

Healthier Reading Partnership Board

Partnership Agreement

(agreed 14.1.10)

1. Purpose & aims

The Healthier Reading Partnership exists to make a measurable improvement to health and well-being and reduce health inequalities in the Reading area, through robust and inclusive partnership working.

The remit of the Healthier Reading Partnership includes the full spectrum of policy and services across both health and social care from prevention to intervention and care.

It will achieve this by:

- **Discussing and agreeing strategic direction and priorities** across all relevant organisations and partnerships (public, private, voluntary and community sectors)
- **Ensuring co-ordination and integration** of strategic planning, business planning and delivery and resources across all the relevant organisations and partnerships

In order to fulfil its purpose, the Partnership will carry out the following tasks.

- a) Lead on the development and delivery of the **Healthy People and Lifestyles** theme of the **Sustainable Community Strategy**.
- b) Oversee negotiation on and securing delivery and resourcing of relevant **Sustainable Community Strategy priorities and LAA targets**.
 - Ensure effective performance management of LAA targets linked to the Healthy People and Lifestyles theme.
 - Receive progress reports from the LAA Performance Group, keep fully informed regarding risks and issues, and take appropriate action to remedy any problems.
 - Supply to the LSP progress reports on relevant LAA delivery issues with appropriate narrative, including any additional information required and actions taken / needed.
- c) Oversee the development, endorsement (by the LSP) and delivery of a joint **Reading Health & Wellbeing Strategy** and an associated shorter term **Action Plan** which sits under the Sustainable Community Strategy and links to other relevant strategies, such as the Strategic Health Authority's regional plan, Children and Young People's Strategic Plan, Social Care and others. The Reading Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan will need to reference but not duplicate these other strategies and add value.

- d) Ensure that the **Reading Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan** is regularly reviewed and refreshed, reflecting changes in the evidence base, relevant policies and plans in order that the partnership sets the direction for health and well-being in Reading.
- e) Ensure that the Reading Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan is **well informed by local evidence**, such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and by the views of local people, including the most vulnerable and hard to reach.
- f) Influence the development of the **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** and ensure it informs priorities and actions.
- g) Advocate for and promote the independence of vulnerable people.
- h) Maximise the use of existing resources through better alignment and integration of service delivery and seek to attract additional funding.
- i) Ensure that the **public and service users** are involved appropriately in the development and implementation of all its work in accordance with the Duty to Involve.

2. Status

The Healthier Reading Partnership (HRP) is a non-statutory thematic partnership within the Reading Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). As such, it will advise the LSP on the content of its strategy and will support the delivery of the Sustainable Communities Strategy in relation to Healthier Communities.

3. Make up of the Board

- a) The membership of the Board is as follows:

Category	Person / Organisation	Comments
RBC (5)	Elected members x 2	From the Executive - to ensure no conflicts of interest in relation to scrutiny activities / functions
	Adult Care x1	Appropriate head of service or Director
	Children's Services x1	Appropriate head of service or Director
	Chief Exec's Dept x1	Appropriate head of service or Director
RBC (2) Observers	Elected members from the two other main political parties	To ensure cross-party engagement and involvement.

PCT (3)	Reading Area Director x1 (or equivalent PCT LSP Board member)	To Chair the HRP Board and represent the Partnership as a member of the LSP Board
	Strategic health improvement lead x1	
	Commissioning lead x1	
Voluntary / Community sector (4)	RVA officer	Role is to advise on voluntary sector involvement in all the work of the HRP and contribute to the effective delivery of the Strategy.
	Vol/ Comm Sector Forum rep x 2	Selected via sector election process
	LINK x1	Board member

- b) The Board may, if it chooses, agree to co-opt an additional Board member from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community to ensure that the Board is representative of the communities it serves.
- c) The Reading HRP Board will review its membership at least annually.

4. Selection of Board members

- a) Individual HRP Board members are nominated by the sector / partner organisations named above, but their nominated member(s) must comply with a person specification provided (see Appendix A), and the Board reserves the right to refuse to accept the person nominated (only as a last resort, following discussion).
- b) Information on a Board member's role and tenure (see section 6 below), will be provided for organisations. By nominating a Board member they will be agreeing to their representative carrying out that role.
- c) If an HRP Board Member has to relinquish their position on the Board at any time other than the annual review period (for whatever reason), then they or their organisation must inform the Chair of the Board of this in writing (email acceptable). The organisation or partnership that this member comes from will then be invited to offer another prospective Board member, who will serve for the remaining period of tenure.

5. Board membership: role & tenure

- a) Board members must :
 - consider and act for **quality of life in Reading as a whole**, whilst remaining within their legal duties to their own organisation.
 - where possible, be **authorised to take decisions** on behalf of their Nominating Organisation, including those decisions which may change the way in which organisations work together. If this is not possible, representatives must be in a position to make

recommendations to the governing body of their Nominating Organisations for a decision to be reached within a reasonable period.

- regularly **communicate** to and work on behalf of the HRP with their organisation/partnership/wider constituency
- give a **high level of commitment** to their role and make every effort to attend Board meetings, as well as give the necessary attention to issues that arise in between Board meetings.
- be willing to take part in **personal development and training** to achieve necessary skills and competencies as an individual. Be willing to take part in organisational development to ensure that the HRP Board functions well as a group.
- be willing to act as an **ambassador** for the HRP
- commit to the **Nolan Principles of Public Life**. The Nolan Principles (Appendix B) will form the basis for the HRPP Board's Code of Conduct and they will apply to all HRP Board meetings.
- declare any **conflict of interest** on matters of HRP business. This should be done at the earliest opportunity. The Board will then decide on the most appropriate course of action.

- b) In order to encourage attendance and ensure meetings are quorate, if the HRP Board Member is unable to attend 3 consecutive meetings, the HRP Board will investigate the issues surrounding non-attendance and take any appropriate action.
- c) If a member of the Board is unable to attend a meeting they may, with the agreement of the Chair, send an alternative representative as an observer.
- d) The **duration of tenure** as an HRP Board member is a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years before the individual's membership comes up for review. This will usually be done as part of a review of the overall Board's membership.
- e) Members' names, job title, office telephone number and email address are the only details to be made available to the public. Private details will never be made public.

6. Board Meetings

Frequency

- a) The Board will determine the frequency of its meetings, in discussion with the HRP Management Group, but aims to meet six times per year. Four meetings will be held quarterly to align with monitoring performance against the LAA targets, with the additional two meetings to be used for strategic business planning discussions. The HRP Board can convene further meetings to the normal calendar if it determines they are required.
- b) At least **half of members must be present** in order to conduct an HRP Board meeting.

Meeting Agenda

- c) The HRP Board, supported by the HRP Management Group, will develop and work to an annual work plan. HRP Board meeting agendas will be formed in relation to this plan.
- d) Agendas and papers for Board meetings will be circulated at least a full week ahead of the meeting and will be managed by the Council's committee services.

Meeting protocol

- e) Minutes of all Board meetings will be taken by committee services and should be disseminated to all Board members for their comment/agreement, by the end of the second week after the meeting.
- f) Any comments on the accuracy of the Minutes will be resolved at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

Decision making at Board meetings

- g) Normally, all HRP Board decisions are to be agreed by securing consensus. Should consensus not be reached then the HRP Board will be asked to vote on the issue.
- h) In the event that both Chair and Vice-Chair are unable to attend a meeting but that meeting is still quorate then those Board members present will agree a Chair from amongst their number. Any decisions taken at such a meeting will be subject to ratification by the Chair at the earliest opportunity.

Non-members attendance

- i) The Board shall have the right to invite other persons to attend the Board as and when appropriate. These attendees would be those, who, in the opinion of the Board, have a special interest, knowledge or expertise pertinent to specific issues of concern to the HRP.
- j) Observers have the right to speak at meetings, subject to the usual discretion of the Chair in managing the overall business of the meeting, but do not have any voting rights on formal decisions.
- k) The Board retains the right to conduct all or some of its business in camera.
- l) The Board retains the right to exclude observers.

Transparency

- m) Agendas and minutes of HRP Board meetings will be made publicly available as a matter of course and, as a minimum, will be published on RBC's website.
- n) HRP Board meetings will not be open to the public though members of the public may be invited as observers within the parameters of i) above.

7. Board Chair and Vice-Chair

Selection

- a) The Chair of the HRP will be the Area Director of the PCT or equivalent PCT LSP representative (to ensure that the Chair of the thematic partnership is also an LSP Board Member)

- b) The Vice Chair will be elected for the duration of one year by secret ballot. Therefore, nominations must be received four weeks before the scheduled date of the Board meeting that is agreed to be the one at which a selection is announced, and according to a timetable that will be circulated with nomination papers. The Vice Chair can be self nominated or nominated by others.
- c) The Vice Chair position will normally be rotated annually between representatives of the different agencies and sectors that constitute the HRP board. In any one year the Chair and Vice Chair must be drawn from two different agencies / sectors as represented on the board.
- d) If the Vice Chair leaves the Partnership during their tenure, a new election will be held.

Role of the Board Chair & Vice-Chair

- e) The Chair will liaise with the HRP Management Group on setting the agenda for Board meetings, and is expected to conduct meetings efficiently.
- f) The Chair will formally sign documents on behalf of the HRP Board. This responsibility can be extended to any member of the HRP Board as appropriate with agreement of the HRP Board.
- g) In the case of very urgent decisions, the Chair is authorised to make the decision on behalf of the HRP Board, in consultation with at least two other Board members. This will only apply if it is not realistically possible to consult with the rest of the Board.
- h) The principal role of the Vice-Chair is to deputise for the Chair in relation to the points above.

8. HRP Management Group

- a) This group's function is to ensure that the strategic decisions of the Board are implemented - making sure that things happen. It supports the Board and could be seen as its 'legs' or 'engine room'. In order for this group to carry out its functions effectively its composition must as a minimum comprise:
 - At least 3 full Board members
 - 1 representative from the PCT
 - 1 representative from RBC
 - 1 representative from the voluntary / community sector.

Devising and tracking HRP work programme

- b) Helps develop and then maintain a rolling work programme for the Board that is tied to:
 - Tracking delivery and review of LAA and longer term SCS goals
 - Performance and resource monitoring of LAA
 - Being alive to newly significant Reading-wide strategic issues that need HRP attention
 - Maintaining ongoing links to the work of the LSP and other thematic partnerships

Agenda setting for the Board

- c) In relation to the Board's work programme and other issues arising, takes initiative in setting the agenda for Board meetings. This could be done working as a group, but there would be regular liaison with and input from Board members. Puts forward proposals for what goes on the agenda / decides what goes on the agenda.
- d) Sets out meetings plan for the Board - a rolling document which always has a year's worth of meeting dates and items for discussion / decision at each one (this gets filled out in more detail nearer to each meeting but reflects reality that such forward planning can be done)

Board papers fit for purpose; (supporting effective meetings)

- e) Ensures that papers for the Board are appropriate, provided within an appropriate timescale, tied into the agenda, clearly written and provide enough information to enable the Board to have an efficient discussion.
- f) Is responsible for ensuring that the right people are asked to produce papers (e.g. in response to a request from a Board member) and that they are properly briefed on what is required

Follows up Board discussions and decisions

- g) Actions Board decisions - follows up after each Board meeting and allocates tasks etc, including task and finish groups.
- h) Keeps a structured check on what happens to actions / decisions
- i) Prepares regular updates for Board on decisions
- j) **Keeps an eye on progress of discussions (e.g. sets a schedule for discussions of complex topic such as Community Strategy) - is responsible for ensuring that the Board discusses what is appropriate at the right point**

9. HRP development role

This role will be picked up by the HRP Management Group who will be responsible for the 'welfare' of the HRP and how effectively it works as a partnership.

- a) Focuses on the processes of the LSP and its constituent groups ie how things are done, not what is done.
- b) Plays a brokering and nurturing role
- c) Helps build relationships
- d) Works to analyse and improve the collective capacity of the HRP, and that of individual members eg learning and development work, training.
- e) Facilitates a continual development process for the HRP, including review and monitoring of the HRP's structure and processes
- f) Brings in best practice on partnership working from elsewhere

10. Disputes and personal issues

- a) If there is any dispute or personal issue / problem between Board members, the member(s) with the dispute must set out in writing the substance of the dispute, for the Chair and Vice-Chair. These two will then, in liaison with

the Management Group, decide on an appropriate course of action, which may or may not entail involving the whole Board.

- b) Where the dispute relates to the Chair and/or Vice-Chair, the Board member(s) will send their written note to three fellow Board members, of their own choosing, who will liaise with the LSP Management Group to determine an appropriate course of action.

Appendix A

Person Specification for Reading LSP Board Members

Below are a range of skills, experience and knowledge that Board members will ideally have. It is accepted that not all members of the LSP Board will be able to demonstrate all these attributes, but the aim is for the Board as *a whole*, to have many of them.

1. **Local knowledge** : Show a good knowledge and understanding of Reading, its organisations and its issues
2. **Team Player**: Be able to work as part of a team.
3. **Political understanding**: Have understanding of political and policy imperatives at national and local level.
4. **External focus**: Be able to focus on other individuals or on groups or organisations outside their own and show commitment to the benefits of working in partnership
5. **Cultural Flexibility**: Be able to develop rapidly an in-depth understanding of a wide range of organisational, professional and community cultures.
6. **Cross Cultural**: Be able to look beyond existing structures and to work and develop plans and strategy across organisations.
7. **Influencing and negotiating skills**
8. **Innovative** : ability to think 'outside the box' /laterally. Be able to produce new views of old problems.
9. **Sectoral / organisational knowledge**: Contribute knowledge and experience from the perspective of their own sector/organisation. Understanding of strategic and financial issues in that sector / organisation.
10. **Communication**: Be an excellent communicator at all levels. Be able to express themselves clearly in speech and writing.
11. **Self-Confident**: Have belief in themselves, their own view and be prepared to state and reaffirm their position.
12. **Personal maturity**: Be able to deal with complexity and ambiguity. Have capacity to tune in to the needs and feelings of others whether directly or indirectly expressed.
13. **Respect Diversity**: Be able to show respect for the diversity of other's viewpoints and backgrounds.
14. **Collective Responsibility**: Be willing to work on a consensus basis and demonstrate corporate/collective responsibility.
15. **Strategic Comprehension**: Have the ability to understand the long term or widespread implications of decisions.
16. **Analytical ability**: Have the capacity to process detailed information.

Appendix B

The Nolan Principles of Public Life

Selflessness

1. Partners should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

2. Partners should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

3. Partners should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

4. Partners should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness

5. Partners should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgment

6. Partners may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

7. Partners should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

8. Partners should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship

9. Partners should do whatever they are able to do, to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

10. Partners should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should always act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.