



# Terms of Reference

## 1. Context and broad role of the Partnership

The TVNP is a cross sector Tees Valley wide partnership that has been formed to take a strategic overview of the natural environment and look for ways to manage, enhance and promote it that will produce outcomes that integrate the needs of nature, people and the economy.

The TVNP has been formed as a response to the Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP) (2011) in which the government invited new and existing partnerships to come together to form Local Nature Partnerships (LNP). The TVNP received government recognition as the LNP for the Tees Valley in July 2012.

The NEWP recognises that a healthy, properly functioning natural environment is the foundation of sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal wellbeing. The Tees Valley is home to the largest integrated heavy industrial area in the UK, which continues to create wealth and employment. Key priorities for the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are to drive forward economic regeneration and to develop the transition into a high value low carbon economy and a creating a more diversified and inclusive economy. Improving health, wellbeing and educational attainment are key priorities of Local Authorities and Health providers. The role of the TVNP will be to bring together a wide range of partnerships and organisations working in the Tees Valley to act as a conduit to local and central government, providing a knowledgeable and objective voice for the natural environment. This will drive positive change for the Tees Valley natural environment by working collaboratively to develop a shared strategic vision. It will also set out and to coordinate delivery of strategic priorities to improve the natural environment that produces multiple benefits for the local economy and health and wellbeing. The TVNP remit will be to drive positive change for the Tees Valley's natural environment and to champion the role of healthy local natural environment and its fundamental contribution to local economic and social prosperity.

## 2. Vision statement

A rich and healthy natural environment in the Tees Valley to create a vibrant place for people to live, work and learn.

## 3. Geographic coverage

The TVNP covers the local authority areas of Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough, Darlington and Redcar and Cleveland.

## **4. Aims**

### **Overarching aim**

The partnership aims to coordinate and strengthen local action to secure a functioning, sustainable and resilient bio-diverse natural environment to improve the health, well-being and livelihoods of people in the Tees Valley.

### **Objectives**

Following stakeholder consultation during the first half of 2012 a number of key priorities can be identified for the Partnership;

- Raise the profile of the Tees Valley as an attractive place to live, work or visit by championing the value and contribution of the natural environment through strong leadership, advice and support
- Contribute to the preparation, review and implementation of local plans and strategies, and influence local decision making
- Continue to work to protect and enhance the geodiversity and biodiversity of the Tees Valley ensuring the conservation, restoration and creation of key landscapes and habitats
- Work at a landscape scale to restore and deliver robust ecological networks that demonstrate a wide range of environmental, social and economic outcomes, including mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change
- Seek positive outcomes for both nature and the local economy by working closely with the economic sector by providing objective knowledge, expertise and advice
- Make positive contributions towards the health and wellbeing of local people by demonstrating the opportunities that better access to and use of the natural environment can provide
- Work closely with local communities to ensure that these views are reflected in the activities and priorities of the Partnership, and that they understand the opportunities offered by the natural environment on their doorstep

## **5. Structure and governance of the Partnership**

### **5.1 Full partnership**

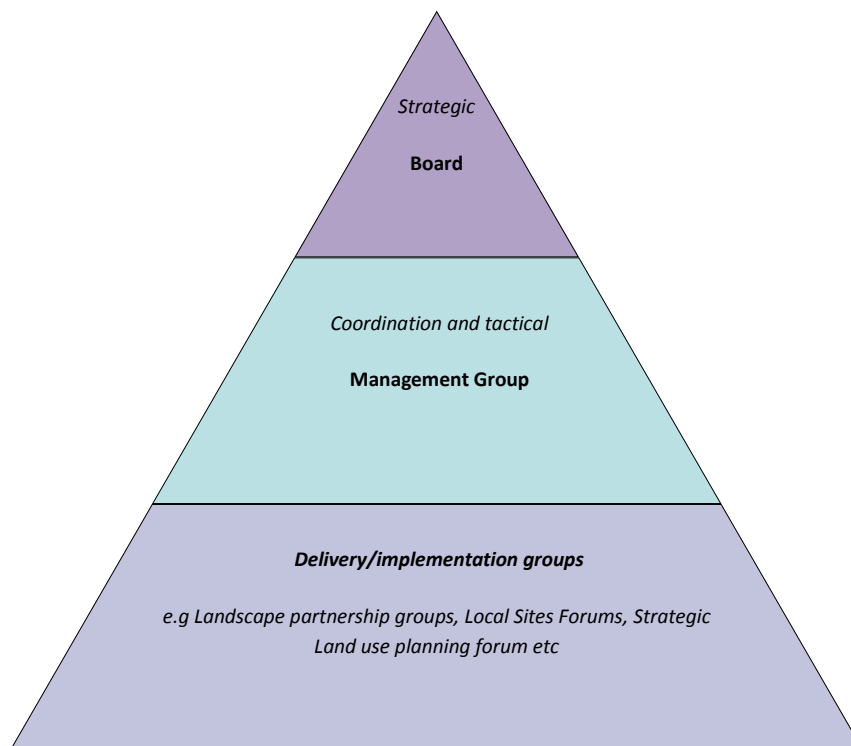
Membership of the TVNP is open to any organisation, public or private, government or non-governmental, corporate or incorporated, which is interested in furthering the work of the partnership and has agreed to the terms of reference of the partnership. The full partnership will convene at an annual partnership forum event.

The function of the annual forum will be;

- To provide an opportunity for all members of the partnership to contribute to discussion on the strategic direction of the TVNP
- To share and celebrate achievements of the TVNP and its member organisations
- To enable partners to share knowledge and best practice.

The TVNP will be governed by a board, which will be serviced by the management group and delivery/implementation groups.

## Conceptual structure of partnership



### 5.2. Accountable body

The Tees Valley Wildlife Trust (TVWT) will act as the accountable body of the Partnership. This role will include;

- Establishing and maintaining effective systems
- Administering and taking responsibility for funding including ensuring structural financial procedures
- Ensuring that funding resources are spent according to agreed plans and priorities
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems of auditing and monitoring spend
- Responsibility for employing and managing any staff to carry out the coordination of the Partnership.

### 5.3 TVNP Board

#### Function of the Board:

The TVNP will be steered by a representative Board. The Board will provide strategic leadership and direction for the work of the TVNP. It will be responsible for the following roles:

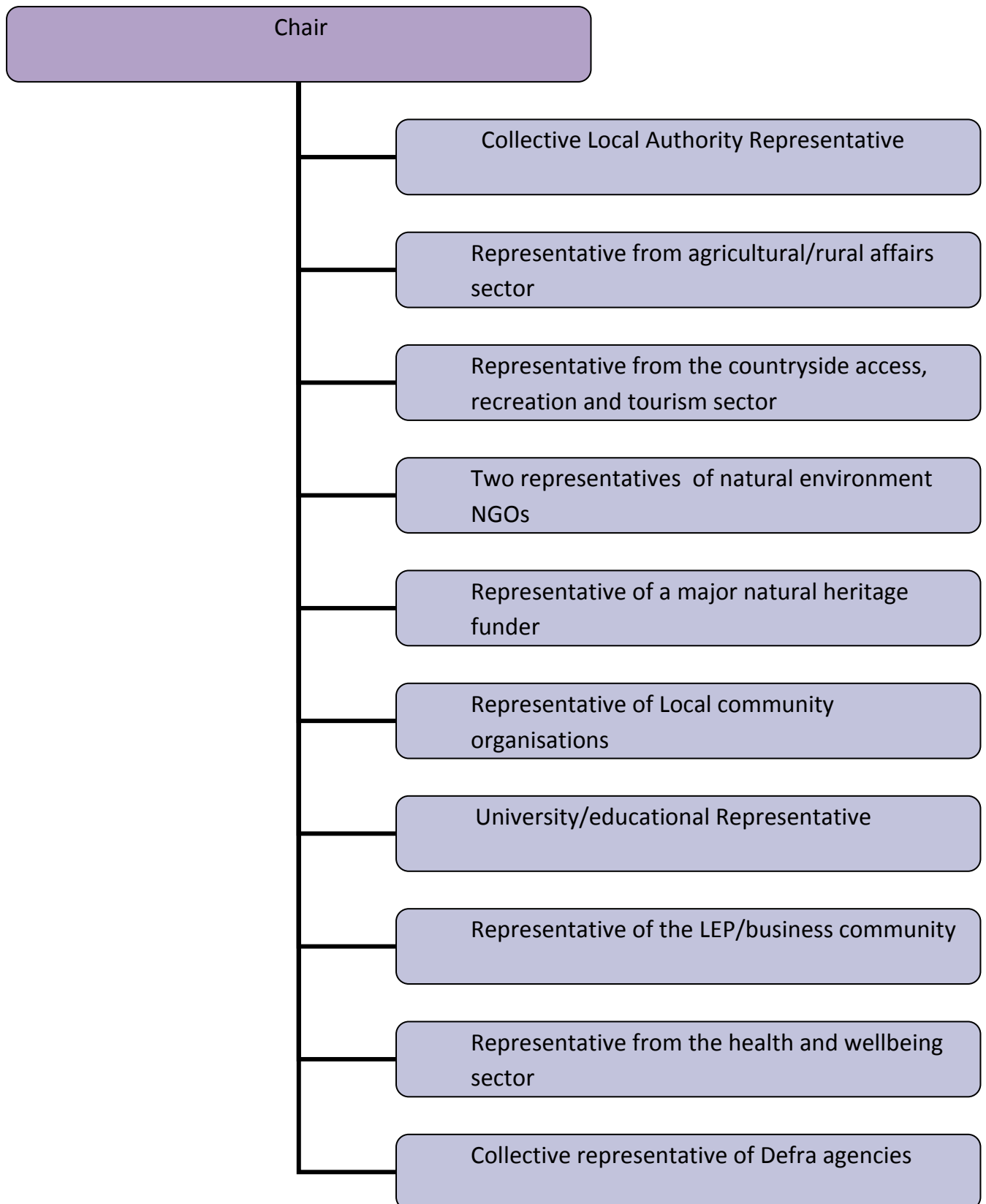
- Defining the strategic priorities of the TVNP based on the aims of the Partnership
- To further develop the Partnership by reviewing and developing the TVNPs strategic aims, ensuring that they remain relevant and reflect the views of the partnership and the local needs of the Tees Valley
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and performance of the TVNP to deliver integrated environmental benefits
- Champion the vision of the TVNP to ensure that this vision is communicated to wider decision makers across a diversity of sectors.

#### **5.4 Composition of Board**

The Board will comprise of 12-15 members. Each representative will have multiple interests and will not be representing a single organisation.

Membership of the board will be comprised of the following representatives;

- The Chair
- One collective representative of the five Tees Valley local authorities
- Two representatives of the natural environment sector
- One local community representative
- One collective representative of the Defra delivery agencies
- One representative of the LEP/business community
- One representative of the health and wellbeing sector
- One representative from a local academic institution
- One representative from the agricultural/rural affairs
- One representative from the countryside access, recreation and tourism sector
- One representative of a major natural heritage funder



The terms of reference for Board members appendix A.

### **5.5 Processes and procedures of the Board**

The Board will meet at least twice a year to set strategic direction and monitor progress.

- The terms of reference of the Partnership will be reviewed annually
- Meetings will be minuted and, where appropriate, action points will be identified with the individuals or groups responsible shown.
- The chair of the Board will be rotated between meetings. Where possible the Board will make decisions based on consensus and agreement. If this is not possible then decisions may be taken by a majority vote of the Board members, with the meeting Chair having the casting vote. For a vote to be quorate at least one third of the Board members must be present.

## **6.6 Management Group and delivery groups**

The work of the Board will be underpinned by a Management Group. Its role will be;

- To monitor, action and review progress against the partnerships objectives
- To implement strategic decisions of the Board by developing delivery mechanisms
- To support the Board with knowledge, expertise and recommendations as required
- To provide a communication link between the Board and the delivery groups to ensure effective working

Membership of the delivery groups will be from Partnership members. The number and remit of these groups will be fluid to meet the developing needs of the partnership. It is anticipated that some of these will be able to function effectively as an email groups.

The TVNP will act as the Local Sites Partnership for the Tees Valley by endorsing and adopting local wildlife sites as proposed by the Tees Valley local authorities to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to monitor their management. This process will be coordinated by a delivery group.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Terms of reference for Chair/Board Members**

#### **Expectations and role of Board Members will be to**

- Champion the work of the Partnership to relevant partners, organisations and networks
- Provide strategic input into the key decisions of the board relating to vision, strategic objectives and delivery plans
- Actively seek opportunities to influence the strategy and plans of relevant organisations and groups to further the aspirations of the Partnership
- Represent and be accountable for the wider interests of their sector at Partnership meetings
- Operate in an open, responsive and accountable manner that adheres at all times to high standards and ethics and governance of public life

## **The role of the Board Chair**

The principal duties and responsibilities of the Chair will be to;

- Build support for the vision and aspirations of the Partnership by acting as an influential advocate
- Chair Board meetings, having regard for the agreed procedures of the Partnership, fulfilling these duties in a manner that is free of political influence or bias
- Represent the Partnership, acting as a spokesperson at appropriate events, forums and meetings
- Ensure a culture of mutual respect, partnership working and equality of opportunity for the Partnership
- Ensure that the views of the wider partnership are represented and taken into account during decision making in order to deliver integrated benefits for the natural environment.