

# Wychavon's Community Plan Core Group & Local Strategic Partnerships

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## Terms of reference

Agreed by Wychavon District Council's Executive Board  
11 September 2007



*shaping the future together*

# Contents

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Page

## 1. Wychavon Community Plan Core Group

1.1. Background	3
1.2. Purpose	3
1.3 Key responsibilities	3
1.4 Shared values	4
1.5 Accountability	4
1.6 Decision-making & operational arrangements	4 – 5
1.7 Membership	5 - 6
1.8 Roles, responsibilities & requirements of members	6
1.9 Chair and Vice-Chair	6 - 7

## 2. Wychavon Local Strategic Partnerships

2.1. Background	7
2.2. Purpose	8
2.3 Key responsibilities	8
2.4 Shared values	8
2.5 Accountability	8
2.6 Decision-making & operational arrangements	9
2.7 Membership	9 – 11
2.8 Roles, responsibilities & requirements of members	11
2.9 Chair and Vice-Chair	11 - 12

<b>3. Contacts for more information</b>	12
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# 1. Wychavon Community Plan Core Group

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## 1.1 Background

Effectively addressing issues such as crime, health, housing needs, transport, activities for young people, the environment, supporting economic activity and community cohesion requires organisations to work together. The **Community Plan Core Group** is the **strategic partnership** for the Wychavon district. It prepares the Wychavon Community Strategy, manages delivery of actions in the plan, gives a steer to the district's three **Local Strategic Partnerships** (LSPs) and builds links with the county LSP, the Worcestershire Partnership.

Whilst most districts have only one LSP, in Wychavon there are three: **Droitwich Spa Area Partnership**, **Evesham Market Town Partnership** and **Pershore Market Town Partnership**. Each LSP is centred around one of the district's main towns and the surrounding rural areas. Whilst the Core Group focuses on strategy, the LSPs are the **local delivery partnerships**, bringing together the public, private, community and voluntary sectors at a local level to deliver real improvements that benefit people living, working and visiting the areas they cover.

The Evesham and Pershore Area LSPs started life as Market Town Partnerships, with a significant amount of funding from the national Market Towns Programme to spend on regeneration projects. The Droitwich Spa Area Partnership was set up from scratch as the area wasn't eligible for Market Towns funding and didn't have an equivalent partnership already in place. All three LSPs have a strong track record of delivery.

The Core Group and LSPs are currently supported by Wychavon District Council officers. The Local Government White Paper and subsequent Bill place a duty on a range of named partners to co-operate in preparing a Community Strategy.

## 1.2 Purpose

To improve the quality of life for everyone living, working or visiting the Wychavon district and to act as an advising and influencing body.

## 1.3 Key responsibilities

1. To identify and agree strategic priorities for the district, through analysing relevant research, intelligence and consultation results.
2. To develop a Community Strategy for the district and gain ownership of the vision and actions.
3. To manage the implementation of the Wychavon Community Strategy and report performance to partners and the wider community.
4. To give direction to the three LSPs and support them in delivering action that contributes to Community Strategy priorities.
5. To oversee the successful delivery of relevant actions in Worcestershire's Local Area Agreement (LAA) and ensure these are reflected in the Community Strategy.
6. To build strong and productive links with thematic partnerships, the countywide LSP, the Worcestershire Partnership, and its Theme Groups and neighbouring LSPs.
7. To explore joint approaches to strategic issues across the district and to maximise use of existing resources.
8. As the 'partnership of partnerships', to provide strategic co-ordination within Wychavon and link with other plans and bodies as appropriate, at the regional, sub-regional and local level.
9. To act as a 'voice' for Wychavon locally, regionally and nationally.

## 1.4 Shared values

In all its work, the Core Group will:

- listen to and involve local people and communities
- make the best use of skills and resources, to give added value and avoid duplication
- work together with honesty, openness and purpose
- think and act sustainably – taking into account environmental, social and economic well-being and the needs of present and future generations
- value diversity and work inclusively
- recognise local distinctiveness.

## 1.5 Accountability

1. The Core Group is accountable to the community of Wychavon. The elected local authority representatives on the partnership – parish, district and county councillors – provide it with a democratic mandate to determine local priorities.
2. Members of the Core Group are also accountable to their own organisations and networks.
3. Individual members are accountable to the Core Group for ensuring they deliver any actions or strategies they are given responsibility for.
4. In accordance with Government guidance, Wychavon District Council is ultimately accountable for the Core Group's decisions and actions.
5. The operation of the Core Group is open to scrutiny through the involvement of elected Members in the partnership and county and district council Scrutiny Committees.

## 1.6 Decision-making & operational arrangements

1. In order to maintain representation and continuity members should regularly attend Core Group meetings. Named substitutes are acceptable occasionally.
2. If a member of the Core Group misses three consecutive meetings, with or without an apology, they may be asked to appoint a replacement.
3. The Chair, or in their absence, the Vice-Chair, will chair Core Group meetings.
4. Wherever possible, a programme of Core Group meetings will be set at the start of the year.
5. The Core Group will conduct its business openly and transparently at all times.
6. Decisions will normally be made by consensus. Voting will only take place as a matter of last resort and will be by a show of hands. Each partner organisation will have one vote, even if an organisation has more than one representative on the Core Group. This also applies to the election of the Vice-Chair.
7. A minimum of one third of Core Group members must be present at a Core Group meeting (a quorum) to make a decision.
8. Where a decision on a particular issue is needed before the Core Group can next meet, the Chair in consultation with the Vice-Chair may take that decision. Any such decision will be reported at the next Core Group meeting.
9. In the event of conflict or a dispute that cannot be resolved in the normal way, the Chair will attempt to mediate and resolve any conflict.
10. Notes of Core Group meetings will be distributed to all Core Group and LSP members and placed on Wychavon District Council's website.
11. Observers may attend and contribute to Core Group meetings at the discretion of the Chair. The Chair may ask observers to leave if confidential items are being discussed.
12. The Core Group will review its Terms of Reference and membership every two years and submit proposals for changes to Wychavon District Council's Executive Board.

13. Although the Core Group is an essential partnership, it is technically a non-executive, non-statutory body, which relies on the voluntary participation of its members. It has no independent legal status.

## 1.7 Membership

The membership of the Core Group will comprise **a minimum of 13 and a maximum of 20 Board members**. These will be from **public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations**. Members will include a number of elected local authority representatives – parish, district and county councillors – to provide the partnership with a democratic mandate and the political leadership that Government advocates for such partnerships.

The Core Group must be able to demonstrate a level of representation across the six Wychavon Community Strategy themes, which are:

- **Communities that are safe and feel safe**
- **A better environment – for today and tomorrow**
- **Economic success that is shared by all**
- **Improving health and well-being**
- **Meeting the needs of children and young people**
- **Stronger communities:** this theme covers a range of issues including, housing, inclusion, leisure, culture and transport.

To ensure that all sectors are represented on the Core Group, the table below sets out the minimum membership requirements. The third column includes suggestions about the sorts of organisations the Core Group **may** wish to consider inviting to be members.

All Core Group members must be willing to fulfil the partnership member roles and responsibilities set out in 1.8 and be able to contribute effectively to Core Group decision-making.

Sector	Must include	Other suggestions
<b>Public: elected</b>	1 district councillor – Executive Board Member responsible for community planning 1 County councillor + supporting officer 1 Parish Councillor representing the County Association of Local Councils (CALC) + supporting officer (if required)	
<b>Public: non-elected</b>	A Housing Association Learning & Skills Council West Mercia Police Worcestershire Primary Care Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Environment Agency</li> <li>▪ Fire Service</li> </ul>
<b>Private</b>	Worcestershire Federation of Small Businesses	
<b>Community</b>	Community First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council for the Protection of Rural England</li> </ul>
<b>Voluntary</b>	Wychavon Council for Voluntary Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ St Richards Hospice</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	Chairs of 3 LSPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership</li> </ul>

The Core Group may also:

- Include relevant local authority officers. These will not normally take part in any voting.
- Nominate named **Champions** for some/all of the Community Strategy themes. The roles and responsibilities of Champions should be clearly defined.
- **Co-opt** people onto the Core Group for up to twelve months for a specific purpose or stage in its work.
- Set up **Task Groups** to devise solutions for issues that arise and deliver specific projects. The membership of Task Groups can be drawn from the LSPs and organisations not on the Core Group. Task Groups should set clear objectives and put reporting mechanisms in place.
- Set up **Theme Groups** to address some/all of the Community Strategy themes. The membership of the Theme Groups can be drawn from the LSPs and organisations not on the Core Group. Theme Groups should set clear objectives and put reporting mechanisms in place.

## 1.8 Roles, responsibilities & requirements of members

### *Roles*

1. To act as a 'voice' on the Core Group for a particular sector, organisation, partnership or network.
2. To effectively consult, communicate and feedback to the sector, organisation, partnership or network that they represent
3. To be an advocate for the Core Group and Wychavon LSPs, promoting and supporting the Core Group's aims and values.
4. To contribute to the development and delivery of the Wychavon Community Strategy and the delivery of relevant actions in Worcestershire's Local Area Agreement.
5. To ensure the Community Strategy influences the corporate strategies and priorities of their own sectors, organisations, partnerships and networks.
6. To attend and actively contribute to Core Group meetings and the work of the partnership.

### *Core Group members must:*

- Be willing to fulfil the roles set out in the Terms of Reference.
- Represent significant interests within Wychavon and have a sufficient level of authority and experience amongst the sector, organisation, partnership or network they represent and be able to speak on their behalf.
- Be able to contribute effectively to Core Group decisions and the development and delivery of the Wychavon Community Strategy.
- Be able to share relevant research and intelligence with partners.
- Be able to commit to attending Core Group meetings and sharing in the development and delivery of the Community Strategy.

## 1.9 Chair and Vice-Chair

Wychavon District Council's Executive Board member responsible for community planning and LSPs will chair the Core Group. The Core Group will elect a Vice-Chair from amongst the other members of the partnership for an initial term of one year.

### *Role of Chair*

1. To provide effective leadership to the Core Group and ensure it delivers its priorities.
2. To chair Core Group Board meetings, ensuring they are conducted effectively and inclusively.

3. To represent the Core Group and Wychavon's LSPs on the Worcestershire Partnership, providing regular updates to the Core Group and promoting the work of the Core Group and LSPs to the Partnership.
4. To encourage and support Core Group members in developing and delivering the community plan priorities..
5. To resolve any conflicts or disputes between Core Group members.
6. To be an ambassador for the Core Group and where appropriate, to represent it at events and official engagements.

#### ***Role of Vice-Chair***

1. To support the Chair in running an effective partnership and ensuring it delivers its priorities.
2. To be an ambassador for the Core Group.
3. To carry out the duties listed above in the absence of the Chair.

#### ***The Chair and Vice-Chair must:***

- Have a clear understanding of Wychavon's Community Strategy and the role of LSPs.
- Have a track record of leading a partnership and/or steering and facilitating the effective delivery of significant projects.
- Status and credibility in the local community.
- Be able to command respect and drive capacity building across sectors.
- Be able to effectively represent the Core Group in public or official capacities.

## **2. Wychavon Local Strategic Partnerships**

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### **2.1 Background**

Effectively addressing issues such as crime, health, housing needs, transport, activities for young people, the environment, supporting economic activity and community cohesion requires organisations to work together. Our **Local Strategic Partnerships** (LSPs) bring together the public, private, community and voluntary sectors at a local level to deliver real improvements that benefit people living, working and visiting the areas they cover.

Whilst most districts have only one LSP, in Wychavon there are three: **Droitwich Spa Area Partnership**, **Evesham Market Town Partnership** and **Pershore Market Town Partnership**. Each LSP is centred around one of the district's main towns and the surrounding rural areas.

The Evesham and Pershore Area LSPs started life as Market Town Partnerships, with a significant amount of funding from the national Market Towns Programme to spend on regeneration projects. The Droitwich Spa Area Partnership was set up from scratch as the area wasn't eligible for Market Towns funding and didn't have an equivalent partnership already in place. All three LSPs have a strong track record of delivery.

Whilst the LSPs focus on **local delivery**, the **Community Plan Core Group** is the **strategic partnership** for the Wychavon district. It prepares the Wychavon Community Strategy, manages delivery of actions in the plan, gives a steer to the LSPs and builds links with the county LSP, the Worcestershire Partnership.

The LSPs and Core Group are currently supported by Wychavon District Council officers. The Local Government White Paper and subsequent Bill place a duty on a range of named partners to co-operate in preparing a Community Strategy.

## 2.2 Purpose

To make visible and lasting improvements for people living, working or visiting the areas covered by the partnership.

## 3.3 Key responsibilities

1. To identify and agree clear priorities for the LSP area that reflect local needs, drawing on relevant research, intelligence and consultation results.
2. To produce an action/implementation plan for the LSP area based on priorities identified in the Community Strategy and/or by the partnership.
3. To deliver, or facilitate the delivery of, practical projects with a proven need that contribute to the delivery of Community Strategy at the local level and demonstrably meet the needs of communities in the LSP area.
4. To provide regular performance updates to the Core Group and to receive information from the Core Group.
5. To engage and communicate with the local community.
6. To provide co-ordination and connect with other relevant bodies and plans in the LSP area, including Parish Plans.
7. To actively seek external funding to support delivery of its priorities and to maximise use of existing resources.
8. Provide visible leadership for the LSP area and seek to influence and lobby for services and local priorities.

## 3.4 Shared values

In all their work, the LSPs will:

- listen to and involve local people and communities
- make the best use of skills and resources, to give added value and avoid duplication
- work together with honesty, openness and purpose
- think and act sustainably – taking into account environmental, social and economic well-being and the needs of present and future generations
- value diversity and work inclusively
- recognise local distinctiveness.

## 2.5 Accountability

1. The LSPs are accountable to the communities in the areas they cover. The elected local authority representatives on the partnerships – parish, district and county councillors – provide them with a democratic mandate to determine local priorities.
2. Members of the LSPs are also accountable to their own organisations and networks.
3. Individual members are accountable to the LSP Boards for ensuring they deliver any actions or strategies they are given responsibility for.
4. In accordance with Government guidance, Wychavon District Council is ultimately accountable for the LSPs' decisions and actions - via the Core Group.
5. The operation of the LSPs is open to scrutiny through the involvement of the Core Group Chair; elected Members in the partnerships; and, county and district council Scrutiny Committees.

## 2.6 Decision-making & operational arrangements

1. In order to maintain representation and continuity members should regularly attend LSP meetings. Named substitutes are acceptable occasionally.
2. If a LSP member misses three consecutive meetings, with or without an apology, they may be asked to appoint a replacement.
3. The Chair, or in their absence, the Vice-Chair will chair LSP meetings.
4. Wherever possible, a programme of LSP meetings will be set at the start of the year.
5. The LSPs will conduct their business openly and transparently at all times.
6. Decisions will normally be made by consensus. Voting will only take place as a matter of last resort and will be by a show of hands. Each partner organisation will have one vote, even if an organisation has more than one representative on the LSP Board. This also applies to the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
7. A minimum of one third of LSP members must be present at a LSP meeting (a quorum) to make a decision.
8. Where a decision on a particular issue is needed before the LSP can next meet, the Chair in consultation with the Vice-Chair may take that decision. Any such decision will be reported at the next LSP meeting.
9. In the event of conflict or a dispute that cannot be resolved in the normal way, the Chair will attempt to mediate and resolve any conflict.
10. Notes of LSP meetings will be distributed to all members of the LSP and placed on Wychavon District Council's website.
11. Observers may attend and contribute to LSP meetings at the discretion of the Chair. The Chair may ask observers to leave if confidential items are being discussed.
12. The LSPs will review their Terms of Reference and membership every two years and submit proposals for changes to the Core Group.
13. Although the LSPs are essential partnerships, they are technically are non-executive, non-statutory bodies, which rely on the voluntary participation of their members. They have no independent legal status.

## 2.7 Membership

The membership of each LSP will comprise **a minimum of 13 and a maximum of 20 Board members**. These will be from **public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations**. Members will include a number of elected local authority representatives – parish, district and county councillors – to provide the partnership with a democratic mandate and the political leadership that Government advocates for such partnerships. Where LSPs choose an organisation to be a member that is also on the Core Group, the LSP member should, if possible, be at a less senior level than the Core Group representative.

The LSP must be able to demonstrate an adequate level of representation across its key priorities or the Wychavon Community Strategy themes, which are:

- **Communities that are safe and feel safe**
- **A better environment – for today and tomorrow**
- **Economic success that is shared by all**
- **Improving health and well-being**
- **Meeting the needs of children and young people**
- **Stronger communities:** this theme covers a range of issues including, housing, inclusion, leisure, culture and transport.

To ensure that all sectors are represented on the LSPs, the table below sets out the minimum requirements for each. With the exception of the elected members and two others, it is for each LSP to decide which organisations or networks it wants to invite to be members. The

third column includes suggestions about the sorts of organisations that the LSP **may** wish to consider.

All LSP members must be willing to fulfil the partnership member roles and responsibilities set out in 2.8 and be able to contribute effectively to LSP decision-making.

Sector	Minimum requirements	Could also include
<b>Public: elected</b>	<b>6 representatives comprising:</b> District councillors x 3 1 County councillor + supporting officer 1 Town Council + supporting officer (if required) 1 Parish Councillor representing the County Association of Local Councils (CALC) + supporting officer (if required)	
<b>Public: non-elected</b>	<b>1 representative:</b> Local High School or FE college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local Police Officer</li> <li>▪ Fire Service</li> <li>▪ Health – e.g. GP or community nurse</li> <li>▪ College or High School</li> <li>▪ Youth service</li> <li>▪ Housing association</li> </ul>
<b>Private</b>	<b>2 representatives, including:</b> 1 with a rural perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>▪ South Worcestershire Federation of Small Businesses</li> <li>▪ Country Land and Business Association</li> <li>▪ Local Job Centre</li> <li>▪ Tourism Association</li> </ul>
<b>Community</b>	<b>2 representatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community First</li> <li>▪ Neighbourhood forum</li> <li>▪ Environmental group</li> <li>▪ Civic Society</li> <li>▪ Church or other faith organisation</li> <li>▪ Arts Centre</li> <li>▪ Sports club or leisure Centre</li> </ul>
<b>Voluntary</b>	<b>2 representatives, including:</b> 1 from Local Development Agency/Council for Voluntary Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age Concern</li> <li>▪ Wildlife Trust</li> </ul>

The LSP Boards may also:

- Nominate named **Champions** on the Board for some/all of the Community Strategy themes and/or its key priorities. The roles and responsibilities of Board Champions should be clearly defined.
- **Co-opt** people onto the LSP Board for up to twelve months for a specific purpose or stage in its work.
- Set up **Task Groups** to devise solutions for issues that arise and deliver specific projects. The membership of Task Groups can be drawn from organisations not on the LSP Board

and the wider community. Task Groups should set clear objectives and put reporting mechanisms in place.

- Set up **Theme Groups** to address some/all of the Community Strategy themes and/or its key priorities. The membership of the Theme Groups can be drawn from organisations not on the LSP Board and the wider community. Theme Groups should set clear objectives and put reporting mechanisms in place.

## 2.8 Roles, responsibilities & requirements of members

### *Roles & responsibilities*

1. To act as a 'voice' on the partnership for a particular sector, organisation, network or other part of the wider community served by the LSP.
2. To effectively consult, communicate and feedback to the sector, organisation, network or part of the community that they represent.
3. To actively engage in the creation of the partnership's annual action/implementation plan.
4. To be an advocate for the LSP, promoting and supporting the LSP's aims and values.
5. To contribute to the delivery of practical projects that directly benefit the local community and meet the LSP's agreed priorities.
6. To attend and actively contribute to LSP meetings and the work of the partnership.

### *LSP members must:*

- Be willing to fulfil the roles set out in the Terms of Reference.
- Have credibility and/or status amongst the sector, organisation network or community they represent and be able to speak on their behalf within the LSP and represent the LSP to them.
- Be able to contribute practically to the development and delivery of concrete projects involving their sector, organisation or community.
- Be able to commit to attending LSP meetings and sharing in the development and delivery of locally relevant actions that benefit the whole community.

## 2.9 Chairs and Vice-Chairs

Each LSP will elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair from among the non-district council LSP members and the 'lead' Wychavon district council member for an initial term of one year, using an election method of its choice.

### *Role of LSP Chairs*

1. To provide effective leadership to the LSP and ensure it delivers its priorities.
2. To chair LSP Board meetings, ensuring they are conducted effectively and inclusively.
3. To represent the LSP on the Core Group, providing regular performance updates to the Core Group and feeding back key issues and decisions from the Core Group to the LSP.
4. To encourage and support LSP members in developing and delivering the LSP's priorities.
5. To resolve any conflicts or disputes between LSP members.
6. To be an ambassador for the LSP and where appropriate, to represent it at events and official engagements.

### *Role of LSP Vice-Chairs*

1. To support the Chair in running an effective partnership and ensuring it delivers its priorities.
2. To be an ambassador for the LSP.
3. To carry out the duties listed above in the absence of the Chair.

***The Chair and Vice-Chair must:***

- Have a good understanding of Wychavon's Community Strategy and the role of LSPs.
- Have a track record of leading a partnership and/or steering and facilitating the effective delivery of significant projects.
- Status and credibility in the local community.
- Be able to command respect and drive capacity building across sectors.
- Be able to effectively represent the LSP in public or official capacities.

In addition, the role of the leading district council member is also to report back progress and issues to Wychavon District Council.

### **3. Contacts for more information**

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For more information about Wychavon's Community Strategy, Community Plan Core Group or Local Strategic Partnerships visit: [www.wychavon.gov.uk](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk) and click on the community planning pages or contact:

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