

# **Draft Terms of Reference**

## **Bath Area Forum**

### **(For review)**

#### **1. Name and Area of Benefit**

- 1.1 The name shall be the Bath Area Forum
- 1.2 The Bath Area Forum will cover the Ward Areas known as The City of Bath
- 1.3 There are currently no corresponding Members.
- 1.4 The Forum will be encouraged to engage with and explore closer working arrangements with other partnership bodies as deemed appropriate.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Bath Area Forum is part of the Connecting Communities initiative that aims to improve the external engagement of the Council and its partners by bringing together neighbourhoods, villages, and towns to reflect local issues and priorities.
- 2.2 Whilst these areas create operational boundaries, they are also important in determining local priorities and bringing together local communities where there are shared and common issues.
- 2.3 Each area of the initiative will be supported by a local 'Forum' that will work together to improve local engagement, join up services and foster communication so local people receive better outcomes.
- 2.4 Each Forum may collaborate with other Forums to share good practice and engage in wider discussions including of a strategic nature. This collaborative approach is designed to secure involvement of stakeholders and residents.

#### **3. Aims and Objectives**

- 3.1 The overall aim is to provide a mechanism for collaboration between communities and public bodies; including Bath and North East Somerset Council to improve local engagement, join up services and foster communication so local people receive better outcomes.
- 3.2 The objectives are to:-
  - Involve residents and organisations by seeking their views and encouraging them to participate in improving their quality of life
  - Identify common issues across this area and debate local priorities
  - Offer constructive suggestions for improvement in relation to local priorities
  - Agree how organisations, including this Forum, will work together to respond to the local priorities and act where appropriate

- Influence wider policy developments and encourage meaningful conversation
- Act as a 'Champion' on behalf of the forum area

#### 4. Key principles

- 4.1 All voting and non-voting members of the Bath Area Forum agree to follow the five key principles of the Connecting Communities programme which are: -
- To **listen** - always being open to ideas.
  - To **prioritise** - making sure local needs come first.
  - To **join up** - working in partnership with our local communities.
  - To **work collaboratively** - helping communities find the best way to tackle local issues.
  - To **share ideas** - building on what works.

#### 5. Membership

- 5.1 Each Member must agree to the aims and objectives and key principles set out in 3 & 4 above.

- 5.2 The Core Membership of the Bath Area Forum will be:-

**Non-voting Members To Be Decided**

**Voting Members To Be Decided**

- 5.3 Further voting members may be drawn from voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations and local business, within the area of benefit as defined in 1.2
- 5.4 Representatives from other local authority partnership bodies may be invited to attend meetings if appropriate.
- 5.5 Organisations must demonstrate their understanding of the local needs and have a willingness to work together to support the aims of the Forum.
- 5.6 Meetings of the Forum shall be open to the public. The Forums are designed to encourage discussion and debate. All attendees will be allowed to freely share their views and opinions.
- 5.6 A notice of every meeting will be placed on Bath and North East Somerset Council's web meeting diary. All members of the Bath Area Forum will be requested to promote all meetings to encourage wider engagement.
- 5.7 An organisation may apply to become a member of the Bath Area Forum and this shall be considered at the Forum AGM, **subject to a maximum number of members To Be Decided**. Applicants will be associate members until this time.
- 5.8 The Secretarial support role will be carried out by Bath & North East Somerset Council, People & Policy Service.

## **6. Role of the Chair and Vice Chair**

- 6.1 The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected from the voting membership set out above. They shall act independently and work on behalf of the Forum for the wider benefit.
- 6.2 The Chair and Vice Chair will meet with the relevant officers of Bath and North East Somerset Council to propose agendas, discuss how issues might be resolved and report to the Forum as appropriate.

## **7. Working Methods**

- 7.1 The Bath Area Forum will meet at least 3 times a year, one of which meetings shall be an Annual General Meeting.
- 7.2 **A minimum number of voting members To Be Decided** should attend any meeting where a vote is required.
- 7.3 Agendas and papers for meetings will be circulated a minimum of seven calendar days before a meeting. A record of each meeting will be taken.
- 7.4 Every member of the Bath Area Forum shall be accorded the same degree of respect, dignity, and consideration by all other members, irrespective of people's protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and with regard to equalities legislation.

## **8. Agenda Planning**

- 8.1. The Bath Area Forum will adopt a core agenda for ordinary meetings as follows: -
- Welcome, Introductions and Apologies
  - Declarations of Interest
  - Minutes of the Last Meeting
  - Matters Arising
  - Standing Items (e.g., Community Safety, Transportation)
  - Community Items
  - Consultation Items (e.g., Council, Police, CCG etc)

## **9. Area profile**

- 9.1 The Bath Area Forum will establish and keep updated an Area Profile that aims to inform the priorities for the Forum.

## **10. Annual General Meetings**

- 10.1 The Bath Area Forum will hold an Annual General Meeting each year.
- 10.2 The Bath Area Forum will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair. These positions will be held for one year and thereafter elections will take place at the Annual General Meeting.

10.3 At AGM meetings, the Bath Area Forum shall:-

- i. Elect the Chair and Vice Chair
- ii. Review the Terms of Reference
- iii. Agree how organisations, including this Forum, will work together to respond to the local priorities and take action where appropriate
- iv. Influence wider policy developments
- v. Review its progress annually and consider how to engage more widely, showcase initiatives and share good practice

10.4 Any member may stand to be elected as Chair or Vice Chair. The existing Chair and Vice Chair may seek re-election.

10.5 Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair may be received prior to and at the AGM. This includes self-nominations for both positions.

10.6 The quorum for the AGM is ten voting members as **in 7.2 above**.

10.7 The election of the Chair and Vice Chair will be made available only to those existing members of the Forum, notification of which will be made in advance.

## **11. Voting**

11.1 The Bath Area Forum will seek to work through the development of consensus.

11.2 Decisions, including alterations to the Terms of Reference, will be made by a simple majority vote, subject to the quorum of the meeting (**see 7.2 above**).

## **12. Working Parties**

12.1 The Bath Area Forum may establish from time to time working parties that will be responsible for undertaking specific topics as necessary.

12.2 Members of the working parties may co-opt individuals or organisations to join, in an advisory capacity, to support their objectives.

12.3 A record of working party meetings will be taken and reported back at the Bath Area Forum meetings.

12.4 Members of the Forum may be invited to attend other meetings or sit on external bodies to represent the views of the Bath Forum area. The Forum will agree this on an ad hoc basis.

## **13. Dissolution**

13.1 A proposal for dissolution of the Bath Area Forum will require the approval of the minimum number of voting members as **set out in 7.2**

13.2 All funds, documents and possessions shall be disposed of in accordance with the wishes of the majority of voting members.