomination to serve on the LSP, a Member agrees to give a personal commitment by :

- giving a high priority to attending meetings, key events and learning and development sessions;
- reading agenda papers before meetings
- upholding the values and objectives of the partnership
- promoting equality of opportunity and diversity
- doing their utmost to represent the LSP when required.

Period of Membership

5.31 There is no fixed period of Membership for individuals but the issue of Membership will be reviewed by the LSP Board every 2 years.

Termination of Membership

5.32 A Member who misses 3 of the quarterly meetings in any one year or 3 consecutive meetings shall have their membership terminated unless the respective Theme Partnership or LSP Board accept that there have been justifiable reasons for the absence.

Deputies

5.33 There is no provision for deputies to attend in place of Members.

Section 6: Complaints

Commitment of the LSP

6.1 The LSP seeks to operate in a transparent and fair manner when carrying out their duties and work programme. In doing so they aim to listen and learn and put things right within the resources available.

Addressing a Complaint

6.2 Should there be any concern or complaint to the LSP about the conduct of one of its members, a decision made by the partnership, or any other matter arising from the activities of the partnership in question it should be addressed to the LSP Lead Officer who will register the complaint and ask the Chair to nominate a Member to hear the complaint.

Hearing the Complaint – Stage 1

6.3 The complaint will be addressed informally by the nominated Member and if the complainant is satisfied with the outcome there will be no need for further consideration under the complaints procedure.

Hearing the Complaint – Stage 2

6.4 Should the complainant not be satisfied an official written complaint should be submitted to the LSP Lead Officer at the Council together with any evidence or relevant documentation.

6.5 The nominated Member will investigate the complaint and present the findings from the investigation to a delegated sub-group of the partnership who will issue a decision.

6.6 The decision will be communicated in writing to the complainant along with an explanation of the right and process of appeal.

Appeals Process

6.7 Any appeals must be made in writing to the LSP Lead Officer within seven days of receipt of the decision. The LSP Lead Officer will raise the appeal with the relevant Chair.

6.8 The appeal letter should state all the reasons why the decision is not satisfactory together with all supporting evidence. The Chair will carry out an investigation based on the appeal letter and the evidence provided. The Chair may reject the appeal on the basis that there are no grounds for challenging the Stage 2 decision.

6.9 If however the grounds of appeal are accepted the Chair will submit a report to the respective Partnership or Board whose decision will be final.

6.10 The decision will be communicated to the appellant within a week of that decision being made.

6.11 The respective Partnership or Board will consider any action necessary as a result of the complaint.

Complaints by an LSP Member (Board or Theme Partnership) Against Another

6.12 The same process will apply except that the Member under Stages 1 and 2 will be the respective Chair and the investigation under any appeal will be by an independent person agreed by the LSP Board or respective Theme Partnership.

Complaints Against the Chair

6.13 In these circumstances, the Vice-Chair will act in place of the Chair throughout the procedures.