

## THE HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD THEMATIC PARTNERSHIP

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### INTRODUCTION

Stockton Renaissance is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the Borough of Stockton on Tees. Renaissance brings together different partners from across the public, private, community and voluntary sectors to promote economic, environmental and social well-being. The Renaissance structure brings together a mix of 'thematic' and 'geographical' partnerships and provides a single overarching framework within which these partnerships can operate effectively.

### The Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership

The aim of this Partnership is to bring together (at a local level) all appropriate stakeholders to achieve one common goal: -

***“To provide access to good quality, affordable housing, with appropriate support, located within pleasant, safe and sustainable neighbourhoods”.***

### TERMS OF REFERENCE: -

The Partnership will: -

1. On behalf of Renaissance take a strategic view on issues related to housing (including housing benefits), ensuring such issues are comprehensively addressed and responded to, so that housing makes a positive contribution to the achievement of strong and sustainable local communities.
2. Assist the Council in developing (and regularly reviewing) it's 'fit for purpose' Housing Strategy and contributing to the development of the Sub-Regional and Regional Housing Strategies.
3. Assist the Council in developing other appropriate strategic plans and endorse the Homelessness, Supporting People and Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategies.
4. Lead on the preparation, implementation and review of housing priority objectives as detailed within the Housing and Environment theme of the Sustainable Community Strategy. Including: -
  - Agreeing key housing and related objectives, outcomes and targets; and
  - Undertaking appropriate and regular performance reviews.
5. Actively contribute to the Neighbourhood Renewal Regeneration agenda.
6. Make representations to Government, the Government Office for the North East, and other bodies regarding housing and related housing support issues and priorities within the borough.
7. Promote, disseminate and share best practice and knowledge on successful activities.
8. Facilitate joint planning and joint working with all appropriate partners and stakeholders.
9. Maximise external funding opportunities.

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10. Ensure effective sub group arrangements (if required) are in place and are fit for purpose.
11. Endeavour to operate in an inclusive manner; in an open and transparent style and ensure the contribution and involvement of all partners are equally respected.

### **Key areas of work will include: -**

- Meeting housing need;
- Ensuring the adequate provision of affordable housing across all tenure;
- Addressing housing market failure;
- Achieving decent homes for all;
- Recommending appropriate housing related support; and
- Creating safe, sustainable and inclusive communities

within the borough of Stockton on Tees.

### **Membership**

Membership of the group will include key stakeholders and representatives of the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors.

Each member shall be an equal and active partner.

All members of the partnership should ensure appropriate representation at the meetings (within this substitute members are allowed).

New voting members may be invited or nominated to join the Partnership (subject to the inclusion of an appropriate agenda item) and will be admitted subject to a simple majority of vote.

An organisation shall cease to be a member of the Partnership if for a period of 6 months it fails to attend without giving an acceptable reason to the Partnership for non-attendance.

Members wishing to resign from the Partnership are requested to provide written notice to the Partnership Secretariat.

Details of the current membership are detailed in **Appendix 1**.

### **Advisers to the Partnership**

In order to obtain specialist knowledge/expertise the Partnership shall have the power to co-opt non voting members and to appoint advisors if required.

### **Operational Arrangements**

#### ***Chair and Vice Chair***

The position of Chair and Vice-Chair shall be open to all members of the Partnership.

The Partnership will elect a Chair and Vice Chair who shall hold office for the duration of a municipal year.

The Chair and Vice Chair will be eligible for re-appointment.

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In the event of the Chair and/or Vice Chair resigning their post, nominations will be sought by the partnership Secretariat. Election will be by a simple majority vote.

### **Review arrangements**

A review of the Partnership's terms of reference, membership and progress will be undertaken annually.

### **Frequency and duration of meetings**

The frequency of meetings will be determined by the Partnership. However it is expected that there shall not be less than 6 per year (April to March).

With the agreement of the Chair the Secretariat may call additional meetings as and when required.

A minimum of 14 calendar days notices will be given unless urgent deadlines need to be met.

The normal duration will be no more than 3 hours.

### **Agenda Setting**

All members of the Partnership can ask for an item to go on the agenda. This can be done via the Partnership Secretariat at least 10 working days prior the meeting.

The Chair will agree the agenda for each meeting with the Secretariat.

The agenda and supporting reports will be circulated a minimum of 5 working days in advance of a meeting.

### **Accountability**

The Partnership is linked to Renaissance as a themed partnership and as such will be a constituent sub-group of the LSP.

Regular reports from the Partnership will be presented to Stockton Renaissance.

Past agendas, minutes and reports will also be available on the Council's website at [www.stockton.gov.uk/renaissance](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/renaissance)

Meetings of the Partnership shall be open to the public unless the business involves confidential information.

All attempts will be made to ensure venues and meeting times are accessible to all.

Comments, Complaints and Compliments about the Partnership can be made through the Council's corporate Comments, Complaints and Compliments procedure. A link to this is available on the Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership webpage.

### **Quorum**

A quorum is a minimum of 6 full voting members including one representative from Stockton on Tees Borough Council.

### **Standards**

The partnership will operate within and promote a culture of high ethical standards such as openness, transparency and accountability. All partnership members will be expected to work within these standards.

### **Resolution of disputes**

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The Partnership will conduct its business by consensus and without voting as far as possible.

There is one vote per member organisation. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair shall hold the casting vote (in addition to his/her normal vote).

### **Membership Interests**

In agenda items where decision-making by the partnership is required, each member should declare any personal or pecuniary interest (direct or indirect). It will be for the Chair to decide whether it is appropriate for the member to take part in the decision-making process.

### **Membership roles:**

#### ***The Chair: -***

- Will ensure that all Partnership members have equal opportunity to participate in decisions, debates and decisions.
- Will try to achieve decisions by consensus.
- Will represent the Partnership at Stockton Renaissance, thereby acting as the link between the Partnership and Stockton Renaissance. The purpose of this role is to: -
  - o Champion the Partnership at Stockton Renaissance and ensure relevant issues are contributed to;
  - o Bring the views of the Partnership to Stockton Renaissance;
  - o Gives feedback on the discussions and decisions taken at Renaissance; and
  - o Regularly attend both the Partnership and Renaissance meetings.
- In the event of the Chair being unable to attend Renaissance a representative from the Partnership may attend.
- Where a decision is needed urgently, the Chair and Vice-Chair have the authority to make the decision. This must then be reported to the next meeting for retrospective agreement.

#### ***The Vice Chair: -***

- Will substitute for the Chair in accordance with the above role.

#### ***Individual Members: -***

- Will contribute to the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of key Partnership objectives.
- Report back to their organisation on the outcome of Partnership meetings.

#### ***The Partnership Secretariat: -***

The Housing Strategy Manager (of Stockton on Tees BC) or his/her nominee will act as Secretary for the Partnership.

**Appendix 1**

**Membership**

Registered Social Landlords  
Private Developers  
Private Sector Landlords  
Teesside Landlords Association  
Stockton Police  
National Probation Service, Teesside  
Age Concern  
Community Campus  
Stonham  
Tristar Homes Limited  
Area Board Partnership representation  
Community/Voluntary Network representation  
Black & Minority Ethnic Groups Network representation  
Council Members  
Tees Valley Living  
SBC Head of Housing  
SBC Community Safety Manager  
SBC/PCT Strategic Commissioning Manager - Independent Living

**Council Advisors**

Planning – Carol Straughan  
Housing Options Manager – Caroline Wood  
Urban Renewal Manager – Melanie Howard  
Housing Market Restructuring Manager – Sharon Lonergan  
Benefits Manager – Linda Stephenson

**Partnership Secretariat**

SBC Housing Strategy Manager – Jane Edmonds