

# DT11 Forum Community Partnership Terms of Reference (draft revisions)

## Aim

To be an area voice for community planning by involving a wide range of partners (see Membership) in the DT11 postcode area (the DT11 area) and to pursue any initiatives as decided by the DT11 Forum Community partnership (the DT11 Forum).

The objectives of the DT11 Forum are to:

1. Encourage a wide membership and representation in the DT11 Forum
2. Actively engage with the wider community
3. Help and guide partnership projects and working parties
4. Ensure inclusiveness in all of the DT11 Forum's activities and procedures
5. Work to ensure the views of minority, disadvantaged and hard to reach groups are included in decision making or activities and in projects undertaken by the DT11 Forum or its members.
6. Adapt to opportunities as they arise or circumstances change
7. Take account of the Nolan principles in all of the DT22 Forum's activities when representing the views of local people (see Appendix 1).
8. Establish a separate structure which will act as a legally and financially accountable body in the event that liability falls on any one or number of members of the DT11 Forum.

The functions of the DT11 Forum are to:

1. Consult upon and implement the Community Strategic Plan
2. Be responsible for the implementation and review of the Action Plan
3. Be a forum for discussion through both formal and informal meetings of issues affecting community planning
4. Act as a key contact and liaison point for organisations, groups and individuals so that it is both a conduit for information exchange and networking and undertake consultation on issues affecting the DT11 area, its communities, environment or economic sustainability.
5. Encourage local residents in Blandford Forum and the surrounding rural areas to participate in the community planning process, along with the town and parish councils.
6. Establish a strategy for regeneration in the DT11 area, to be used when talking to other groups or bodies such as CPEND (Community Partnership Executive in North Dorset)
7. Encourage community groups to become members and participate actively in the Partnership and its projects.

8. Encourage volunteers, as working group members or as individuals, to participate in the DT11 Forum and its projects
9. Make agendas and minutes of the DT11 Forum available to local residents in the DT11 area and to consider publishing an annual report that includes information on: the role and remit of the organisation; its plans or strategy; the membership of the DT11 Forum and where further information can be obtained.
10. Nominate and mandate representatives to join various outside groups and bodies, such as the Community Partnership Executive for North Dorset, when required. These nominees will report the outcome of attended meetings to the DT11 Forum with a written report or verbal update.
11. Be directly involved with or assist in projects as decided by the membership.
12. Establish a company limited by guarantee, complying with the necessary audit requirements of Companies House and the Charity Commission, to undertake activities or projects which could result in financial or legal liabilities on the Partnership members.

## DT11 Forum operating structure

### Officers of the DT11 Forum

A Chair is to be elected at the AGM from amongst the membership to serve for one year. A Vice Chair and Treasurer are to be elected to run concurrently with the Chair's term.

The DT11 Forum may appoint additional officers, such as a website manager, as the need arises.

### DT11 Forum Office:

The DT11 Forum will establish and maintain a Community Office with the support of an Administrative Assistant and volunteers.

### DT11 Forum Management Group:

The DT11 Forum will appoint a DT11 Forum Management Group to ensure the efficiency and responsiveness of the DT11 Forum on a day-to-day basis.

The main duties of the DT11 Forum Management Group are to:

- Carry out the research and review functions for the DT11 Forum.
- Recommend priorities for action
- Guide the work programme
- Assess projects arising from the Community Planning process in the DT11 area, or identified by DT11 Forum members, and recommend how they could be delivered through the DT11 Forum or referred on to either the accountable structure, DT11 Forum, Ltd., or other similar body.
- Compile agenda items or papers for the regular Partnership meetings.

## Geographical area

The DT11 Forum will seek to represent the communities in the following parishes:

Blandford St. Mary  
Blandford Forum  
Bryanston  
Charlton Marshall  
Chettle  
Child Okeford  
Durweston  
Hanford  
Hilton  
Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton  
Langton Long  
Lower Winterborne  
Milborne St Andrew  
Milton Abbas  
Pimperne  
Shillingstone  
South Tarrant Valley  
Spetisbury  
Stourpaine  
Tarrant Gunville  
Tarrant Hinton  
Tarrant Monkton & Launceston  
Turnworth  
Winterborne Clenston  
Winterborne Houghton  
Winterborne Stickland  
Winterborne Whitechurch

## Membership

Member Organisations (to be amended / updated)

All Parish & Town Councils in the DT11 area  
All Parish Planning groups in the DT11 area  
Blandford Camp  
The Blandford Schools Network  
Chamber of Commerce  
North Dorset Citizens Advice Bureau  
Blandford Youth Trust  
Blandford Age Concern

Nordcat  
PACT  
RDTA (Rural Dorset Tourism Association)  
PPI (Patient and Public Involvement Forum) or its successor organisation  
Blandford Youth Service

Member organisations will be entitled to vote. Any community group or organisation within the DT11 area can request to become a voting member. Any such membership will need the approval of the Forum.

- Although invitations to meetings of the DT11 Forum will go to the Parish Council, the representative sent does not have to be a councillor but could be someone involved with a Parish Plan, a local community group or similar organisation.
- Each organisation is to provide one representative who will have one vote, with the exception of Blandford Forum Town Council which will be entitled to send two representatives and have two votes.

## Permanent Invitees

Dorset Community Action  
Dorset County Council: nominated councillor  
North Dorset District Council: link officer  
North Dorset District Council: link councillor  
Police  
Dorset Primary Care Trust  
Signpost Housing  
Members of the Public  
Members of the Press  
M.P. for area

\*Other organisations or officers of above organisations may be invited for their expertise to address specific items of the agenda. Invitees do not have a vote.

## Partnership Principles

1. A community development worker will support the DT11 Forum community partnership: the work programme (**whose?**) will be presented to the DT11 Forum by the Management Group on a regular basis, either by written communication or at the regular DT11 Forum meetings.
2. The Forum will meet every two months or as required. (**By whom?**)
3. An agenda will be circulated at least one week prior to the meeting. (**How?**) Only agenda items can result in a decision/action taken
4. Any member can propose agenda items at least two weeks before a meeting. Additional items can be tabled at the start of meetings but their inclusion will depend on available time, and will be at the discretion of the Chairman

## 5. Voting

- a. Decisions will be reached by majority vote.
  - b. Only members of the DT11 Forum who are in attendance at a meeting are eligible to vote. (If the nominated representative of an organisation is unable to attend, any councillor or member of that organisation may vote on behalf of the organisation when mandated by their organisation to do so). T
  - c. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair has the casting vote.
  - d. If the Chair considers it necessary, voting cards will be handed out to each eligible member, as taken from the List of Attendees at the meeting, prior to the vote being taken.
6. Minutes will be taken of each meeting and circulated promptly. (By whom and to whom?)
  7. Meetings will be open meetings. Any member of the public in the DT11 area can request an item be placed on the agenda if notified two weeks prior to the meeting. All such requests will constitute item 1 of the agenda and the member of the public making the request may be invited to speak to the Forum on the item raised.
  8. Invitees with specialist knowledge may be asked by the Chair to attend the meeting to speak and /or give a presentation.
  9. Agendas, reports and minutes will be available to anyone(?) on request and will be posted on village websites. (What about members' websites?)
  10. Sub-groups/working parties may be set up by the DT11 Forum with terms of reference and may identify a Chair. Members of these groups can include invitees and members of the public from the DT11 area but at least two members of the DT11 Forum should be included in every group. Minutes of the groups will be circulated to members of the DT11 Forum and reports made to meetings of the DT11 Forum on a regular basis
  11. Changes to the Terms of Reference can only be made at a properly constituted DT11 Forum meeting and are to be noted at the end of the written record of the Terms of Reference.
  12. Decisions can only be made at quorate meetings. To be quorate at least ten members with voting rights must be present.
  13. Meetings will rotate around the DT11 area.
  14. An Annual General Meeting will be held ( at which officers will be elected). (Date/month?)
  15. An open annual meeting will be held at which the DT11 Forum will detail its progress throughout the year and seek views and take questions from a larger audience.? (How does this tie in with the AGM?)

### NOLAN PRINCIPLES

#### The Seven Principles of Public Life

**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 organisations 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 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.

#### Elements of Best Practice

Best practice, subject always to proportionality for smaller organisations, includes:

##### Appointments

- A publicly available written appointments process;
- Job descriptions and person specification;
- The use of advertisement and/or consultation with interested bodies and other forms of canvassing;
- The encouragement of nominations (including self-nominations);
- The sifting of candidates by a nominations committee;
- Defined terms of appointment after which reappointment should not be automatic.

##### Openness

- Making the agendas and minutes of governing body meetings widely available, together with board papers where this will not inhibit frankness and clarity;
- Publicising forthcoming meetings and summarising decisions in a newsletter or through some user-friendly method;
- Holding an open annual meeting at which board members can be questioned by the public and press;
- Setting up more specialised consultation bodies/groups for important interest groups;
- Publishing an annual report which includes information on the role and remit of the body, its plans or strategy, the membership of the board, and where further information can be obtained;
- Publishing audit reports;
- Making publications available widely as possible, for example by sending them to interested parties and putting them in local public libraries.

#### Codes of Conduct

- A statement of the aims and values of the body;
- Statements of the obligations of the body towards its customers, staff, community, and other interested parties;
- Information about the body's approach to openness and arrangements for acquiring information about its activities;
- Procedures for handling inquiries and complaints;
- Procedures for raising complaints with an independent body.

#### Whistle blowing

- A clear statement that malpractice is taken seriously in the organisation and an indication of the sorts of matters regarded as malpractice;
- Respect for the confidentiality of staff raising concerns if they wish, and the opportunity to raise concerns outside the line management structure;
- Penalties for making false and malicious allegations;
- An indication of the proper way in which concerns may be raised outside the organisation if necessary.