

## **Terms of Reference**

### **LSP HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY GROUP**

#### **1. Introduction**

The City of Durham Local Strategic Partnership has established six LSP Policy Groups, together with a cross cutting group, through which partners of the LSP work to progress their collective aims.

These terms of reference provide a structure for the LSP Housing and Environment Policy Group and define its relationship to other groups, the Community Network, the LSP Executive Group and the LSP Board. The Policy Group will endeavour to operate an inclusive partnership with an open and transparent style; contributions and involvement will be equally respected from all partners regardless of size, statutory status, etc.

#### **2. Vision of the LSP Housing and Environment Policy Group**

To conserve and enhance the quality of the built and natural environment, and to secure the development of sustainable communities through promoting:

- responses to climate change including reduction of carbon emissions and planning / preparation for unavoidable consequences;
- residential development and housing that is affordable, energy efficient, low impact and well connected to local amenities and open spaces;
- conservation of natural resources including soil, water, minerals, air and mitigation of impacts associated with their consumption including pollution;
- conservation and enhancement of biodiversity within natural and built environments;
- adherence with the principles of the waste minimisation hierarchy (reduce - re-use – recycle / compost) and recovery of energy from waste;
- transport diversification through improved facilities for walkers and cyclists;
- improved access to public transport / community transport considering cost, reliability, network coverage;
- reduced road congestion and improved road safety through car sharing, transport diversification, local service provision;
- design/action that reduces antisocial behaviour, crime and the fear of crime;
- action to create cleaner urban environments through tackling issues such as litter, vandalism, dog fouling;
- local provision of essential services, e.g. doctors, schools, nurseries;
- access to information within the home, community and natural environment to raise people's awareness of local and global issues;
- healthy living through improved diet and physical activity;
- a sustainable local economy with stable levels of employment focusing on rural diversification, tourism, local production and purchasing.

### **3. Membership**

Membership of the Policy Group will be open to any organisation or group active in the fields of housing and environment. Members may be drawn from statutory, independent commercial, and not-for-profit agencies, and from voluntary/community service providers, residents and tenants.

Each agency or organisation on the Policy Group will be expected to ensure that their representation is at an appropriate level in their structure. This can be expressed as a senior officer or key individual, who is able to influence the responses of their organisation. They will be committed to ensuring that there is an active dialogue between their organisation and the Policy Group.

Delegate representation will be subject to the approval of Group members, and will include the Group meetings themselves, and any task groups, etc. that may be convened from time to time.

Membership of the group will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

### **4. Chairperson/Coordinator**

Each group is expected to provide a Chairman who will represent the group on the LSP Executive Group and facilitate the working of the Policy Group's meetings by securing the equal involvement of all partners to ensure discussions are reflective of the breadth of representation and perspectives. Each group is required to provide a coordinator who will establish the agenda of items to be discussed by the group in partnership with the Chairman, and support implementation of decisions made by the group.

The Chairperson will be appointed by the group and will serve for 3 years, after this period the chair may be re-elected for a further 3 years but may not serve for longer than 6 years. The Co-ordinator will be agreed in consultation with the LSP group members.

Secretariat for the group will be provided through the Co-ordinator.

### **5. Frequency of Meetings**

It is expected that the Policy Group will meet every two months to fit in with the Executive Group/LSP Board's reporting arrangements and timetables. Further meetings, short-life task groups, topic groups and the like may meet as frequently as the members of the group deem necessary to discharge the work of the Group. Any decision making will require a quorum of 1/3 of the group's membership.

### **6. Performance Monitoring**

A suite of relevant indicators will be developed to enable monitoring of relevant targets.

## 7. Aims of Policy Group

- To develop a District-wide vision to consolidate the purpose of the H&E Policy group.
- To identify a District-wide set of strategic aims, which fulfil the overall vision of the LSP Policy Group.
- To ensure that these aims reflect the aspirations and priorities identified by the local community with respect to Housing and the Environment.
- To identify and analyse issues connected with Housing and Environment, and consider their inter-relationships with the issues relevant to other policy groups.
- To facilitate the development of a partnership approach with all local service providers to ensure linked agendas and a focussed, shared vision in the production of strategies and other relevant initiatives which improve quality of life through creating sustainable communities.
- To drive partnership working with community groups and initiatives at a local and district level to improve quality of life through development of built and natural environments, to create better neighbourhoods, confident communities and promote social inclusion.
- To work with regional and sub regional agencies, local service providers and local business to assist with the conservation and enhancement of the built and natural environments.
- To develop access to services to improve the quality of life for the districts residents and to attract visitors and inward investment, eg transport, ICT
- To disseminate agency held information and strategies which contribute to LSP endorsed strategies to avoid duplication and wasted resources.
- To work with communities suffering high levels of social deprivation to bring about regeneration and improvement to people's quality of life.
- To identify trends in the housing market that threaten the stability and sustainability of communities, and seek to positively influence markets through development control measures
- To 'bend' mainstream funding, and identify other potential sources of funding, to meet agreed aims.
- To establish if necessary, and / or liaise with, other groups or partnerships operating within the District covering issues relating to housing and the environment.
- To review the vision and aims on an annual basis, to ensure that the LSP Policy Group is continuing to respond to agreed priorities.
- To ensure effective liaison is maintained with similar groups within the neighbouring LSPs and the County Durham Strategic Partnership, through representation and the referral of relevant issues.

## 8. Housing and Environment Issues

