

Brierley Hill Town Centre Partnership

Draft terms of reference

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1.0 Introduction

This document sets out the terms of reference for Brierley Hill town centre partnership (BHTCP) and covers its structure, remit, membership and operation.

2.0 Strategic structure, development area and purpose

2.1 Structure

The BHTCP consists of a network of partnerships and partners working in the best interests of Brierley Hill town centre. The partnership forms a sub-group of the Economic Development and Regeneration Partnership (EDRP), which is part of the Local Strategic Partnership for Dudley Borough (Dudley Community Partnership).

One of the key roles for Dudley Community Partnership (DCP) is to extend and improve partnership working within the borough whilst ensuring that communities are actively involved in helping shape and determine service delivery. DCP has a commitment to address any inequalities that exist so as to ensure no one is disadvantaged by virtue of where they live etc. Working with all partners and the community, DCP strives to improve the quality of life for all those who live or work in the borough.

The EDRP brings together a range of key agencies, which hold an interest in the skills, business, employment, unemployment, inward investment and economic regeneration agendas.

The partnership has agreed and set out its strategic priorities for the next three years, which are to:

1. Optimise the opportunities for local people including the most vulnerable people and those from deprived areas to obtain local jobs
2. Support and develop new and existing businesses and to attract inward investment
3. Encourage and support the development of a diverse and dynamic employment base that increases the proportion of well paid jobs
4. Improve the economic and environmental infrastructure of Dudley borough and its town centres

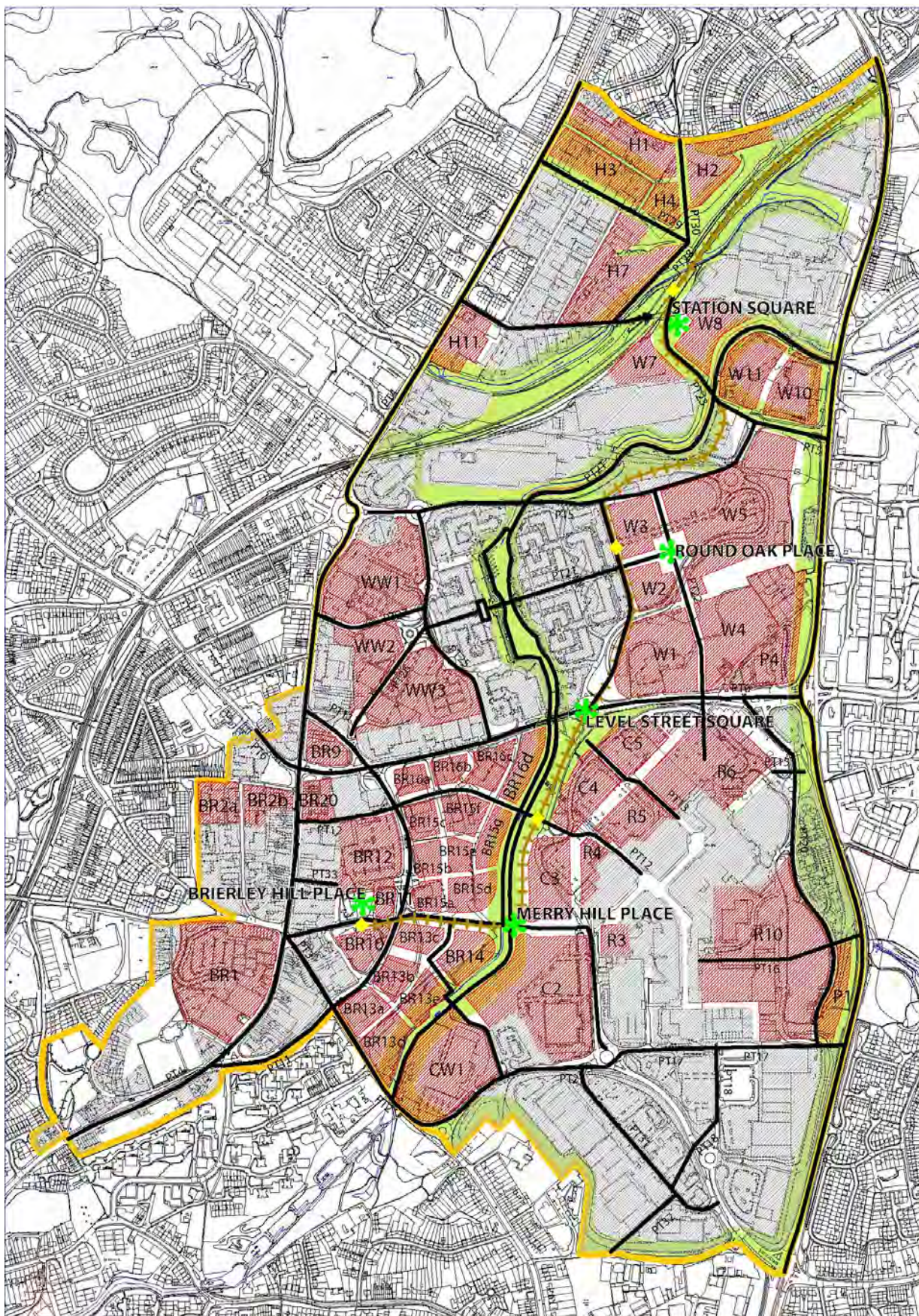
5. Champion the interests and assets of the borough, securing resources and improving its position regionally, nationally and internationally

DCP is keen to ensure that it is very outcome focussed and able to monitor its progress by an extensive range of performance indicators.

The strategic aims are captured within the economic strategy, which acts as the EDRP's business plan. Key areas of work include:

1. Ensuring that the group is fully informed about inward investment and economic regeneration activity so that plans can be made to ensure action with employers/developers is taken via initiatives such as local employment partnerships and Train to Gain. This should lead to local unemployed people being given an opportunity for job interviews and once in employment to be up-skilled
2. Overseeing the economic development elements of the local area agreement to ensure work is being driven forward against the national indicator set
3. Supporting a networking opportunity to ensure mainstream government funded initiatives are maximised and any additional funding that Dudley Council or its partners receive is used in a way that adds value to the mainstream offer and does not duplicate existing services. Essentially, ensure coherence and alignment of provision to support employers and individuals

Brierley Hill Town Centre - Development Area Boundary



2.2 Purpose

The partnership's purpose and objective is to support the council, businesses and the community in:

- Promoting Brierley Hill town centre's renaissance through its unique character, cultural assets, development and tourism
- Acting as a consultee in town centre projects and policy initiatives (development plans, local development frameworks, council sponsored and private sector projects)
- Providing a forum for reporting back progress of key projects complementary to the delivery of Brierley Hill town centre Area Action Plan. Subgroups to the partnership may be established when necessary to facilitate more detailed work e.g. townscape heritage initiative working group.
- Encouraging opportunities to assist and work with organisations to achieve major new development for the creation of new employment prospects and developing an economy with diversity of opportunities including: manufacturing, information communication technologies, recreation and leisure, tourism, business services and retail
- Supporting and promoting town centre community safety initiatives
- Supporting and promoting town centre events
- Supporting and promoting a healthy town
- Maximising the economic opportunities in the town centre, creating better job and investment prospects to ensure it retains its distinctive local character and liveliness
- Supporting the council and other partners bidding for resources
- Supporting town centre management issues; and

- Promoting the town's 'liveability' by creating a place that people want to visit, live and invest in

3.0 Principles, membership and structure

3.1 Principles

All members of the partnership shall be committed to applying the principles established by Dudley community partnership:

Accountability
Community involvement
Equality and inclusion
Sustainability
Integrity
Maximising opportunity
Maximising resources
Partnership
Quality service and continuous improvement

3.2 General role of partnership members

The general role of all members will be to take a town-wide perspective and to develop consensus in the best interests of the town as a whole.

Members will bring their own perspectives and also represent their own organisation, interest group or area and will be recognised for their valuable contribution in bringing ideas, knowledge and expertise to the process.

3.3 Membership

The partnership has the right to invite other organisations to join if deemed on the basis they will make a meaningful contribution to the partnership.

Members will be recorded on the partnership database with the details of which organisation they represent and contact details for correspondence and communication.

Elected members and council officers who are approached or wish to become a partnership member must comply with Dudley Council's guide to partnership working code of practice.

Membership is not transferable to any other person or organisation without the express consent of the chairman.

Each member must attend an induction programme to gain a full understanding of the partnership's rational and clear objectives.

A no discrimination policy is operated and all members are equal. The Partnership wants to make sure that everyone is treated fairly, regardless of gender, race, disability, ethnic origin, marital status, age, religion, parental or property status or sexuality. The Chairman and other Board Members will monitor all proceedings to make sure Members and visitors are treated fairly and without prejudice.

Membership will be open to the following organisations and any other organisation deemed appropriate by the executive committee and members:

Political

Cabinet Member – Economic Regeneration or nominated representative

Cabinet Member – Transportation or nominated representative

One Ward Member from Brierley Hill Ward

Statutory bodies

Police – Town centre sergeant

Fire – Station commander

Ambulance – Station commander

Job Centre Plus - Manager

Business and agencies

Brierley Hill Traders Association

Primary Care Trust

Black Country Chamber

Business Link West Midlands

Dudley College

Stourbridge College

Community groups

Youth Council

Age Concern

Disability Consultation Group

Churches Together
Dudley Borough Business Crime Partnership
Dudley Centre for Equality and Diversity
Friends of Marsh Park

Historical and archaeological

English Heritage
Dudley Historic Society

The following officers of the council attend for the provision of information and feedback only:

Dudley Council officers

Business Development and Partnerships Manager
Regeneration Project Officer
Brierley Hill Town Centre Manager

3.4 Partnership executive committee

The partnership will hold elections at the inaugural meeting and every two years nearest to 31 March at the annual meeting to appoint an executive committee consisting of chairman, deputy chairman and secretary.

The maximum term an individual can serve on the executive committee is four years.

3.5 Role of chairman

To effectively chair meetings and ensure active participation from all members.

Provide, on behalf of the partnership members, direction and support for each organisation's issues or concerns.

Provide intelligent challenge and response to issues and proposals raised at partnership meetings.

Achieve alignment and coordination across the partnership, fostering an environment of consensus and joint working.

Be a champion for the renaissance of Brierley Hill town centre.

Assist in the production of a business plan and measure outputs against the plan.

3.6 Role of vice chairman

The vice chairman will support the chairman in the conduct of partnership meetings.

Provide an extra point of contact for issues or concerns to be raised by members.

Deputise for the chairman in their absence.

Assist in the production of a business plan and measure outputs against the plan.

3.7 Role of secretary

The secretary will effectively coordinate the collation and distribution of agendas and minutes.

Invite and arrange the visit of any guest or visitor the partnership feel may be of benefit and able to contribute to the meetings.

Be a point of contact for members to raise any items for agenda.

3.8 Role of partnership support officer

The council will provide administration support for the board. The support officer will take minutes and distribute papers for meetings and arrange any technical support required.

3.9 Termination of membership

Membership is terminated if a member:

1. Gives written notice to the chairman stating they wish to withdraw from the partnership on a given date
2. No longer holds a key position within the organisation they represent
3. A representative of the organisation has not attended three consecutive meetings
4. Organisation has been terminated
5. Is instructed to resign by the chairman following an investigation of complaints from other members as to the member's conduct

3.9.1 Representation

Flexibility and continuity are essential to partnership working; each BHTCP member organisation may identify a named substitute to attend meetings when their Partnership Member is not available. The substitute person will be held in a register by the secretary. Substitutes should be suitable senior representatives who are able to speak on behalf of their organisation.

4.0 Operation of board meetings and executive

4.1 Frequency of meetings

The board will normally be held every six to eight weeks and executive meetings will be convened as required.

4.2 Decision making

Practicable business will be conducted in the spirit of partnership and consensus will be sought without recourse to votes. In exceptional circumstances, where a vote proves necessary each member will have a single vote and in the event of a tied vote the chairman will have the casting vote. The board quorum is eight members. Officers in attendance and representatives from government agencies will have a non-voting observing and advisory role.

4.3 Advisory arrangements

The executive and members will be supported in their work by council officers and government agency members. In addition it will exercise its responsibility to use a range of methods to consult widely on issues as appropriate.

4.4 Meeting procedures

Any member can request inclusion of an agenda item by contacting the secretary. This information will enable the chairman to prioritise agendas for board meetings.

Items for the agenda should be communicated two weeks before the next meeting.

Reports and any appendices should be received electronically by the partnership support officer 10 days prior to the meeting – **reports received after this deadline are not guaranteed to be included on the agenda.**

Reports should be in a standard format – a template is available from the partnership support officer and online.

Reports are presented on the agenda in three categories:

- Principal item for debate
 - Items for decision
 - Items for information
1. There will usually be only one principal item for debate or presentation on each agenda – an item for debate may be added to a future agenda by liaison with the secretary or partnership support officer
 2. Presentations should be no longer than 15 minutes, allowing time for debate
 3. Presentation material should be received by the partnership support officer 24 hours before the meeting – equipment and set up for presentations will be provided and facilitated by the partnership support officer
 4. There will usually be up to four items for decision on each agenda. Items can be added to future agendas if the current agenda is considered full
 5. Items for information - reports will not be presented but taken as read, however members will be able to comment or ask questions at the meeting

6. The partnership support officer should be informed of any additional persons attending the meeting to present a report, take part in a presentation or debate
7. Papers for the meetings will be made available by the partnership support officer at least one week before the meeting
8. Partnership members will be able to choose whether they receive their papers electronically or via paper copy in the post
9. Copies of papers for meetings will also be placed on the partnership's website: brierleyhilltowncentrepartnership.dudley.gov.uk

If a heated dispute arises between two or more attendees the chairman has the right to call a halt to the item under discussion and reconvene the item at the next meeting or to remove the agenda item completely.

Minutes will be approved by the chairman or deputy prior to distribution to all attendees within eight working days of the meeting. The minutes will then be made available to the public by posting on the BHTCP website.

4.5 Special general meeting

A special general meeting of the partnership may be called at any time by the chairman of the executive committee and may also be called if 10 or more members write to the chairman of the executive committee, stating the business to be considered.

4.6 Venues for meetings

As far as practicable venues for meetings will be located in Brierley Hill or within easy reach of the town centre.

5.0 Declarations of interest

Comments from the group must be taken at each meeting in the interest of the well being of the town,

Board members will record on a register any personal or professional interest which could come into conflict with their responsibilities as members of the board,

The form that should be used, together with guidance notes on its completion, is available from the partnership support officer.

A personal interest, even if that not the interest of representing organisation must be registered.

6.0 Annual general meeting

An annual meeting and conference will normally be held to review progress on or before 31 March each year.

7.0 Marketing and communications

7.1 Principles and values

The aim is to promote clearly and honestly the BHTCP's activities and decisions to local people and businesses and position the partnership positively in the eyes of its stakeholders.

7.2 Media

The chairman (or deputy if chairman absent) are the only persons to issue media releases or media statements, organise a press conference or invite the press to an event.

All press enquiries should also be routed through the Chairman.

If a member of the press or media makes contact with a Partnership Member for comment the protocol is:

- (1) Take the name of the journalist, the publication they represent and their Contact details,
- (2) Advise the journalist to contact the Chairman direct for any comment required On behalf of the Partnership and provide them contact details.

8.0 Review and evaluation

8.1 Process

As near as possible to the anniversary of the partnership's inauguration the chairman may instruct a review of the terms of reference, business plan and key objectives. This will be carried out using a suitable and relevant evaluation tool that can be used in conjunction with a suitably qualified independent person or body.

8.2 Recommendations

A report on recommendations and improvements from the review process will be presented to partnership members by the chairman for discussion and implementation within eight weeks of the review process.

8.3 Risk assessment

Risk management is central to the strategic management of the partnership. A risk assessment will help to identify and address the risks and challenges facing the partnership and in doing so increase the likelihood of successfully achieving objectives. Assessments will be carried out on a regular basis to assist the executive committee in its decision-making process and steering members.

9.0 Development and training

Presentations and appropriate training will be offered to members at regular intervals, for them to obtain an understanding of current legislation and best practice techniques for items that are relevant.

10.0 Executive Board remuneration

Due to the nature of their workload and responsibility, Executive Board members are entitled to claim for or have use of the following:-

- Partnership mobile phone
- Travel cost or car mileage expense @ .45p per mile for journey's on Partnership business
- Car parking costs
- Supply of stationery for Partnership business only
- Postage for Partnership business

Any claim for the above must be with prior agreement of the Partnership Manager and all claims made at the end of each month and will be paid within 30

days. The use and supply of these resources will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

This document has been produced in conjunction with the following guides:-

Communities and Local Government Guide

Managing Town Centre Partnerships – A Guide for Practitioners October 2008

Dudley MBC

A Guide to Partnership Working – 2007

Dudley MBC

Partnership Evaluation Tool - 2007

Draft