

Hartlepool Board Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference set out how the Hartlepool Board operates, how decisions are made and the procedures that are followed to ensure that the Board operates efficiently, effectively and is both transparent and accountable. This document reflects the governance requirements as set out in the guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and should be read alongside other associated documents including the Code of Conduct.

1. Purpose

The Board brings together those with a deep connection to Hartlepool including local businesses, educational institutions, elected members and community leaders to provide collective strategic leadership to improve and drive forward Hartlepool. The Board will be representative for the whole Borough of Hartlepool and will oversee key funding and investment streams including the £20m Pride in Place Programme.

The Board will serve as a platform for collaboration, decision-making, and the development of initiatives covering three strategic themes:

- **To create thriving places:** Focus on economic growth, sustainability, and enhancing public spaces to create vibrant, inclusive neighbourhoods.
- **To build stronger communities:** Promote social cohesion, support community-led initiatives, and strengthen local networks and partnerships.
- **To empower people to take back control:** Empower residents to influence decisions, manage resources, and address local priorities effectively

The Hartlepool Board will develop, agree, and publish a ten-year Regeneration Plan for the Borough of Hartlepool.

2. Membership

The Hartlepool Board will have cross sector representation with a focus on the local community. The representation includes but is not exclusive to:

- Member of Parliament
- Local Authority
- Educational Establishments
- Police
- Fire
- Health
- Housing Associations
- Member of Youth Parliament
- Voluntary and Community Representation
- Citizen Representation
- Faith Representation
- Businesses and Industry Representation
- Parish Council Representation

- Other Board Leaders, such as, Town Deal Board and the Hartlepool Development Corporation

An up to date list of members will be held and reviewed quarterly by the Board including monitoring of attendance. Members are also required to participate in a Board Development Programme.

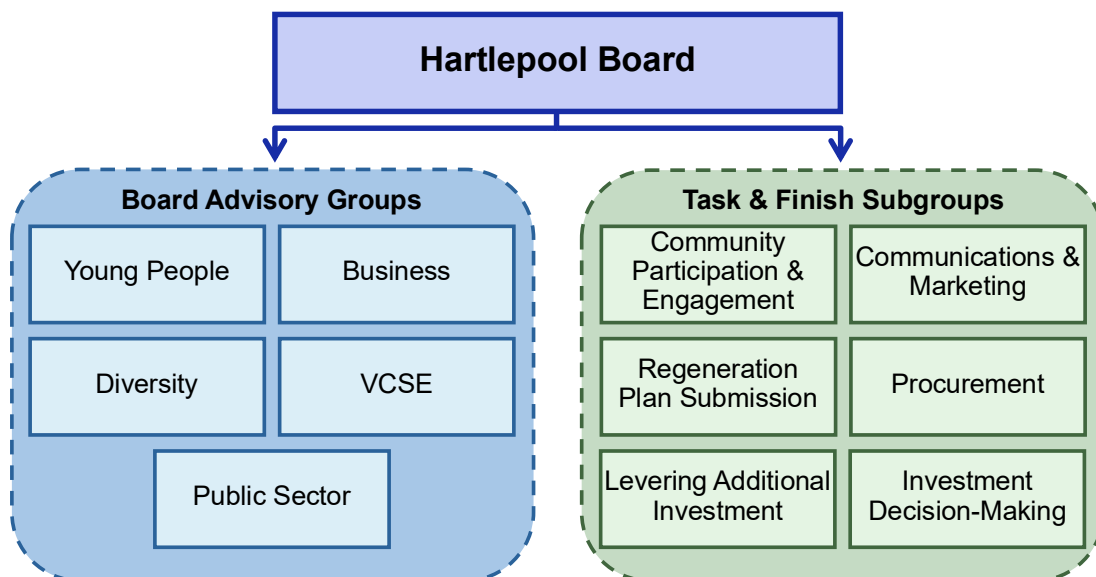
Each member will provide a named substitute who will attend meetings if the board member is unavailable, which will help to ensure continuity for the Board. This should not be on a sustained basis, unless agreed by the Board that there is to be a change of representative.

To maintain high standards for the operation of the Board, members will act in accordance with the agreed governing documents including the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy. Each member will also adopt the Nolan Principles of Public Life and the principles of Civic Leadership.

3. Governance Structure

Members of the Hartlepool Board will be expected to share the views of the community in the context of being Civic Leaders and not only representing personal or professional views. Members will be expected to have a reach into the community and to communicate within their respective organisation to ensure they can be an effective representative on the Board.

The governance structure for the Hartlepool Board is shown below:



Representatives of Voluntary and Community Sector, Businesses, Public Sector, Young People and Faith/Multi Cultural Communities will be supported through the Board Advisory Groups. This will enable effective engagement and advice whilst contributing to the governance of the Hartlepool Board.

The positions of Chair, Deputy Chair and Vice Chair will be appointed by Hartlepool Borough Council, in collaboration with the MP and the Board. The secretariat role will be fulfilled by Hartlepool Borough Council.

a) Role of the Chair of the Hartlepool Board

The role of the Chair is to provide strategic leadership and direction, leading the Board to ensure it achieves its objectives, and championing partnership working. The key responsibilities of the Chair are to:

- Lead meetings ensuring they are conducted efficiently and effectively.
- Collaborate with board members and the secretary to develop and finalise meeting agendas.
- Facilitate the decision-making process, ensuring that all viewpoints are considered, and consensus is reached.
- Act as the primary spokesperson for the Hartlepool Board, representing its views and decisions to the public, media, and other stakeholders.
- Serve as the liaison between the Hartlepool Board and other public bodies, organisations, and community groups.
- Provide leadership and guidance to the Hartlepool Board, ensuring that its activities align with the community's vision and objectives.
- Lead the development and implementation of policies and initiatives that support the Hartlepool Board's goals.
- Foster effective communication among board members, ensuring that everyone is informed and engaged.
- Engage with the community and stakeholders, keeping them informed about the Hartlepool Board's activities and progress.
- Provide mentorship and support to board members, helping them to develop their skills and fulfil their roles effectively.
- Mediate conflicts and disputes that may arise among board members or between the board and other parties.
- Ensure that all conflicts are resolved fairly and transparently, maintaining a positive and collaborative board environment.
- By fulfilling these responsibilities, the Chair of the Hartlepool Board plays a crucial role in guiding the board's activities and ensuring that it operates effectively and in the best interests of the community.

b) Role of the Deputy/Vice Chair of the Hartlepool Board

The Deputy/Vice Chair will work closely with the Chair of the Hartlepool Board. The key responsibilities are to:

- Support the Chair and assisting with their duties and responsibilities.
- Step in to lead meetings or take on the Chair's responsibilities in their absence.
- Help to facilitate board meetings, ensuring they run efficiently and effectively and assisting with agenda setting and preparing for meetings.
- Serve as a liaison between the Chair and other board members.

- Help to mediate and resolve conflicts that may arise within the board or with external parties.
- Ensure there is a fair and transparent process for addressing disputes.
- Participate in strategic planning and decision-making processes.
- Provide input and feedback on key initiatives and projects.
- Represent the board at events, meetings, and other engagements when the Chair is unavailable.
- Act as a spokesperson for the board in various forums.
- Encourage active participation from all board members and stakeholders.
- Foster an inclusive and collaborative environment.
- By fulfilling these responsibilities, the Deputy/Vice Chair ensures that the Hartlepool Board operates smoothly and effectively and contributing to the overall success of the board's initiatives.

4. Meeting Protocols

Meetings of the Hartlepool Board will be held monthly for up to two hours and will be held either face to face or virtually. The Council will publish an annual schedule of meetings for the Board.

The quorum for any meeting of the Board will be 25% of the membership or ten members, whichever is the greatest, and needs to include either the Chair or Deputy/Vice Chair.

Actions of each meeting will be tracked and the headline discussion points captured which will then be circulated after each meeting, once approved by the Chair.

Each Board member shall have one vote with the details of decisions presented to members and agreed on a majority vote of the members present. In the event of an equal number of votes the Chair shall have a casting vote.

Members will declare any conflict of interest at the beginning of each meeting and cannot vote on matters of conflict but may present their perspective as a civic representative able to articulate the needs of communities. The dedicated Conflict of Interest Policy sets out the expectations of all members on the Hartlepool Board.

5. Attendance at Meetings

Members will endeavour to attend all meetings of the Hartlepool Board. However, 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, each member will provide a named substitute who will attend meetings if the board member is unavailable, which will help to ensure continuity for the Board

6. Responsibilities and Duties

Board Members have a responsibility to uphold high standards of integrity and

probity. Their responsibilities and duties will be further developed throughout the operation of the Hartlepool Board.

- Develop and oversee the implementation of a 10-year Regeneration Plan and 4-year Investment Plan
- Engage with the community to coproduce plans and devolve leadership.
- Allocate resources and monitor progress.
- Report outcomes and maintain transparency.
- Engage with the community and stakeholders, keeping them informed about the Hartlepool Board's activities and progress.
- Monitor the progress of the Hartlepool Board's initiatives and projects, ensuring they are on track and achieving desired outcomes.
- Encourage and facilitate training and development opportunities for board members to enhance their capabilities.
- Lead investment efforts and pursue additional opportunities for investment and resources.
- Mediate conflicts and disputes that may arise among board members or between the board and other parties.
- Ensure that all conflicts are resolved fairly and transparently, maintaining a positive and collaborative board environment.
- By fulfilling these responsibilities, the Board plays a crucial role in guiding the activities and ensuring that it operates effectively and in the best interests of the community.

These principles can serve as a solid foundation for the Hartlepool Board to operate as a dynamic and effective local strategic partnership, driving positive change and development within the community.

7. Communication and Reporting

In line with the principles of public life, it is important that there is transparency around the operation of the Hartlepool Board.

Meetings of the Board will be called by the Council as the secretariat and at the request of the Chair of the Hartlepool Board.

Wherever possible, the agenda will be circulated electronically to each board member no later than five days before the date of the meeting and any supporting reports and/or papers will be sent to board members at the same time. Agendas will be made publicly accessible through the Council website once they have been approved for publication by the Chair.

Board Members, and any non-members permitted to attend, are required to keep exempt papers confidential. The proceedings and resolutions of meetings of the Board, including the names of those present and in attendance, will be recorded by the Council as the secretariat for the Board.

The draft notes of each meeting will be circulated promptly to all members of the Board. The meeting notes will remain in draft until approved by the Board, at which point they will be published onto the Council website.

Additional reporting will be required for the governance of specific funding and investment streams in accordance with relevant grant conditions such as for the Pride in Place Programme.

8. Subgroups

At the discretion of the Board, thematic subgroups will be established to expedite a particular matter, which requires focused activity or where a more specialist membership is required. These subgroups can include people and organisations outside of the membership of the Hartlepool Board.

The Board have already identified six subgroups which are shown in Section 3 as part of the governance structure for the Hartlepool Board.

The Board may decide to establish further sub-groups and will nominate a lead for each subgroup. This will allow for wider engagement outside of the Board to support the on-going development and delivery. The subgroups will not require voting mechanisms and are advisory to the Board on specific matters. Sub-groups will be approved by and report to the Board and members of the sub-groups will adhere to the Code of Conduct set out in these Terms of Reference.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

The KPI's will be defined as part of the Board Development Programme (July to December 2025).

10. Review and Revision

Membership will be reviewed quarterly by the Board.

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually or by exception should circumstances change or at the request of the Board.