

WANDSWORTH LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Constitution and Terms of Reference

Revised January 2007



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INTRODUCTION

1. These terms of reference set out the ground rules for the operation of the Wandsworth Local Strategic Partnership (WLSP). They are designed to support WLSP members in understanding their role and responsibilities and in ensuring that the business of the WLSP is carried out in an effective, professional and transparent way.
2. The terms of reference apply equally to all members of the WLSP unless otherwise stated.

PURPOSE OF THE WANDSWORTH LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (WLSP)

3. The WLSP has been established in Wandsworth as the 'premier partnership' in the Borough. It acts as the over-arching strategic group of the Borough. Its aim is to work together with all sectors of the community on a range of key inter-related issues to improve the quality of life in the Borough, making it a better place in which to live and work.
4. This purpose is summarised in the WLSP's vision statement set out in the Borough's Community Strategy. Partners are committed to making Wandsworth:-

'A place which is safer, healthier, more prosperous and sustainable – a good place to live and work now and a better place in the future.'

5. The WLSP will achieve this aim by working in partnership across the six strategic priority areas set out in the Community Strategy:-

- (a) Making Wandsworth safer;
- (b) Improving the local environment;
- (c) Building a prosperous and vibrant community;
- (d) Improving education for all, including the Every Child Matters Agenda;
- (e) Improving health and social care; and
- (f) Meeting housing needs.

6. The WLSP members will contribute to this process by:-

- (a) providing and sharing information to set strategic aims for the Borough;
- (b) overseeing the development, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the agreed Sustainable Community Strategy;
- (c) agreeing, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Local Area Agreement;
- (d) promoting equality of opportunity;
- (e) tackling cross-cutting problems affecting the Borough;
- (f) encouraging constructive engagement of the local community in the above activities.

MEMBERSHIP

7. The WLSP should include representatives from the public, private and voluntary and community sector.
8. The WLSP is intended to be an effective decision-making body and its size should generally not exceed about 25 members.
9. All members of the WLSP have an equal standing and no one organisation can assume a dominance. All decisions made will be made as a Partnership.
10. As at 1st January 2007 the balance of membership by sector is as follows:-

Statutory sector (Total 11)

Wandsworth Borough Council (5)(4 majority party and 1 minority party member)
Wandsworth Primary Care Trust (2)
Metropolitan Police (1)
Job Centre Plus (1)
Learning and Skills Council (1)
South Thames College (1)

Business Sector (Total 6)

Balham Town Centre Partnership (1)
Clapham Junction Town Centre Partnership (1)
Putney Town Centre Partnership (1)
Tooting Town Centre Partnership (1)
Wandsworth Town Centre Partnership (1)
Wandsworth Chamber of Commerce (1)

Voluntary and Community Sector (Total 8)

Borough Residents' Forum (1)
Roehampton Partnership (1)
Wandsworth Environment Forum (1)
Wandsworth Care Alliance (1)
Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency (1)
The Older People's Network (1)
The Children and Young People's VCS Network (1)
The Crime Virtual Network (1)

Role of all members

11. Members of the WLSP are expected to participate fully in the business of the partnership to achieve the aims set out in paragraphs 4 to 6 above. As such the member organisations' appointed representatives should:-

- (a) be of sufficient seniority and authority within their organisation to enable them to contribute to the WLSP in a significant way;
- (b) represent the policies or view of their organisation or partnership where relevant, rather than any personal view;

- (c) provide information, data and consultation material to the WLSP as appropriate to inform discussions and decisions;
- (d) Ensure they read all agenda papers prior to the meeting so they can make an informed contribution to discussions and decisions;
- (e) ensure that the policies and decisions of the WLSP are widely disseminated within the organisation and cascaded to staff/members as appropriate.
- (f) sign up to the highest standards of behaviour in public life to maintain the credibility and integrity of the partnership. Members shall commit to uphold the Nolan Principles for Public Life set out in Annex 1.

12. In particular, WLSP members are asked to -

- a. ensure that the aims and objectives of the organisation are aligned with those of the WLSP to provide consistency. These should be built into operational plans, such as business plans of all member organisations where appropriate;
- b. align planning and budget cycles as far as possible given the statutory and operational circumstances relevant to their organisation;
- c. endorse the need within the organisation for performance management systems of all partner organisations to be developed and related to community strategy objectives;
- d. align consultation with other WLSP organisations which share the same client base, and with the work of the WLSP where appropriate; and
- e. investigate the possibility of streamlining budgets in future years to meet community strategy objectives and to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided to the public.

Role of the Local Authority

13. Wandsworth Borough Council has a particular role in relation to the WLSP. The Government has recognised that democratic legitimacy confers a special responsibility to provide vision and leadership to local partnerships and, more importantly, to the local community. As such, the Government expects local authority leaders to agree the appointment of an WLSP chair, and for them to be key members of the WLSP.

14. Wandsworth Council will therefore continue to be an active member of the WLSP. It also provides the coordination, policy and administrative support to the WLSP in recognition of its role as community leader.

Voluntary and community sector (VCS) members

15. The WLSP recognises the importance of VCS representation but acknowledges that it faces particular challenges as a sector within the WLSP. VCS groups vary enormously in size, resources and capacity and in the size of “constituency” they represent. In addition they may represent key user groups, themes/issues or neighbourhood/localities (or all three). For all member organisations, this means building greater mutual understanding and recognition of the contributions different sectors make.

16. The current VCS members of the WLSP have been invited to join the WLSP to support each of the Borough's Community Strategy priorities:-

The Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency (WVSDA) which acts as a conduit to the sector as a whole, for example by having regular news items in the VCS newsletter on WLSP issues.

Making Wandsworth Safer: representative from Crime Virtual Network.

Improving the Local Environment: Wandsworth Environment Forum

Building a prosperous and vibrant community: WVSDA

Improving Education for All:- the Children and Young People's VCS Network (this would cover a much broader remit than education alone to reflect the national 'Every Child Matters' agenda).

Improving Health and Social Care:- Wandsworth Care Alliance and the Older People's Network

Meeting Housing Needs:- Borough Residents' Forum

17. VCS representatives on the WLSP are expected to

- (a) Primarily represent the interests of their network members;
- (b) offer expert advice in their field as service providers; and
- (c) advocate on behalf of service users or client groups which may find it difficult to access policy-making forums.

18. VCS participants are expected to reflect a wide range of interests and so need good support to enable them to do this. The WLSP will support VCS representatives by:

- (a) offering agenda briefing sessions where VCS representatives may meet to consider the material being presented, share issues of common concern and ensure that VCS interests are being fully reflected:
- (b) ensuring that agenda papers are despatched 2 weeks in advance to allow time for consideration and input from other network members;
- (c) considering particular training and capacity building needs in order to maintain an effective VCS contribution to the work of the partnership: and
- (d) promoting the principles set out in the Wandsworth Compact with the VCS.

Involvement of other groups

19. The WLSP aims to be inclusive. However, it acknowledges that representation on the partnership should not be tokenistic. A key emphasis on the WLSP's work will be to seek and reflect the views of the whole community, particularly Black and Minority Ethnic communities, faith communities, people with disabilities and young people.

20. The WLSP has agreed the following arrangements in order to ensure that these views can be accessed:-

- (a) Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. It is not easy to reflect the ethnic diversity of the borough in one individual or organisation. Therefore the WLSP will seek BME views and feedback through a variety of approaches including robust and focused consultation.
- (b) Faith groups: The WLSP will seek the views of local faith representatives via the WLSP Multi-Faith Sub-group and through a variety of approaches including robust and focused consultation. Issues highlighted by the WLSP Multi-Faith Sub-group will be fed back to the WLSP via the chair of the sub-group.
- (c) Young People:- The WLSP will access views through the arrangements set out in the draft engagement and participation strategy for children and young people.
- (d) People with disabilities: To utilise existing and well-founded communication and support mechanisms.

Period of office of WLSP members

- 21. In order to provide consistency and continuity, all current members of the Partnership are encouraged to remain members for a minimum of two years.
- 22. Where WLSP members have left the partner organisation that they represented, the partner organisations shall appoint new persons to replace them and fit the criteria as above.
- 23. The membership of the WLSP should be reviewed every two years, with the next review in January 2009.

GOVERNANCE

- 24. The WLSP will provide the forum for setting the strategic vision for the Borough, for capturing that vision in the Sustainable Community Strategy, and for agreeing priorities for improvement in the Local Area Agreement.
- 25. Responsibility for implementing plans and for driving delivery of outcomes is the role of the partners and thematic partnerships such as the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, which underpin the WLSP. Annex 2 sets out the relationship between the WLSP and these other key bodies.
- 26. Although the WLSP will be responsible for monitoring overall progress against targets, scrutinising areas of under-performance and questioning lead partners on the achievement of their LAA and Sustainable Community Strategy targets, each partner organisation will be ultimately responsible for delivery in their area and will continue to be accountable to their own management and executive structures.
- 27. The only formal sub-group to the WLSP is the Faith Sub-Group.
- 28. The WLSP will establish time-limited Task Groups where appropriate to work on specific issues or themes. In general, these would not have delegated powers and would report back to the WLSP.
- 29. Any Task Groups should have a balance of representation.

30. Decisions of the WLSP can only be implemented by consensus and are not binding on the policy and resources of the constituent partners without reference to and the agreement of the partner's own management or executive bodies.

WLSP MEETINGS AND ADMINISTRATION

Chairing the Partnership

31. The election of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman shall take place annually at the first meeting of the WLSP after the beginning of the municipal year (which begins in mid-May).

32. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the WLSP shall be elected by and from among the members of the WLSP.

33. Candidates for Chairman are required to be proposed and seconded by WLSP members at the meeting.

34. Should there be more than one nomination, a vote shall be taken by the WLSP to determine the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

35. In the absence of the Chairman at meetings, the Deputy Chairman shall chair the meeting. In the absence of both the Chairman and Deputy Chairman at a meeting, the members present shall elect one of their number to chair the meeting.

36. It is the role of the Chairman of a meeting of the WLSP to ensure that:-

- (a) the core business of the meeting is dealt with efficiently and thoroughly;
- (b) all members observe high standards of conduct including respect and tolerance of the views of others.
- (c) open and constructive discussion is facilitated;
- (d) all members of the WLSP members are encouraged to contribute; and
- (e) decisions are reached by consensus wherever possible.

37. In addition, in consultation with the WLSP Coordinator (the officer appointed designated by Wandsworth Council to coordinate the work of and support the WLSP), the Chairman is responsible for ensuring that:-

- a. the agenda for the meeting reflects the core business of the WLSP;
- b. agenda papers are despatched in a timely manner as specified in paragraph 18(b);
- c. WLSP partners are properly informed to address the business of the meeting either through written reports, presentations or by the attendance of the relevant professionals to advise the meeting; and
- d. actions and outcomes are properly recorded and circulated.

38. The Chairman's ruling with respect to the conduct of discussion and business at meetings of the WLSP shall be final.

Conduct at Meetings

39. WLSP Members are expected to carry out the role described in paragraph 11 above, have regard to the standards set out in paragraph 11(f) and declare any interest as set out in paragraph 42.

Attendance

40. WLSP member organisations are asked to make every effort to attend meetings of the Partnership. If their appointed representative cannot attend, they should formally submit apologies to the Secretary in advance of the meeting and make every effort to find a substitute or deputy to attend.

41. In cases of continued absence the 'three strikes rule' shall apply. This means that after a second consecutive absence by a WLSP member without the presence of a substitute, the Secretary shall send a reminder letter to the representative and the organisation they represent. A third consecutive non-attendance would normally lead to a decision by the WLSP that the organisation concerned should lose their seat on the WLSP.

Declaration of interest

42. Any organisation or individual with either a pecuniary or private interest in any agenda item is required to declare these. There will be an item early on the agenda of each meeting to remind attendees of this requirement. The representatives concerned will be barred from taking part in any vote required in respect of these items but, subject to the discretion of the Chairman, may take part in discussion.

Meeting Arrangements

Frequency

43. Meetings of the WLSP shall generally be held four times a year (quarterly), although more frequent meetings may be held if necessary (e.g. if requested by the Chairman or called for by 5 or more WLSP members in writing, submitted to the Secretary).

44. Meetings will generally be held in the evening, commencing at 7pm.

45. A forward programme of dates shall be agreed at the last meeting of the financial year, usually March.

Venue

46. WLSP meetings shall normally be held at Wandsworth Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, SW18 2PU.

Agenda Preparation and Despatch

47. Items for the agenda are the responsibility of the Chairman of the Partnership.

48. A draft list of agenda items shall be circulated to all members 1 month in advance of the meeting. Members will be invited to submit additional items for the agenda to the Chairman of the Partnership for consideration.

49. Agendas and associated documentation shall normally be despatched to WLSP members at least two weeks prior to the meeting date to allow sufficient time for WLSP members to read and absorb material before the meeting. These will be sent out electronically wherever possible in order to save paper, printing and postage costs.

Making the WLSP Accessible

50. The business of the WLSP should be accessible to all members of the community and partners with special needs. Accessibility can be achieved in the following ways:

- (a) ensuring adequate physical access to WLSP meetings;
- (b) providing signers, palantypists, interpreters or other specialist support on request to the Secretary;
- (c) ensuring that all agenda papers are available 2 weeks days before the meeting to allow for translation, brailleing, etc if necessary;and
- (d) observing RNIB and other guidance on the preparation and presentation of slide shows.

Quorum

51. No business shall be transacted at a meeting of the WLSP unless at least 11 voting members are present.

Decision-making

52. In order to make a decision democratically, a system of voting shall take place in respect of items needing a decision or agreement. This shall be done through a show of hands. However, a private vote can be proposed by any WLSP member in case of controversial items.

53. In the case of an equality of votes the Chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote. Any member dissenting from a resolution passed by the WLSP shall be entitled on request to have his/her name recorded in the minutes as having so dissented. The Chairman may also, in the case of an equality of votes, request a further more detailed report for a future meeting if time permits.

Administrative support

54. Administrative support to the WLSP shall be provided by the Director of Administration for Wandsworth Borough Council. As secretary to the WLSP this role would include minute taking, typing and agenda despatch. This secretarial function shall be provided for any organisation holding the Chairmanship of the WLSP with liaison with the Chairman's own secretariat for the purpose of fixing meeting dates, etc. In addition, the Council offers to lead on data collection and policy analysis to complement any activities of the Partner organisations.

55. Minutes of all meetings will be maintained, and signed by the Chairman (or the Deputy Chairman in his absence), after approval by the WLSP members of a true record of the meeting.

Accountability and openness

56. Accountability and openness are fundamental to the workings of the WLSP and the issues which are discussed. Decisions made at the meetings should also be transparent and made easily available to both the business and wider communities. For this reason, the agenda and minutes of all WLSP meetings shall be sent to all members of the Partnership and shall be made available on the WLSP's and all the members' public web-sites.

57. All WLSP meetings shall be open to the public and press. Deputations may be heard by prior arrangement with the Chairman and agreement with the WLSP. The period for a deputation to address a meeting shall be limited to a maximum of ten minutes.

58. The dates, agenda and papers for future meetings will be available on the Council's web-site two weeks prior to the meeting.

59. All members shall seek to follow the agreed Communications strategy which specifies in more detail the mechanisms for publicity and information about the WLSP and its work.

60. There might be occasions when business is confidential. In such cases the WLSP will be asked to approve a resolution to exclude to press and public.

Conflict Resolution

61. It is acknowledged that, at times, conflicting views and opinions might be expressed. In principle, the WLSP should aim to achieve consensus by focusing on clear, objective data, through full and open discussion and with respect for the views of all WLSP members.

62. Differences of opinion leading to conflict should be resolved in their early stages to avoid a detrimental impact on the working of the WLSP. For this reason, it is suggested that in the first instance, the issues in question should be discussed with the Chairman. Should the issue not be resolved at this stage, the item should be put on the agenda for discussion within a meeting of the WLSP and a vote taken where appropriate.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

63. Evaluation and assessment of the WLSP is fundamental to the effective working of the Partnership. It is important that all partners on the WLSP are held accountable for achieving the results from the decisions made by the Partnership. Regular progress reports shall be presented to the WLSP to monitor progress and alert members to any potential problems or issues. These reports shall be prepared by the responsible organisation either solely or in partnership with other organisations jointly responsible for achieving goals or objectives.

64. It is also important to ensure that the WLSP, as a partnership, functions effectively and is a sustainable structure, meaning that regular reviews will be necessary. A review shall be conducted on a regular basis with all WLSP members, considering the way the Partnership is structured, the WLSP's training needs, and the way in which work is conducted, for example

65. The WLSP must be able to demonstrate that its activities add-value to the borough and result in an improvement in the quality of life. Therefore it should develop robust performance management systems. In most cases these will be based around the systems established by constituent partners for operational service delivery, although the Council has responsibility for driving and supporting the performance management framework for the WLSP.

66. The main work of the WLSP shall be to develop, implement and monitor the Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategy. These shall be monitored as part of the WLSP's routine business and partners from all sectors will have an opportunity to participate in the monitoring process.

67. WLSP members shall receive a variety of reports during the year to monitor performance. For example, the WLSP shall receive six-monthly and year-end reports on progress of the LAA.

68. These high level reports shall be complimented by more detailed monitoring at the key partners and the thematic partnerships (e.g. The Crime, Drugs and Disorder Reduction Partnership, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership) which have operational responsibility for delivery and will raise issues of concern as appropriate with the WLSP. These partnerships will be complemented by the Council's own Overview and Scrutiny Committee arrangements which ensure that robust and transparent performance information is available in the public domain, and regularly published on the web.

69. Local operational and strategic service managers shall receive more frequent reports as part of their routine performance management arrangements in order to review and adjust performance as necessary.

70. Where an area of sustained under- performance against target is identified, the lead partner shall be expected to provide a full assessment of the reasons for this and a set of proposals to bring performance back on track.

71. The WLSP recognises that in exceptional circumstances there might be a need to make a fundamental reassessment of planned performance. The WLSP is committed to ensuring that a revised delivery plan or improvement plan is developed and implemented locally.

72. The WLSP shall prepare an annual report for all its stakeholders in March each year summarising its performance against its targets in order to demonstrate how effectively it has addressed them and the progress made in achieving its objectives.

RISK MANAGEMENT

73. The WLSP is confident that its approach is subject to good risk management procedures and therefore should successfully deliver improvements across all the borough's strategic priorities. These procedures reflect best practice and include:-

- (a) a shared understanding of the priorities by partners;
- (b) clearly defined measures of effectiveness/outcome;
- (c) clear allocation of responsibility for delivery;
- (d) consideration of risk as part of any proposals for service or policy development;
- (e) an effective framework for monitoring and evaluation which includes provision for taking action to anticipate and mitigate the risks of under achievement; and
- (f) sound project management of well-developed action/service or development plans using a Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed (SMART) approach to target setting.

EQUALITIES

74. All WLSP members are expected to have regard to the WLSP's own Equality of Opportunity Policy (adopted in June 2002 and revised in December 2006) which sets out

clearly its commitment to equal opportunities in its role as a key planning and co-ordination body serving the community of Wandsworth. This commitment builds on that of the individual partner organisations and their responsibilities under relevant equalities legislation for the promotion of equality of opportunity in policy development, service provision, training and employment.

75. The WLSP will seek to take forward the overall equalities agenda in all aspects of its work. The Equality of Opportunity Statement is attached at [Annex 3](#).

CONSULTATION

76. The WLSP is also committed to consult as widely as possible with local residents on a regular basis, with emphasis on traditionally hard-to-reach groups such as young people and minority groups.

77. The WLSP's approved Communication Strategy includes a commitment to robust and meaningful consultation. This includes a commitment that the Council should take a key advisory role during the co-ordination and instigation of formal consultation activities for WLSP and related business, since it bears the ultimate statutory responsibility for the Community Strategy. However, this does not mean that creative and joint approaches from WLSP members will not be most welcome, and considered essential in some cases.

78. The WLSP shall ensure that adopted consultative methods are representative of the community as a whole. This includes a continuing commitment, taking into consideration latest Council for Racial Equality (CRE) codes of practice, to consult with traditionally hard-to-reach groups including, amongst others, BME groups, young people and lone parents. Many of the agencies represented on the WLSP also have a commitment to undertake extensive community consultation.

29th January 2007

THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC LIFE

The Nolan Committee was set up by the Government in 1994 to consider standards of conduct in areas of public life. The Committee defined seven principles for public life, which gave a clear statement of the behaviour expected of elected and appointed members, employees and volunteers.

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.

Structure diagram of key partnerships

WLSP

- Brings forward priorities
- Sets overall strategy direction
- Influences allocation of resources
- Monitors strategic performance against targets
- Cannot commit to spending decisions

Council Executive and OSC system/governing bodies of other partners

Wandsworth Environmental Forum. Regular Council/WEF meetings. Formal link via chair of WEF.

Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership – formal link via rep from VCS CYP forum.

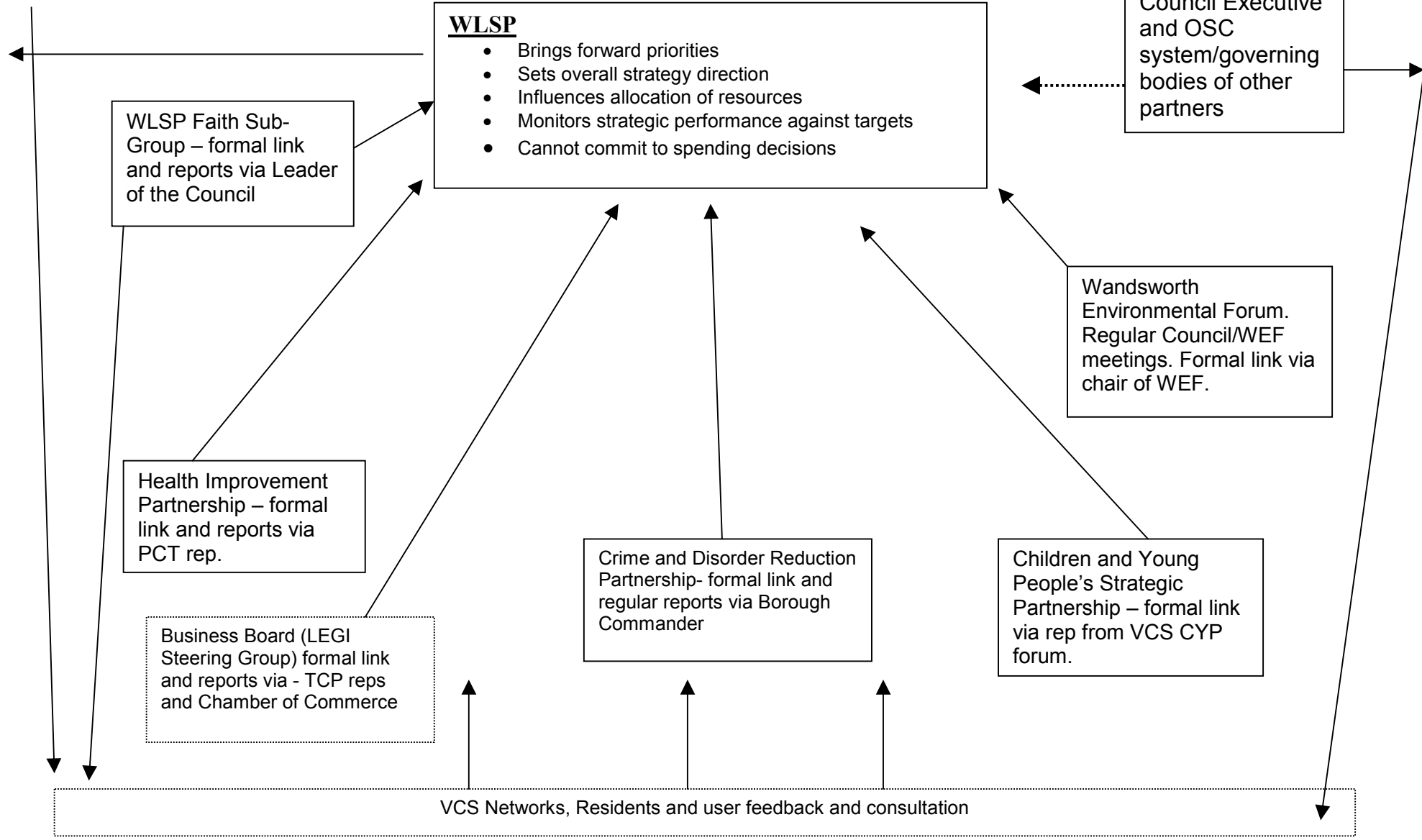
Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership- formal link and regular reports via Borough Commander

Health Improvement Partnership – formal link and reports via PCT rep.

WLSP Faith Sub-Group – formal link and reports via Leader of the Council

Business Board (LEGI Steering Group) formal link and reports via - TCP reps and Chamber of Commerce

VCS Networks, Residents and user feedback and consultation



Wandsworth Local Strategic Partnership Equality of Opportunity Statement

The Wandsworth Local Strategic Partnership is committed to equal opportunities in its role as a key planning and co-ordination body serving the community of Wandsworth. This commitment builds on that of the individual partner organisations and their responsibilities under relevant equality legislation for the promotion of equality of opportunity in service provision, training and employment.

The vision of the WLSP is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in the Borough. As such the Partnership is committed to working together and with the local community to ensure a strong sense of community cohesion across the Borough. In achieving this aim the WLSP will ensure that any decisions or action it takes has regard to disability, gender, race/ethnicity and other dimensions of disadvantage and discrimination including age, sexuality and religion or belief.

The WLSP's approach to equality of opportunity will be demonstrated in its efforts to:-

- Build a commitment to equality into its strategic aims;
- Integrate the principles, strategies and practice of equal opportunity into its work;
- Ensure partners tackle discrimination and harassment in employment, service planning and provision;
- Ensure that all partners understand their duty to promote good relations, challenge stereotypes and promote equality of opportunity; and
- Encourage all WLSP partners to reflect these aims in the execution of all their functions, and via their own policies and strategies.

In practical terms the WLSP will:-

- Ensure the WLSP is inclusive either through direct representation or formal communication/consultation mechanisms.
- Work in partnership to plan for, establish, promote and disseminate fair and accessible services.
- Incorporate appropriate targets into its strategic plans, including the Local Area Agreement;
- Make best use of monitoring data available from all sources and partners to inform planning, decision-making and service provision.
- Use effective consultation to obtain the views of the whole community, with particular attention to traditionally hard to reach or marginalised groups.
- Ensure that the meetings and documents of the WLSP are publicly accessible and that requests for additional support to access meetings or papers are responded to appropriately;
- Request all partners to be proactive and positive in their promotion of equality.
- Include progress against the above objectives are included in the proposed annual report on the work of the partnership.