

# Best Practice Guide: Partnership Formation and Development

March 2024

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# Executive Summary

The twelve-month High Street Accelerator (HSA) pilot programme tasked 10 locations with forming local place partnerships to address high street issues that they face in a relatively short period of time.

This Best Practice Guide for Partnership Formation & Development aims to help each location meet the pilot programme requirement of forming a local place partnership to oversee investment into projects which address the local challenges facing their high street.

Our work through the High Streets Task Force has demonstrated the vital importance of partnerships in driving forward successful town centre development and high street renewal. A successful place partnership brings local stakeholders together to discuss the development of their place and to work effectively together to ensure that positive place change is delivered upon.

Unfortunately, we have found that not enough high street locations have effective place partnerships established, so we have designed this guide to help you critically analyse your existing approach to partnership working in order to give your High Street Accelerator the greatest chance of success.

Throughout the guide, we have provided a range of useful frameworks to help you:

1. **Understand the type of partnership you want to establish.**
2. **Map out the organisations and individuals to involve in your partnership.**
3. **Set out how your partnership will function (Terms of Reference).**
4. **Choose a suitable member of the community, with the right skillset, to act as Chair.**

Taking this approach to partnership formation and development will help ensure your partnership is truly representative of the local community and will add value, by delivering improvements that are new and necessary, rather than simply replicating existing activity.

Our work studying effective place partnerships has also identified a series of important key factors that are critical to their successful output. These factors are as follows:

- **An effective partnership is *driven by local place ambassadors*.** It should include individuals who are passionate about the place who act as ambassadors for the town.
- **An effective partnership *needs to foster and build trust*.** It should proactively seek to foster a welcoming environment of information exchange, where decisions are made together.
- **An effective partnership *needs to be organic*.** It should change its composition to allow important interests/skills/stakeholders to be represented as projects develop.
- **An effective partnership *delivers impact*.** It should avoid being a 'talking shop' and prioritise actions that deliver tangible, positive changes to the high street.

Finally, this guide provides a series of case studies to provide you with some more detailed information as to how successful place partnerships have formed and performed. Whilst all these partnerships come in different shapes and sizes, what unites them all is their ***way of working***.

Each partnership has taken its time to understand their local assets, from their people to the buildings, and have established well-structured governance systems that are representative of communities they serve. Partnerships are always evolving, and we would encourage you to continually review the approach you are taking to ensure that it is delivering the very best outcomes for your place.

# Introduction

The work of the High Streets Task Force, which was commissioned by the UK government to support 150 locations across England between 2019 – 2024, has helped demonstrate the critical importance of effective place partnerships in delivering positive outcomes for high streets and town centres.

Successful outcomes for high street and town centres are often linked back to a place partnership's **way of working** that promotes collaboration, demonstrates effective communication, and displays clear leadership. A well-run partnership will represent a diverse community, made up of a variety of stakeholders, ranging from the council to local businesses, community groups and civic societies.

Typically, governance of partnerships has been driven by top-down approaches, led predominantly by the local authority. This approach, however, rarely builds the level of trust and engagement with the local community that is key to the successful and sustainable delivery of effective place outcomes.

Instead, we have seen real success where the governance of place partnerships involves a wide range of voices and opinions, in order to ensure that all perspectives are taken into consideration. This process of distributing power throughout the community enables a shared vision to then be developed and agreed upon, which ensures that a variety of needs are met and that outcomes are co-owned.

For some places, the formation of a new place partnership will result in the local authority taking a step back to allow other organisations to take a greater role in place leadership, visioning and delivery. For others, it may lead to greater involvement from the local authority, who perhaps was previously missing from conversations with businesses, local residents and community groups.

Whatever the approach, it is important that the partnership is an authentic representation of the place, providing a voice to as many local stakeholders as possible. Successful place partnerships are those that demonstrate strong place leadership through their effective partnership working – with open and regular communication – and are able to identify and harness the unique assets that can help improve the town's offer and image.

We hope you find the information and frameworks contained within this guide to be helpful to your process of partnership development and wish you all the best of luck.

**Matt Colledge,**

**HSTF Executive Director**

# Types of partnership

The findings of the High Streets Task Force's annual research study (2024) have demonstrated that successful partnerships come in different shapes and sizes, with different levels of formal structures.

For example, some place partnerships are very formal, overseeing capital delivery programmes that involve the investment of millions of pounds of government funds, whilst others are very informal, with some simply involving local businesses coming together to regularly clean-up the high street.

As an example, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) have a formal structure which provides them with ring-fenced funding to achieve their aims and ambitions for place improvement, but this process can sometimes make it difficult to shift their objectives without the consent of local levy-payers. The formal structure that BIDs operate within can also limit the wider involvement of the local community.

However, on the flipside, more informal partnerships, such as Town Teams and community-based associations, may have the flexibility to adapt their approach to place improvement but may lack the ring-fenced funding and governance systems in place to achieve instant and sustained successes.

Therefore, as our annual research study into place partnerships suggests, a balanced approach is what is required for place partnerships to have clear formal structures in place but be flexible and adaptable enough to meet the challenge of different issues which occur at different times.

As such, we recommend that your place partnership has a formal structure at their core, with a Terms of Reference (that clearly sets out how it will function see Appendix 1 for template) but also provides enough space for informality to ensure that the voices of as many members of the community can be heard and incorporated into plans for place improvement.

In addition, our research has identified that there are three main focuses of place partnerships, which are **operational** (delivering products and services, such as street-cleaning, place promotion etc.); **political** (influencing strategy that affects the place) and **strategic** (developing strategy and plans for the area). If you already have a partnership or are aiming to start one, a good question to ask is where does, or where will your partnership sit? Do you think this might change over time?

Another central pillar that is key to the success of your place partnerships is the ability to effectively identify and leverage local resources. A report titled 'Making the Most of High Street Investment' (2024), which was recently published by the Institute of Place Management, underscores the importance of this. Whilst many locations have a wide range of assets that could be of benefit to their high street, including physical infrastructure and human capital, not enough places make the most of them, so it is important that there is a thorough assessment of the assets at your disposal.

This could include making the most of important buildings, by identifying uses for key sites which may be currently vacant, alongside ensuring that your partnership benefits from the wide range of personal and professional skills that can be found in the local community.

Ultimately, your place partnership should be focused on delivering a series of outputs and outcomes, such as improving the high street's physical appearance, increasing footfall through the activation of public space and ensuring that the place is being promoted effectively. There is no right or wrong list of actions for a partnership to be involved in - what's important is that you collectively identify the purpose for your partnership along with other stakeholders that have 'skin in the game'.

The next section looks at this area of partnership development in more detail.

# Mapping your Partnership Landscape

Partnerships are important structures that help individuals and organisations work collaboratively to secure the very best outputs for a place.

**As a first step, it is really important to understand your existing partnership landscape, before any new partnership is formed, or an existing partnership is adapted.**

In some places, a place partnership may not currently exist. Instead, there may be large amounts of mistrust and miscommunication that has developed between stakeholders and the local authority.

In other places, place partnerships may exist – but they may not be truly representative of the wider local community and may have limited effectiveness.

Either way, a useful starting point is to understand who is already doing what in your place – and how these groups may be able to collaboratively work together to deliver positive place outcomes.

## **Step 1: Identify existing stakeholder groups that exist within your place.**

The first step is to list all the organisations/groups that exist within your location. This will allow you to identify all the stakeholders who could add value to the process of decision making, either formally or informally, through the place partnership.

Below is a list of stakeholder groups that you may wish to involve in your partnership. ***How many of these do you currently involve? Can you spot any areas for improvement?***

1. **Local Businesses:** Engage with both small independent shops and larger chain stores operating on the high street.
2. **Property Owners and Landlords:** They play a significant role in shaping the character and condition of your high street.
3. **Residents:** People who live in the vicinity of the high street are often the most impacted by decision making, so are well worth involving.
4. **Local Authority Representatives:** Such as local councillors or council officers responsible for town centre management, economic development and high street regeneration.
5. **Market Traders:** Both Indoor & Outdoor Market Traders could be involved as part of your partnership, to get their views on how the market can be developed.
6. **Events Organisers:** Those that are involved in the organisation of local events, markets and festivals would provide useful insight on how to best activate your place.
7. **Chamber of Commerce:** If your area has one, they can be valuable in mobilising businesses and advocating for improvements.
8. **Community Groups, Civic Societies and Non-profits:** Organisations focused on community development, heritage conservation and charitable activities.
9. **Arts and Cultural Institutions:** Museums, galleries, theatres, or cultural centres can contribute to the vibrancy and attractiveness of the high street.
10. **Tourism Boards / Destination Management:** Especially relevant if your high street attracts tourists or has historical or cultural significance.

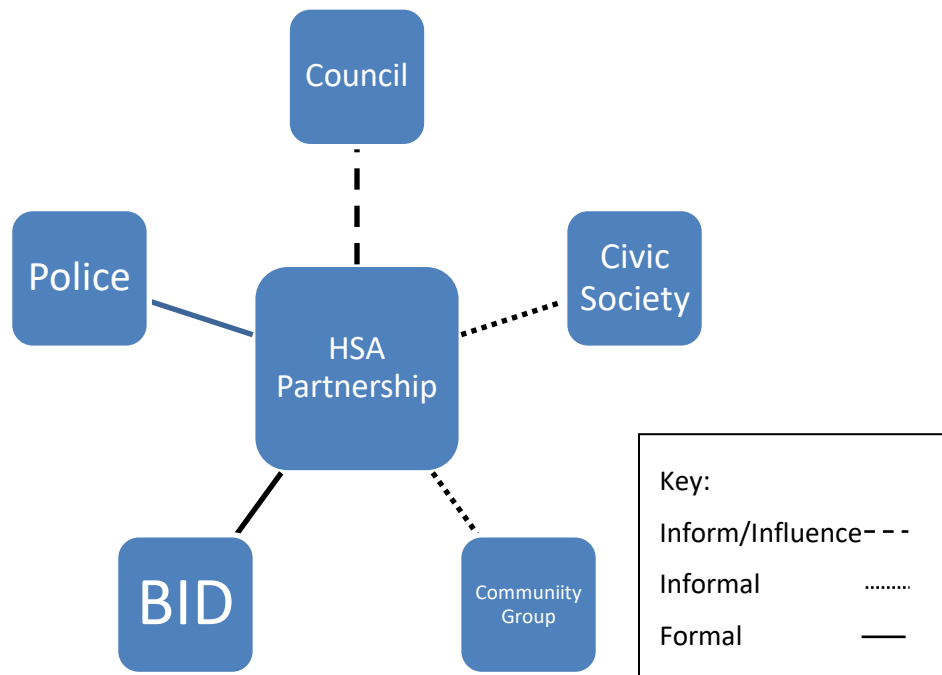
11. **Schools and Educational Institutions:** Engaging with local schools can help promote community involvement and youth participation in improvement efforts.
12. **Environmental Organisations:** Groups concerned with sustainability, green spaces, and ecological conservation.
13. **Health and Social Services Providers:** Partnering with these organisations can help ensure that approaches to improving public health are place-based.
14. **Police and Emergency Services:** Collaborating with the police can address safety concerns and ensure a secure environment.
15. **Local Media:** Newspapers, radio stations, and online platforms often play a key role in shaping place perceptions and can help raise awareness of local initiatives.
16. **Urban Planners and Architects:** Professionals who can provide expertise on design, infrastructure, and urban renewal projects are worth involving.
17. **Financial Institutions:** Banks or credit unions with branches on the high street may have an interest in supporting local businesses and encouraging investment.
18. **Youth Groups and Clubs:** Engaging with young people can bring fresh perspectives and energy to revitalisation efforts.
19. **Ethnic and Minority Communities:** Ensure inclusivity by ensuring that the diverse cultural and ethnic groups found on your high street are involved in the partnership.
20. **Civic Leaders and Influencers:** Involve individuals with influence or leadership roles within the community who can advocate for the partnership's goals.

By involving these stakeholders, you can create a more inclusive and comprehensive partnership that addresses the diverse needs and interests of your high street community.

Name of Organisation	Aim/Remit	Geographical Focus	Type of Relationship with HSA
e.g. Civic Society/BID	What are its clear and obvious aims..	Does it have interests in the HSA area	(formal - represented in structure....informal - working together on project/ad hoc activity....inform/influence....not working together but keep informed of HSA activity)

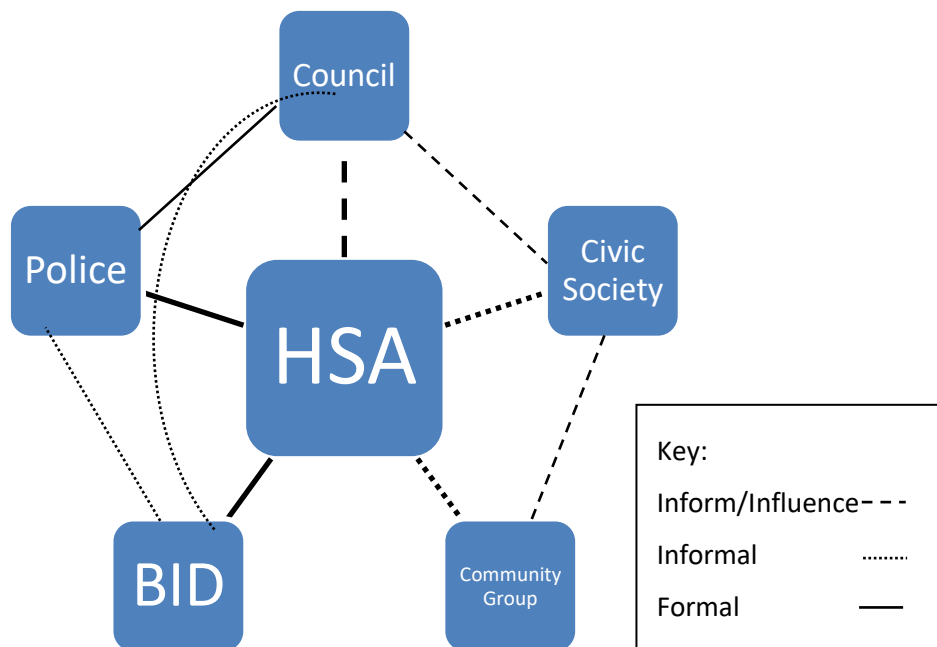
**Step 2: Show the relationship of your HSA partnership with stakeholders**

Create a visual map or diagram of current partnerships to understand the connections and collaborations between your HAS and the stakeholders identified in Table 1



**Step 3: Show the relationship between the different groups**

Create a visual map or diagram to understand the connections and collaborations between the individual groups.





# Terms of Reference

Every place partnership needs a Terms of Reference, which is a key document that sets out how the partnership will be managed and governed. We have developed an example Terms of Reference document, including as an Appendix, which can be used as a useful template.

When developing your Terms of Reference document, you will need to consider including the following sections:

## **1. Overview**

- a. Background of the partnership
- b. the aims and vision of the partnership

## **2. Purpose and Aims**

- a. This depends on the place, but may include:
  - i. Bringing people together.
  - ii. Identifying issues and improvements
  - iii. Championing the place

## **3. Actions/Outputs**

- a. This depends on the place but may include.
  - i. Creating vision documents
  - ii. Addressing vacant units
  - iii. Running events and festivals

## **4. Task Groups**

- a. A section which states the role and function of smaller task groups
- b. A diagram of how these groups interrelate.

## **5. Composition**

- a. The length of the partnership
- b. The amount of board members and who is represented.

## **6. Scheduling**

- i. How often the board/steering group meets
- ii. The role of the Chair
- iii. The role of the board

## **7. Membership Conduct**

- a. A list of principles which the members agree to uphold.

## **8. Conflicts of Interest**

- a. List the processes in which this should be made known and dealt with

## **9. Finances**

- a. How the finance will be spent
- b. How it is monitored

## **10. Rules of Amendments**

- a. Rules of how the TOR can be changed

## **11. Dissolution of partnership**

- a. Information on how the partnership can be dissolved

You can use the sample Terms of Reference included in Appendix 1 as the basis for your own place partnership's governance arrangements.

# Appointing a Chair

Partnerships need leadership. The appointment of a Chair should not be based around their position in their own company, or the council. Instead, it should be based on the qualities that an individual possesses to effectively bring people together around a shared goal of improving a particular place.

The Chair needs to be a place ambassador, who has the passion and drive to see their town improve and change. They are individuals who are pivotal in driving partnership activity. This means that they approach the partnership with a non-political standpoint, connect people together and can mediate between different groups if there is conflict or different outlooks on the vision.

If possible, the Chair of a place partnership should be a representative from either the private or third sector. This is to ensure that the partnership is led by the community, rather than the council.

The role of the Chair should be clearly defined in your partnership (see Appendix 2 for Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair). For example, the Chair should be actively involved in:

- Setting the agenda for each meeting.
- Encouraging participation and input from members.
- Ensuring actions and visions are being achieved.
- Taking a non-partisan approach.

The Chair should be selected by the partnership, rather than being imposed upon. This means that stakeholders should identify who has the right skills and qualifications for the role. For example, it is important to consider key skills and experience, such as leadership skills, experience in collaborative initiatives, understanding of the partnership's objectives, and the ability to communicate effectively.

It is vital for partnerships to try and reach a consensus in the process. Although there may be some disagreements, having broad majority support for a Chair helps bring people together which is of real importance when developing a vision and deciding future plans. It is beneficial to give thought to succession and limit to terms held by an individual to ensure that power is not only shared, but that new voices and generations can be actively involved in the changing nature of a partnership.

Finally, whilst getting the right person to serve as Chair is a very important process, it should be noted that the success of the partnership is not down to one individual alone but instead the results of the collective effort of multiple individuals and organisations. In essence, the Chair should reflect the needs and objectives of the partnership, rather than control them.

# Case Studies

## Altrincham

The partnership in Altrincham emerged from a crisis. Reports in the press noted the high vacancy rates of up to and over 30% and decline of the high street. This brought people from various sectors together, such as local council officers, local businesses, and community groups, who went on to create Altrincham Forward.

In a period of five years, the partnership had achieved major renovations and reimaginings of the town centre that addressed the high vacancy rates and feeling of the town. This then developed and changed into Altrincham BID which worked with businesses to continue change and meet the new needs that had emerged in the town. Altrincham provides a great example of how a partnership has the need to develop over time, which can mean a change in structure and aims.

This was a collaborative effort, and key skills and assets were noted. For example, the local council ensured that there was adequate funding and staffing resources for the partnership. It created a visual presence on the high street, as it worked from a shop unit, and had a local team who was able to co-ordinate efforts to improve Altrincham.

Throughout the partnership's development, Altrincham offered more activities and events, such as the Goose Green Summer Festival. Altrincham also won awards including the Action for Market Towns Strategy and Partnership Working Award in 2014, and was a finalist in the 2015 Placemaking Awards for the redevelopment of Altrincham Market. In 2015, Altrincham Market was voted Market of the Year winner, as well as being a 2015 Great British High Streets Awards finalist and won the Great British High Street of the Year Champion in 2018.

## Buxton

The partnership in Buxton was formed following the Big Buxton Conversation in spring 2021. Residents felt that they wanted a non-political collective forum for local people to influence their place. This led to the formation of 'We Are Buxton' to promote collective discussions and collaborative activities.

The purpose of this partnership is to provide a voice for the local community and to be a conduit for good communications from local government to a broadly representative group of groups. In this way, it has helped to foster and nurture trust within the local place because it promotes active collaborative working amongst local groups.

This partnership has continued to change, adapt, and evolve in response to local conditions. For example, they have set up a 'Neighbourhood Plan Group' which is also part of the group itself. They have also been able to run a fun eco-activity for Spring Fair 2023 (cycle powered scalectix), which brought something new and different to Buxton.

In summary, We Are Buxton has been able to bring together representatives from various local organisations together to explore areas of local action. This includes identifying possible solutions for an unsightly gateway site that has long term safety issues and how an empty retail unit, owned by the Borough Council, could act as a flexible pop up / temporary use opportunity.

## Bungay

The partnership in Bungay began from an initiative in 2019 where East Suffolk Council commissioned People & Places to study some of the town centres across East Suffolk. Although impacted by Covid, there was an interest in restarting an initiative which engaged local stakeholders. This expanded the partnership's membership to become broader, involving more representatives across the town. The group agreed that the council should be the lead facilitator, as they believed that it ensured that it would keep the council committed, and the stakeholders agreed they would work together to achieve the overall aims.

The structure of the partnership involved one person representing one organisation, as most of the stakeholders are involved in several organisations in the place. For example, there is only one member who represents the town council interests, whilst others represent other organisations, such as Heritage, Community Support, and the Library.

The partnership is open to anyone who has interest in being involved and agrees with the shared vision of Bungay being a sustainable community with a thriving business, community and civic focus. The only caveat is that the partnership needs to be at an easily manageable size. This issue is often solved with the use of Task and Finish Groups where appropriate.

The partnership has ensured that there is more collaborative working in the town, with a greater willingness to get involved in different events and ideas. It has created less competition and issues within the stakeholder community and has instead improved local communication, ensuring that everyone has a voice and are involved in decision making. It also has helped to build trust with the council as they engage and work together with local stakeholders.

## Atherstone

Atherstone's local partnership is informal in its structure and shows what can be done when collaboration between businesses and residents takes centre stage. It aims to improve Atherstone as a place to live, increase footfall, and showcase local information for local people.

The partnership meets monthly in an Atherstone town centre hospitality venue and asks stakeholders to contribute around 10 hours per person, per month. It began when approaches were made to businesses and organisations to form a partnership group to spearhead town centre improvements and a series of meetings were organised. More recently, the place consultancy service Heartflood have been commissioned to provide one day of support per week to the Partnership.

This has led to a variety of small wins, such as the hosting of a coronation event, the provision of free afternoon teas for vulnerable people, the hosting of a memorial concert for a local person, alongside the organisation and promotion of a local history festival and a history film of the towns hatting past. All which help boost local pride in their place.

This success of the partnership has resulted from its organic nature and a desire for the public, private and community sectors to work together. The partnership has also recently noted that there is a need to continually evolve the membership. For example, recent challenges have involved changes in key individuals involved, which has made them more aware that partnerships need to have a resilience baked into their operations in order to avoid such disruption.

# Appendix 1: Example Terms of Reference Template

## Terms of Reference

[*insert name*] Town Centre Partnership (TCP or 'the Partnership') is a group made up of representatives and stakeholders of [*insert name*] Town Centre including local businesses, representatives of the Council and other public sector stakeholders.

The Partnership works together to support and promote the town centre and its future wellbeing and viability as a place to live, visit and invest.

*The principal area covered by the Partnership is shown in [*insert Appendix*]*

## 1. Vision

Our vision for [*insert name*] Town Centre is set out in [*insert vision document name*] which highlights the need to [*insert vision objectives*].

## 2. Aims

To work together as key Town Centre stakeholders to promote the attractiveness and use of the town centre by local residents, businesses, and visitors.

## 3. Actions

- To contribute to the development of a vision for [*insert name*] Town Centre.
- To consult and engage with the local community and businesses to develop a list of potential actions to promote and improve [*insert name*] Town Centre.
- To support the development and delivery of a range of Town Centre events and activities to encourage footfall, increase dwell time and grow the reputation of [*insert name*] Town Centre as a place to visit.
- To identify opportunities to collaborate with the Council, public bodies, and landowners on improvements to town centre spaces and buildings.
- To seek opportunities for the provision of local arts and cultural delivery in [*insert name*] Town Centre with relevant arts and cultural partners.

- To attract additional private investment into *[insert name]* Town Centre to boost the attractiveness and economic health of the town centre.
- To work with the Council to support the delivery of key regeneration projects, by ensuring effective engagement throughout project delivery.
- To work with the Council and other bodies to secure funding from various sources for *[insert name]* Town Centre improvements.
- To coordinate the sharing of data on the Town Centre to contribute to the effective monitoring and evaluation of Town Centre performance.
- To prepare an action plan for the work of the Partnership.

#### **4. Structure**

The Partnership is comprised of members who have an interest in *[insert name]* Town Centre's future development.

To become a member, an individual must complete a *[insert name]* Town Centre Partnership Member form, available at *[web address]*, and return it to the following address *[insert email address]*.

The form can also be posted to: *[insert postal address]*

Once accepted, each member will have full voting rights at *[insert name]* Town Centre Partnership's Annual General Meeting (AGM), which will take place in the month of *[insert month]* every calendar year.

The AGM will provide an opportunity to update all *[insert name]* Town Centre Partnership Members with information about relevant activity that has occurred since the last AGM and also provide an opportunity to elect members of the Town Board, who act as the Executive Body for the Partnership.

The Town Board will consist of up to [x] members who are appointed for a period of [x] years. The members of the Town Board are comprised of representatives from:

- Local Businesses
- Representatives from *[insert name]*'s hospitality, tourism and leisure sector
- Representatives from *[insert name]*'s cultural and arts sector
- Representatives from local VCSFE groups
- *[insert name]* Civic Society
- *[insert name]* Business Improvement District
- Local Residents
- Elected representatives (Local Councillors / MP)
- Police
- College/University
- Professional Services

- Health Services

The Town Board will be supported by officers from *[insert name]* Borough Council, who will act as Observers and have no voting rights.

The Chair and Deputy of the Partnership shall be chosen from among the members of the Town Board. If agreed by the Town Board, an independent Chair and Deputy Chair may be appointed. Appointments will be reviewed annually at the AGM.

At least 50% of members of the Town Board will need to attend a meeting for the meeting to be quorate.

All members of the Town Board will have an equal vote. In the event of a tie on any vote, the Chair (or Deputy in the absence of the Chair) will have a casting vote.

Officers of the Council attending the Town Board will act as Observers and not have voting rights at meetings.

## **5. Task & Finish Groups**

The Partnership's Town Board may seek to establish task and finish groups, as appropriate, to deliver projects such as events, project support/development activity, focussed activity on development of retail or the night-time economy.

Task and finish groups will be established only with agreement of the majority of members of the Partnership Board. These groups will make recommendations to the Partnership Board, unless specifically given permission to carry out actions or incur expenses on behalf of them at a quorate Board meeting.

## **6. Meeting Scheduling**

Town Board Meetings will usually be held on the first week of the month. The Group will meet on no less than 4 occasions annually and meetings will be held in accordance with a calendar approved by the Group's members.

Agendas and documents will be issued no less than one week in advance of each meeting. All meetings are to be minuted.

The Chair, supported by the Council and in consultation with members of the Town Board, will be responsible for:

- Setting the agenda for each meeting



- Keeping the meeting moving and on time
- Encouraging broad participation from members
- Summarising agreed decisions and actions
- Ensuring accurate minutes of each meeting are produced

Town Board members have a responsibility to:

- Attend meetings and positively engage in discussion.
- Contribute knowledge and expertise to benefit *[insert name]* Town Centre and the activities of the Partnership.
- Represent the agreed views of the Partnership in discussions with wider stakeholders.

The Annual General Meeting of the Partnership shall be held in *[insert month]* every calendar year.

## 7. Partnership Member's Conduct

All Partnership members are expected to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life, known as the Nolan Principles, as defined by the Committee for Standards in Public Life. They are:

- **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other 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 organisations that might seek to 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 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 it.

- **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.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The following provisions shall apply to all partnership members:

- In the event that there is a conflict of interest, the person so conflicted shall immediately declare the nature of the conflict or potential conflict and withdraw from any business where the conflict would be relevant.
- Whenever a person has an interest in a matter to be discussed at a meeting the person concerned will not be entitled to remain present at the meeting during discussion of that matter.
- The Partnership may, at any time, authorise a person to remain in the meeting whilst a matter in which they have or may have a conflict of interest is discussed, provided that the conflict of interest is declared.

## **8. Finances**

The Town Board will seek funding on behalf of the Partnership from a wide range of potential sources, including in collaboration with the Council and other bodies, to achieve the aims and actions as set out in the Terms of Reference.

The Partnership is unconstituted so *[insert name]* Borough Council is defined as the Accountable Body to hold funds on behalf of the Partnership.

All proposals for expenditure by the Partnership will require the approval of a majority of the Town Board.

Appropriate budgetary control and management measures will govern all the finances of the Partnership including receipt and expenditure of funds with fully transparent authorisation and accountability. A statement of annual account will be produced in an annual report.

## **9. Amendments to the Terms of Reference**

All Project Board members will be asked to vote on any proposals to change the Terms of Reference.

## **10. Dissolution**

If any member of the Town Board decides it is necessary or desirable to dissolve the Partnership, they shall call a meeting of the Group with not less than twenty-one days' notice, informing them of the proposed dissolution. The proposal will be carried if approved by at least two-thirds of those present and voting at a quorate meeting.

# Appendix 2: Example Chair Roles & Responsibilities

## 1. Purpose of Chair Role

To Chair the Town Board meetings of the Partnership, ensuring that the Partnership is delivering on its mission and vision for the town centre, providing inclusive leadership to the Board and its sub-groups, ensuring that each Board Member fulfils their duties and responsibilities for effective collaborative working.

The Chair will lead the Board in achieving its objectives, maintain an overview of activity, and champion and support partnership working. They will also support, and, where appropriate, challenge and ensure that the Board functions as a unit, working in a joined-up way with the sub-groups to deliver on the Partnership's action plan.

The successful candidate will be a strong leader who recognises how a flourishing town centre contributes to economic development, and the wellbeing of individuals and the wider community. Previous experience of being Chair of a Board is not essential, but Board experience would be desirable. Interest from candidates who have not previously served as a Chair but who can demonstrate the skills and competencies necessary to undertake the role is welcomed.

## 2. Remuneration and time commitment

The role of Chair is a voluntary position and is not accompanied by any financial remuneration.

There will be a minimum of [x] and a maximum of [x] Board meetings per year.

In addition, the Chair is expected to represent the Partnership at various events and meetings with key stakeholders.

## 3. Term

The Chair will be elected by members of the [insert name] Town Centre Partnership at the Partnership's Annual General, which takes place in [insert month] every year.

If the Chair needs to step down, for any reason, during the term, they will need to give the Board at least one-month notice, so the process to recruit a new Chair can be activated.

Should the Chair of the Board not be available, the Board will elect a Vice-Chair who will act as the Chair of the Board and undertake assignments at the request of the Chair. In the event of neither role being available, a Chair-Nominee will Chair meetings of the Board.

*(On an occasion when a Chair or a Board member behaviour/conduct may be considered to be sufficiently unacceptable or to be damaging to the Partnership's own reputation/bringing it into disrepute, the Board can ask the Council to investigate any complaints (taking great care when dealing with an allegation of bringing the Partnership into disrepute) and a recommendation can be made to the Board, for them to consider and agree, if the behaviour amounts to a dismissal).*

#### **4. Principal responsibilities and competencies of the Chair role**

- **Leadership** - Provide leadership and clear strategic direction for the Partnership and its Board, to realise the Partnership's vision and maximise positive impact. Ensure that the Board operates within the Partnership's Terms of Reference and Objectives. Act as an ambassador for the Partnership and the town centre. Uphold the Nolan Principles (see 5 below).
- **Action Planning** - Ensure that the Board reviews progress of the Partnership's Action Plan, explores opportunities to 'join the dots', and monitors and mitigates risks. Open to change, and capable of adapting plans and behaviour to account for changes to circumstance or new information.
- **Chairing Meetings** -. Ensure that Board meetings are well planned, meaningful and outcome driven. Ensure that Board members are fully engaged in a collegiate approach, and that collective decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the town centre.
- **Conflict Management** – Experience at addressing and resolving any conflicts within the Board should they arise. Communicates in a way that promotes understanding and buy-in from others, and successes of the Partnership.
- **Interpersonal and Team building skills** - Foster collegiate and constructive relationships between Board members. Ensure that the Board incorporates the right

balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to lead the Partnership effectively. Strong ability to operate with an independent and objective mindset in the best interests of the Partnership and maintain effective professional relationships with a variety of stakeholders.

## 5. The Nolan Principles:

- **Selflessness:** The Chair should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity:** The Chair must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity:** The Chair must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability:** The Chair is accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness:** The Chair should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty:** The Chair should be truthful at all times.
- **Leadership:** The Chair should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

*Source: IntoPlaces Ltd.*

## Appendix 3: Expression of Interest for Chair of the Board Template

Principal Responsibilities and Competencies	Complete how you meet each competency <i>(Max 200 words in each section)</i>	Score
<p><b>1. Leadership</b> - Provide leadership and clear strategic direction for the Partnership and its Board, to realise the Partnership’s vision and maximise positive impact. Ensure that the Board operates within the Partnership’s Terms of Reference and Objectives. Act as an ambassador for the Partnership and the town centre. Uphold the Nolan Principles.</p>		
<p><b>2. Action Planning</b> - Ensure that the Board reviews progress of the Partnership’s Action Plan, explores opportunities to ‘join the dots’, and monitors and mitigates risks. Open to change, and capable of adapting plans and behaviour to account for changes to circumstance or new information.</p>		
<p><b>3. Chairing Meetings</b> - Ensure that Board meetings are well planned, meaningful and outcome driven. Ensure that Board members are fully engaged in a collegiate approach, and that collective decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the town centre.</p>		
<p><b>4. Conflict Management</b> – Experience at addressing and resolving any conflicts within the Board should they arise.</p>		

<p>Communicates in a way that promotes understanding and buy-in from others, and successes of the Partnership.</p>		
<p><b>5. Interpersonal and Team building skills</b>          - Foster collegiate and constructive relationships between Board members. Ensure that the Board incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to lead the Partnership effectively. Strong ability to operate with an independent and objective mindset in the best interests of the Partnership and maintain effective professional relationships with a variety of stakeholders.</p>		

*Source: IntoPlaces Ltd.*