

Terms of Reference for Dorset Local Nature Partnership Board

Agreed at Dorset LNP Board meeting on 19th June 2013

1. Purpose of the Local Nature Partnership

- 1.1 The Dorset Local Nature Partnership (LNP) is a voluntary partnership established at the invitation of the Government to act 'as a strategic body to help the local area manage the natural environment as a system and embed its value in local decisions for the benefit of nature, people and the economy' across Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole.

2. Status of the Local Nature Partnership

- 2.1 The Dorset LNP is established initially as an independent voluntary partnership, without formal legal status. It will conduct its activities in the interests of the area it serves and secure its long-term objectives without giving undue favour to any organisation or Board member. Where a legal status is required to enter into contracts, the Partnership will act through one of its partners as accountable body.

3. Purpose of the LNP Board

- 3.1 The purpose of the LNP Board will be:

- To lead the LNP in **delivering positive outcomes** for Dorset's natural environment
- To **champion** Dorset's natural environment and the benefits it offers
- To **raise awareness** of, and communicate, the value of Dorset's environment
- To give **direction and leadership** to the LNP, informed by the wider LNP membership
- To develop **strategic and tactical plans** for the LNP to guide the work of the partners
- To **create a climate** in which partners in the LNP can better achieve their objectives
- To define the terms of the LNP's engagement in wider **policy and decision-making**
- To develop and keep under review an **effective, efficient structure** for the LNP
- To ensure the **good governance** of the LNP
- To **secure resources** as necessary for the effective and efficient operation of the LNP
- To ensure **effective collaboration** with other strategic partnerships to achieve sustainable development in Dorset and beyond

4. Membership of the Board

- 4.1 The Board will consist of up to 15 members:

- Nine selected on merit by open recruitment
- Four appointed by local authorities (being the relevant Cabinet/Executive/Lead Member of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Councils, and one on behalf of the six Dorset District and Borough Councils)
- One Board member on behalf of the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (to be nominated by the LEP Board)
- One Board member on behalf of Dorset's Health and Well-being Boards (to be nominated by the Boards)

5. **Observer status at Board meetings**

5.1 The Board may invite appropriate officer support to attend meetings in the capacity of observers. These invitations may vary from meeting to meeting but there will be a standing invitation to the following to attend:

- A representative of the Defra family of agencies (Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Marine Management Organisation)
- Senior officer support to each of the local authority elected members on the Board
- Members of the officer working group or successor body

Other observers may attend, and may be invited to comment, in a non-voting capacity at the invitation of the Board or Board members via the Chair.

6. **Role of Board members**

6.1 Board members will pursue the purposes of the Board as set out in 3.1 and serve in a personal capacity (with the exception of local authority members and those appointed by other strategic partnerships):

- The role of **9 members appointed via open recruitment** is to represent the views and interests of voluntary, community and private organisations with an interest in the natural environment, whilst always ensuring that decisions are taken in the best interests of Dorset's environment as a whole.
- The role of **local authority** members is to represent their constituents, whilst acting in the interests of Dorset as a whole.
- The role of **members appointed by other strategic partnerships** is to represent the views and interests of those partnerships to ensure the development of shared aims and joint working in as far as possible between those partnerships and the LNP.

6.2 All Board members will be expected to act in accordance with the seven principles of public life, as set out in the Localism Act 2011 section 28: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

6.3 A **Chair** and **Vice-Chair** will be elected by the Board from among the 9 members appointed via open recruitment. Both positions will be subject to annual renewal.

6.4 **Alternate or substitute members:** in order to maintain consistency and focus alternate members will only be allowed with the prior agreement of the Chair.

6.5 **Period of office:** the period of office for Board member shall be as set out below.

Member category	Term of office	Replacement if vacancy arises
Appointed via open recruitment	Initial 3 years, renewable for a further <i>two terms subject to open recruitment process</i>	Open recruitment
Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Councils	During the term of office as Cabinet/Executive/Lead Member	By succeeding Cabinet/Executive/Lead Member
Dorset District & Borough Councils	During the term of office as Cabinet/Executive/Lead Member <i>with rotation between Councils every three years</i>	Nomination by the Dorset District & Borough Councils
LEP and Health and Well-being Boards	Initial 3 years, renewable for a further <i>two terms subject to re-nomination by the appropriate Board</i>	Nomination by the appropriate Board

6.6 **Additional members:** the Board may co-opt up to ***three*** additional people to serve as members, if there is a clear requirement for additional expertise and experience for the successful delivery of the LNP's objectives. Co-opted members may only serve a maximum of ***three*** years but will not necessarily be expected to serve a full three-year term.

6.7 **Attendance:** Board members (or approved deputies) are expected to attend not less than 50% of Board meetings (assuming 4 meetings p.a.) over a twelve month period. If this attendance rate is not achieved by any member, the Board is entitled to review their membership and ask for an explanation before taking further action. A 75% majority is required to rescind the membership of any individual.

6.8 **Resignation and removal of members:** members (excluding local authority members) may resign giving one month's notice by writing to the Chair. ***The Chair has explicit authority to hold Board members to account for their performance of their duties.***

6.9 The Board acting with a 75% majority of all members may require a member to resign if, in the view of the Board:

- The member has failed to attend sufficient meetings or to contribute to the activities of the Partnership.
- The member has not acted in the interests of the Dorset LNP.
- The member has failed to declare and/or resolve or otherwise deal with conflicts of interest.
- The member has failed to act in a collaborative manner with other Board members at meetings or in other settings and is obstructing the furtherance of the work of the Partnership.
- The member is involved in activities which could bring the Dorset LNP into disrepute.