



BARNLSLEY

BARNLSLEY TOWN BOARD PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Introduction

This Partnership Agreement sets out the basis on which the Barnsley Town Board (“BTB,” “the Board”) will operate. The agreement incorporates the Partnership’s constitution, but also sets out in detail the purpose of the Partnership and the roles and responsibilities of its members.

The Partnership brings together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to jointly develop, deliver, and govern the Long-Term Plan for Towns (“LTPT”) programme focused on the Barnsley Urban Area, which includes the town centre and its surrounding districts.

The BTB is the ‘top tier’ of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council’s (“BMBC”) place governance structure. The BTB will strategically lead the development of the town centre and maintain oversight of the operational management of the town centre, tasking actions to the Urban Centres Strategy Group.

The Partnership is not a legal entity and is governed by this voluntary agreement, which commits independent bodies to work together under a recognised framework. The outcomes of the Partnership will be measurable and add value which could not be reached by working separately.

The Board shall hold no monies or assets. It has no decision-making authority and serves as an advisory function to BMBC, who are the Accountable Body. The business of the Board will be dealt with in accordance with BMBC’s policies, procedures, and codes, where relevant.

The Role of Town Deal Boards

The LTPT programme requires that a Town Board be established in each town awarded the funding, bringing together community leaders, employers, local

authorities, and local MPs to develop a shared 10-year vision for their town and oversee the funding together.

In total 55 towns were awarded a total of £1.1 billion overall and that has resulted in each town being allocated endowment-style funding with c£20 million of grant providing support from 2024 to 2034. In addition, £50,000 capacity funding was allocated for set up and a further £200,000 funding allocated as capacity funding at the start of 2024/25 FY.

Government requires that the Town Board develops a 10-year vision and 3-year investment plan and that subsequent investment plans will be developed over the life of the programme in a manner which is consistent with the vision and the 3 main themes of the programme.

The three themes of the programme are:

1. Safety and Security
2. High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration
3. Transport and Connectivity

The Board is the vehicle through which the vision and investment plan for the town is defined within the themes identified. It will produce a Vision and Investment Plan enabling the funding from the programme to be drawn down and assuring governance over the delivery of the projects identified.

- Our Long-Term for Towns (October 2023). Available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/long-term-plan-for-towns-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-town-boards/long-term-plan-for-towns-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-town-boards#long-term-plan-for-towns-summary>.
- Long-Term Plan for Towns: Guidance for Local Authorities and Town Boards (December 2023). Available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/long-term-plan-for-towns-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-town-boards/long-term-plan-for-towns-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-town-boards#long-term-plan-for-towns-summary>.

Lead Partner

As Lead Partner, the role of BMBC is to make available all opportunities to make the Partnership sustainable, providing the clear vision and drive needed to make things happen and ensuring inclusive partnership arrangements enabling all sectors/partners to feel equal.

BMBC will make sure that the Partnership is 'fit for purpose' and will act if it is falling significantly short in any aspect of this Agreement.

As Lead Partner and Accountable Body, BMBC is responsible for:

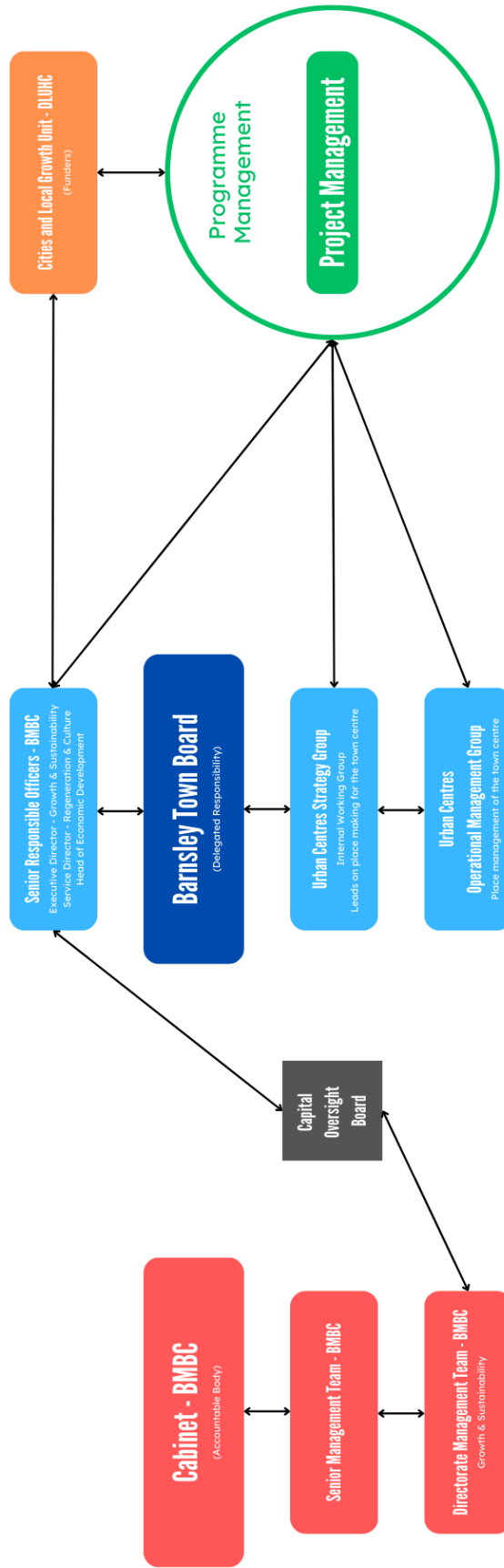
- Developing a delivery team, delivery arrangements and agreements.
- Ensuring that decisions are made by the board in accordance with good governance principles.
- Ensuring transparency requirements are met through publication of information on its website.
- Developing agreed projects in detail and undertaking any necessary feasibility studies.
- Undertaking any required environmental impact assessments or public sector equalities duties assessments.
- Helping develop detailed business cases.
- Liaising with potential private investors in identified local projects and schemes.
- Signing the Head of Terms Agreement with government.
- Monitoring and evaluating the delivery of individual LTPT projects.
- Receiving and accounting for the Town's funding allocation.
- Supporting the Board with senior management, including the most appropriate Council Directors, and other officers as appropriate.

BMBC remains the accountable body for all monies received through capacity funding and any other funding that will be allocated from the LTPT programme. As such, ultimate decision-making responsibilities remain with BMBC's Executive ("Cabinet").

BMBC will be represented on the Board by its Leader and relevant ward member and will be the link between the two bodies. Cabinet will receive reports on the progress of activities. The Board may make recommendations to Cabinet prior to the submission of the Town Investment Plan.

Board and Accountable Body Structure

See overleaf.



Membership

The Barnsley Town Board will bring together key members of the community to shape the future economy of Barnsley town centre and its surrounding districts. Membership is wide ranging, bringing together public, private, and voluntary sectors.

The BTB should be chaired by a businessperson or local community leader that ensures the Board fully reflects the priorities of the town. The Chair must have presence and visibility and be able to exercise objectivity and independence. The Chair will serve for a period of 12 months before re-election and appointment by the Board.

The Chair's role is to:

- Uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles).
- Lead the Board in achieving its objectives, maintaining an overview of activity, and championing and supporting partnership working.
- Ensure that decisions are made by the Board in accordance with good governance principles.
- Sign the Head of Terms Agreement with Government.
- Seek solutions to achieve a shared consensus about the way forward and be able to create an atmosphere where values are understood and owned and where non-compliance with the Partnership's purpose, principles and the Compact Codes of Practice is challenged.

A Deputy Chair will also be elected from within the Partnership Board, who will stand in for the Chair as necessary. On occasion, the Chair and/or the Deputy Chair will be asked to speak publicly on behalf of the BTB, which includes participating with press interviews and events (e.g. Conferences).

The Board may call on professional advice and support, if deemed necessary. This will include external consultants to support the development of the Investment Plans if required. Any such advisors may be invited to attend all or part of any meeting as and when appropriate as observers and shall be entitled to speak at the meeting with the prior permission of the Chair but shall not be entitled to vote.

The participants identified may change over time at the discretion of the Chair in agreement with the lead representative of BMBC. Participants can be removed from the Board if they do not adhere to this Partnership Agreement or the Terms of Reference.

A Board member shall cease to be a member of the Board in the following circumstances:

- Resignation; or,

- Death; or,
- Bankruptcy, making of any arrangement or composition with creditors or, in the case of an organisation, winding up, liquidation, dissolution, administration or anything analogous; or,
- Removed from membership by a resolution of the Board. If a Board Member's conduct falls short of that expected and a breach of the Code of Conduct has taken place, the Board may agree to remove that member. There shall be no right of appeal from a decision of the Board's decision to terminate the membership of a Board Member.

Board Representation

All Partnership members will agree to focus on, and commit to, the purpose of the Partnership whilst also expressing the views, priorities and interests of those sectors and organisations that they represent. As the Partnership does not have an independent legal status, individual partner organisations remain responsible and accountable for decisions on their own services and the use of their own resources.

Partner representatives are responsible for ensuring the commitments they make to the Partnership on behalf of their own organisation can be fulfilled. They will provide systematic feedback to their organisation on the business of the Partnership as it affects their organisation. They will provide other Partnership members with the opportunity to comment and participate in the development and delivery of activities by their organisation.

All Partnership members need to be clear about their remit when acting or speaking on behalf of a community. They must guard against portraying their own views as being representative of a whole community. It is therefore essential that any proposal is supported by details of the nature and extent of consultation that has taken place, or that will take place as part of developing the proposal.

All Partnership members are expected to work to the Nolan Principles as outlined below:

- Selflessness – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so 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 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.

Board Responsibilities

- Work collectively to drive the development of the Barnsley Urban Area, including the town centre and its surrounding districts.
- Strategically lead, and subsequently oversee, the identification, development and delivery of all relevant initiatives impacting on the town centre and its surrounding districts.
- Maintain an oversight of the operational management of the town centre, tasking actions to the Urban Centre Strategy Group, which serves as an Internal Working Group to the LTPT programme.
- Provide input into and agreeing an evidence-based 10-year vision and revolving 3-year investment plans.
- Establish a clear programme of interventions to address priorities within the Investment Plans, to ensure coordinated and effective delivery, and to identify gaps and opportunities to drive forward new initiatives within the themes of the programme.

- Embed arrangements in local long-term towns plans (where appropriate) and undertaking and fulfilling duties of public authorities under the Equalities Act and the public sector equality duty as well as all the necessary environmental considerations.
- Co-ordinate resources and engage stakeholders to ensure there is sufficient resources and co-investment to deliver the LTPT programme.
- Ensure communities' voices are involved in shaping design and decision making at each phase of development.
- Ensure diversity in its engagement with local communities and businesses.
- Champion the potential Barnsley has to significantly contribute to wider South Yorkshire economic strategies and growth targets.
- Oversee each step of agreeing the 10-year vision and Investment Plans (each of 3 years duration), and overseeing compliance with the Heads of Terms Agreement with government.
- Ensure the financial viability, sustainability, and accountability of the investment plan. The board should review and approve the annual budget, financial statements, audits, and policies.
- Make strategic financial decisions that align with the vision and values of the funding programme.
- Ensure transparent and accurate financial reporting and communication to stakeholders and the public. The board should disclose the sources and uses of funds, the risks and opportunities, and the financial implications of the Board's decisions.
- Undertake its duties and responsibilities in line with the requirements of the [Long Term Plan for Towns Prospectus](#) and any subsequent guidance that may be issued.

Confidentiality

Barnsley Town Board meetings are held in private, and attendance is by invite only at the discretion of the Chair.

For the group to execute its role effectively, there needs to be openness and transparency in all its business. Members must feel that they can be honest in Partnership meetings and that, if agreed by the Board, they are not directly quoted outside of the meeting.

The Board will be closed to the public and press unless specifically invited. Designated observers will be permitted to attend with the agreement of the Chair. Observers will not be allowed to comment or address the Board unless asked to do so by the Chair.

BMBC's Executive Director Growth & Sustainability should be informed of any persons attending the meeting to observe in advance. Any contact from members of the public in relation to the Board will be managed by BMBC's Head of Economic Development or equivalent.

Declarations of Interest

Each member of the Board is required to declare any conflict of interest, personal, prejudicial, or disclosable pecuniary interest (direct or indirect) in any agenda items. Where such an interest is declared, the member shall take no part in the discussion or decision making about that item. All such declarations must be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Board members shall complete and keep updated the Board's register of member interests via completion of BMBC's Declarations of Interest Form. This form will need to be completed at a minimum of once per year, or earlier if Board member circumstances change.

BMBC will provide guidance on the pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests individuals must declare, outline the process that Board members must follow for declaring interests, and explain the process for requesting an exemption.

Meetings Practice

The Board will meet to an agreed schedule of dates (at minimum, four times a year). Meeting dates will be distributed via email. Meetings will be a blend of in-person and online (utilising Microsoft Teams).

In line with principles of public life, the decision-making process will be documented, including the outcome of votes and any conflicts of interest, and reported within the published minutes.

Agendas and report packs will be distributed to Board members five working days in advance of a meeting. Draft minutes of meetings will be published on the BMBC website within 10 working days. Final minutes, once approved by the Board, will be published on the BMBC website within 10 working days.

The BTB will follow BMBC governance and finance arrangements when considering private reports, with the default position being that all papers are open to the public.

Members will endeavour to attend all meetings of the Board. If they are unable to attend any meeting, then they should submit their apologies in advance of the meeting.

As flexibility and continuity is essential to partnership working, each member may identify a named substitute who may attend on their behalf when necessary (subject to approval by the Chair).

Any six members of the Board, including the Chair (or Deputy Chair) and Leader of BMBC (or their nominated substitutes), shall constitute a quorum for meetings of the Board.

Each member of the Board shall have one vote which may be cast on matters considered at the meeting by a show of hands. Votes can only be cast by members attending a meeting of the Board.

The general rule about decision making by the Board is that any decision of the Board must be a majority decision at a meeting. In the event of a tied vote the Chair may have a second or casting vote.

If an urgent decision is required which cannot be deferred until a subsequent meeting, then a special meeting may be arranged. If this is not practicable, then the Chair in discussion with the Deputy Chair and Leader of BMBC may take a decision jointly. The decision must be reported to the next scheduled meeting.

Occasionally a sub-group of the Board may need to be established to expedite a particular matter that requires focussed activity or where a more specialist membership is required.

These would normally have a specific remit and period of operation to oversee or undertake a specific task, reporting directly to the Board. The Board will set out the terms, remit, and membership of any sub-group.

Whistleblowing Policy

Where it is alleged that the Board is acting in breach of the law or failing to safeguard public funds the whistleblowing procedure of BMBC will be applied.

Gifts and Hospitality

BMBC has a policy setting out its position on the receipt of gifts and hospitality. All Board members are required to abide by the terms of that policy.

Review of the Terms of Reference and Membership

The Terms of Reference and membership of the Partnership will be considered annually. Should the need for additional members be identified, a recruitment exercise will be undertaken addressing any skills shortage within the group.

SIGN UP TO THIS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Member Declaration

All current representatives must sign to confirm that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by the terms of this Partnership Agreement. They are signing on behalf of the group/ organisation they represent.

A representative from the Lead Partner will explain this Partnership Agreement to any new partner organisation or new representative and arrange for them to sign the agreement within one month of them joining.

I have read, understood, and agree with this Partnership for the Barnsley Town Board:

Name.....

Title.....

Organisation.....

Signed.....

Date.....