

STANDING ORDERS

FOR THE

SOUTHWARK

ALLIANCE

Ratified 23 November 2002
Amended 22 September 2008

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SECTION A: TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Core Purpose

- To improve the lives of people in Southwark

The Southwark Alliance (Alliance) is a forum for opinion reflecting the diversity of the lives of the people of Southwark. While we have no statutory or administrative powers, our goal is to influence the decisions taken by all organisations that impact on the borough, to ensure their joint efforts contribute to an improvement in the lives of the people of Southwark.

- Take forward and problem solve the 'big' issues around regeneration, crime, health, education, employment, housing and the environment
- Negotiate with and influence government departments and other agencies

2. Role of Southwark Alliance Board

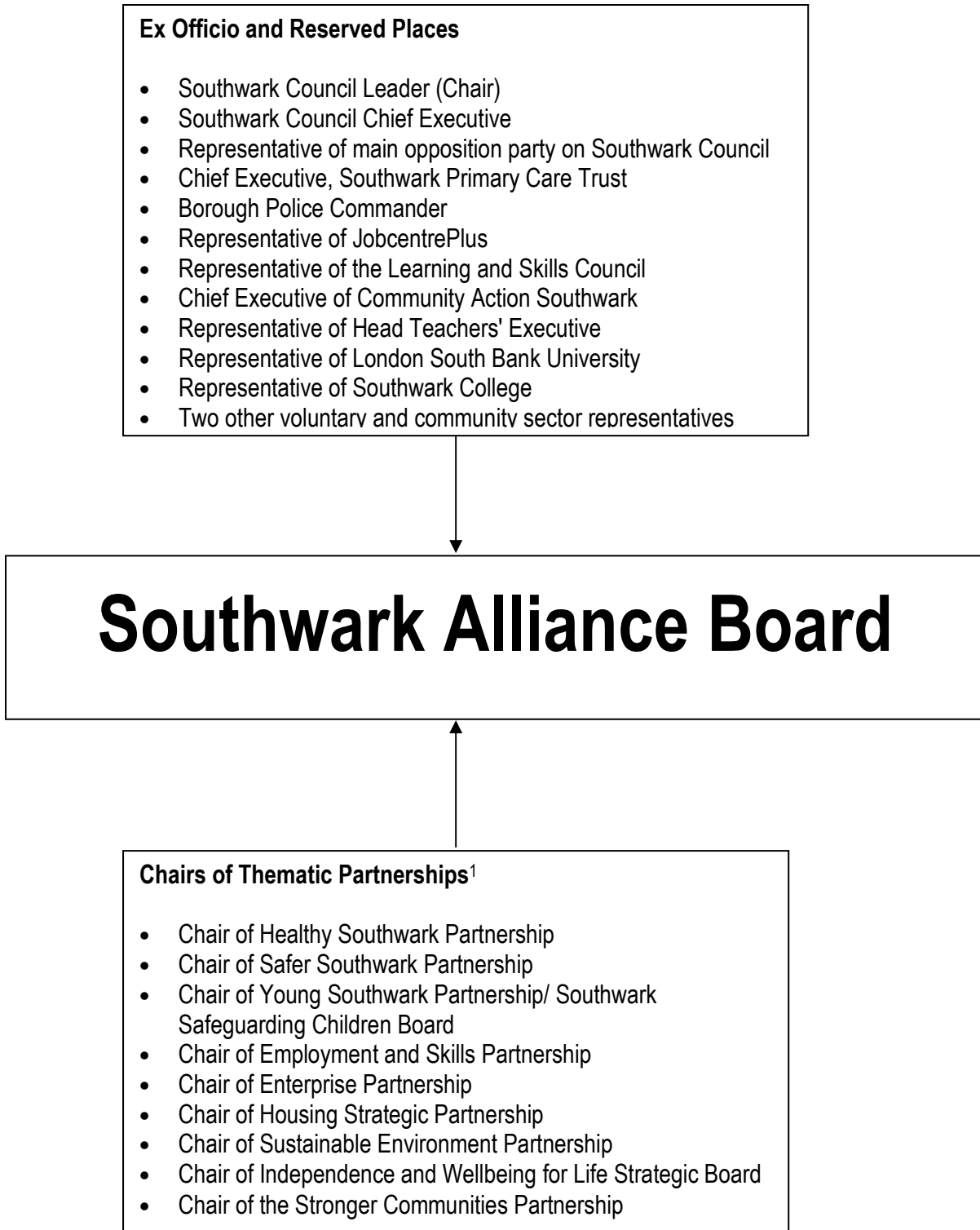
- To promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the borough and the improvement of public services, by preparing and overseeing the delivery of Southwark's Sustainable Community Strategy.
- To identify and articulate the needs and aspirations of local communities, and reconcile or arbitrate between competing interests.
- To co-ordinate and oversee partnership working in the borough, working through thematic and area-based partnerships.
- To lead on cross cutting initiatives, such as Local Area Agreements and multi-agency programmes, taking responsibility for system-wide performance management arrangements.
- To establish a shared understanding of the totality of resources that local partners can bring to bear, with a view to ensuring that these are used efficiently and effectively, exploiting opportunities for securing economies of scale, joint commissioning and service sharing.
- To promote active citizenship and community cohesion in the borough, and oversee and coordinate the community consultation and engagement activities of partner bodies.
- To oversee the Alliance's internal and external communications.
- To adopt and ratify borough strategies and plans.

3. Accountability

- To the public - through consultation and reporting
- To partner agencies - through the accountabilities of each participating organisation
- To each other - by keeping promises and delivering action on agreed goals

4. Membership

The Southwark Alliance Board shall be comprised as follows:



¹ Where practicable, thematic partnerships will be chaired by an ex officio member of the Southwark Alliance Board.

5. Frequency of Meetings

- At least 6 times a year

6. Key Principles Underpinning Partnership Working

- Developing a culture of mutual respect
- Recognising that different organisations/individuals have different structures, timescales and objectives
- Continuous drive towards creating the opportunities for involving groups under-represented in decision making process such as black and ethnic minority communities, young people, older people, gay men and lesbian women and people with disabilities
- Direct commitment and involvement of nominated partnership members and a presumption against deputisation
- Recognising the conflicts between different organisations
- Demonstrating honesty about what will work

7. Method of Working

By conducting business in a creative, inclusive and non-bureaucratic way focused on:

- Facilitated discussion
- Creative thinking
- Team work and working in small groups
- Inviting keynote speakers and visiting models of good practice in other parts of the country which are relevant to the work of the Southwark Alliance
- Through a clearly structured and jointly agreed work programme
- Reporting progress on pushing forward partnership objectives to local stakeholder events

8. Review of Partnership Success, Role and Membership

- Against its annually agreed work plan and performance management framework.
- At stakeholder events
- Membership of the Southwark Alliance will be kept under review in the light of changing circumstances and priorities.

9. Communications

- The Southwark Alliance will develop and implement a communications strategy
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SECTION B: PROTOCOLS

Membership

10. Members

- 10.1 Southwark Alliance members shall formally agree to accept the *Southwark Alliance Rights and Responsibilities (see Section C)*
- 10.2 Members will hold their positions by reference to the constituency they represent.
- 10.3 Southwark Alliance members have a responsibility to attend all Southwark Alliance meetings. In exceptional circumstances, a Southwark Alliance member can send a deputy/substitute to a meeting. The deputy/substitute shall be fully briefed and have the authority to make decisions at the meeting.
- 10.4 When a substitution is to be made members are required to:
- a) contact the Southwark Alliance Partnership Manager to record apologies for the meeting and to notify the Partnership Manager of the name of the substitute;
 - b) ensure the named substitute receives the appropriate agenda, reports and associated paperwork for the meeting; and
 - c) arrange a debriefing with the substitute.
- 10.5 A member of the Southwark Alliance who wishes to resign shall tender his/her resignation to the body that nominated or elected him/her, as a member of the Southwark Alliance, and, at the same time, shall notify the Southwark Alliance Partnership Manager.
- 10.6 Should a member not attend three consecutive meetings the chairperson will ask them to review their place on the Southwark Alliance.
- 10.7 The membership and terms of reference of the Southwark Alliance shall normally be reviewed every four years, but ad hoc changes can be made in the light of changed circumstances.

11. Equality

- 11.1 Each constituent body has a responsibility to ensure that the composition of the Southwark Alliance reflects the whole community; and all those involved in the work of the Southwark Alliance have a responsibility to conduct business in a way that celebrates and builds on the rich cultural diversity within Southwark.
- 11.2 The Southwark Alliance will seek to engage all communities in its work with specific emphasis on traditionally excluded groups, including children and young people; black and minority ethnic communities; Travellers; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual communities; physical and learning disabilities, older people, faith-led groups, citizens with HIV and citizens with disabilities.

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- 11.3 The Southwark Alliance will ensure that its equalities work underpins its terms of reference, protocols, self-assessment and work programme.

12. Chairing

Selection of Chair and Vice Chair

- 12.1 The Southwark Alliance shall have a chairperson and a vice chair.
- 12.2 The Leader of Southwark Council shall be the chairperson of the Southwark Alliance.
- 12.3 The Southwark Alliance will elect a vice chair from within the membership of the Southwark Alliance for a term of two years.
- 12.4 The chairperson and vice chair shall not be representatives of the same organisation.

Rights and responsibilities

- 12.5 The chairperson and vice chair shall have the rights and responsibilities as outlined in Section C, below.

Process

- 12.6 The Southwark Alliance Officers shall be responsible for co-ordinating the election of the vice chair position.
- 12.7 The election of the vice chair will be held at a Board meeting and will be by way of a 'first past the post' system.

Chairing of Southwark Alliance Meetings

- 12.9 At a full meeting of the Southwark Alliance Board, the chairperson of the Southwark Alliance shall normally preside. If the chairperson is absent from the meeting or disqualified from participating on the grounds of a declared conflict of interest, the vice chair shall normally preside. If the chairperson and vice chair are absent or disqualified from participating, the members present shall choose who shall preside.

13. Quorum

- 13.1 No business should be transacted at a full Southwark Alliance meeting unless at least one half of the current membership is present.
- 13.2 An amendment to these Standing Orders shall require the agreement of a simple majority of the current Board membership (i.e. >50%).
- 13.3 If the chairperson or member has been disqualified from participating in the discussion on any matter and/or from decision making because of a declaration of a conflict of interest he/she will not count towards the quorum.

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Decision Making

14. Meeting Conduct

- 14.1 Southwark Alliance meetings shall be conducted in a way that reflects the best practice of partnership working including:
- Balancing between talking and listening
 - Speaking one at a time
 - Allowing everyone the opportunity to speak
 - Keeping to time
 - Addressing any questions to the chairperson
 - Being polite and constructive
 - Seeking consensus
 - Use clear and accessible language
 - Openness, transparency and honesty
- 14.2 Should any Southwark Alliance member have concerns about the conduct of the meeting or conduct of persons attending the meeting, he/she should advise the chairperson either:
- a) during the meeting, if appropriate or
 - b) after the meeting
- 14.3 When the matter is raised during the meeting, the chairperson will endeavour to deal with the matter immediately. Where it is raised subsequent to the meeting, the chairperson will determine whether it warrants use of the complaints procedure.

15. Public Attendance, Observers and Officers

- 15.1 Public: Full meetings of the Southwark Alliance will be open to the public except during the consideration of confidential or exempt matters under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972 (i.e. matters affecting commercial matters or matters to do with private individuals).
- 15.2 Observers: The Southwark Alliance may invite individuals and organisations with known expertise and knowledge to attend its meetings as observers. Observers may participate in meetings of the Partnership but shall have no decision-making powers. If a member would like an observer to attend a Southwark Alliance meeting, he/she should seek the permission of the chairperson.
- 15.3 Officers: Southwark Alliance officers have a responsibility to attend Southwark Alliance meetings and may participate where appropriate, including presenting information to the Southwark Alliance. Southwark Alliance officers have no decision-making powers.
- 15.4 Members of the public can attend Southwark Alliance meetings but have no speaking rights.

16. Decision Making Arrangements

- 16.1 The Southwark Alliance recognises that it comprises agencies with their own separate accountability and decision-making processes. Therefore Southwark Alliance decisions are not binding on agencies or organisations. Notwithstanding this, members of the Southwark Alliance should seek to align as far as possible the aims, priorities and performance management arrangements of their organisations with those of the Alliance.
- 16.2 To be effective and action orientated, the Southwark Alliance recognises that it may from time to time, need to take formal decisions which it would expect its constituent members to take into account as significant recommendations to their own decision making bodies.
- 16.3 To make such decisions, a full Southwark Alliance meeting will need to be constituted and decisions will be made as follows:
- ❑ The Southwark Alliance will aim to work by consensus and where this is not possible a decision will be made through voting.
 - ❑ Every decision taken by the Southwark Alliance shall require the agreement of more than half of the number of Southwark Alliance members present.
 - ❑ Where there is a split vote, the chairperson will have a casting vote.

Powers of the Chairperson

- 16.4 Between formal Board meetings, the chairperson, with the assistance of the vice chair, is empowered to take decisions that assist the Alliance to operate smoothly.

17. Declarations of Interest

- 17.1 It is the responsibility of all members to declare a personal interest in matters being considered by the Southwark Alliance.
- 17.2 If a member fails to inform the meeting of his/her interest, and it is subsequently brought to the attention of the Southwark Alliance, the individual member will be reported to his/her nominating body.
- 17.3 The individual member will be suspended from participating in any future meetings of the Southwark Alliance until the Southwark Alliance chairperson has investigated the matter, taken appropriate actions and notified the Southwark Alliance and the nominating body. In the meantime the nominating body may appoint a substitute where applicable.

Personal Financial Interest

- 17.4 A personal financial interest is where an individual Southwark Alliance member or a member of their family may be affected financially as a direct result of a Southwark Alliance decision. Personal financial interests exist whether the Southwark Alliance decision will have a positive or negative effect and should be declared whether the Southwark Alliance member would gain or lose as a result of the decision.

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- 17.5 Personal financial interests could include the following: -
- ❑ Employment and business interests;
 - ❑ The interests of an employer, a firm where the member is a partner or a company where s/he is a director;
 - ❑ Corporate bodies where the member has a substantial share holding;
 - ❑ Ownership of land, interests in leases and tenancies; or
 - ❑ Contracts with the Southwark Alliance.
- 17.6 Upon declaration of a personal financial interest as defined under 18.5 the Southwark Alliance member can not participate in the discussion. This provision does not apply to representatives of statutory agencies, if the financial benefit is not directly a personal one.

Other Personal Interests

- 17.7 As well as financial interests, Southwark Alliance members may have a range of other interests as a result of their membership of charities, voluntary organisations, political associations, trade unions and other bodies [other than the constituent body they are representing on the Southwark Alliance]. Where an Alliance member is actively involved in the management of such organisations they should declare a personal interest when the Southwark Alliance considers matters that may affect the organisation.
- 17.8 Upon declaration of a personal interest, as defined under 18.7, the person will continue to act as a full member of the Southwark Alliance.

18. Task Groups

- 18.1 The Southwark Alliance may from time to time form Task Groups to focus on particular issues. The Southwark Alliance will determine their membership, terms of reference and duration.
- 18.2 Members of a Task Group may include Southwark Alliance members, nominees of Southwark Alliance constituent bodies, and other persons/bodies as determined by the Southwark Alliance.
- 18.3 All Southwark Alliance Task Groups are accountable to the Southwark Alliance and are required to report back to the Southwark Alliance.
- 18.4 Southwark Alliance Task Groups will be supported by the most relevant agency to the interests of the Task Group. Therefore, constituent members agree to commit to supporting any relevant Task Groups.

19. Complaints Procedure

- 19.1 The chairperson shall ensure that any complaints concerning either the Southwark Alliance as a body or individual members acting in their capacity as an Alliance member are properly investigated and appropriate action taken.

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- 19.2 If a complaint is about the chairperson, the vice chair shall perform the responsibilities normally carried out by the chairperson.
- 19.3 Any complaint should be in writing. The process of investigation will be started within five working days of receiving the complaint. Investigations should be completed within two weeks, whenever possible.
- 19.4 In cases involving individual members, the detailed decision will be reported to the Southwark Alliance member's representative body/organisation.
- 19.5 If a Southwark Alliance member complained about feels the decision is unfair, there is a right of appeal to the Southwark Alliance as a whole.

Meetings, agenda and supporting documentation

20. Arranging Meetings

- 20.1 A minimum notice period of 1 month will be given for each meeting, except where it proves necessary to arrange a special meeting at shorter notice.
- 20.2 The chairperson of the Southwark Alliance may from time to time call additional meetings of the Alliance to deal with urgent business. In any event, one full week's notice will be given for all meetings.
- 23.3 Members of the Southwark Alliance may seek to call additional meetings of the Southwark Alliance. However, they must seek the permission of the chairperson to do so. To call an additional meeting, a member will need to present a letter that is also signed by no less than three other members of the Southwark Alliance detailing the business to be discussed.

21. Agenda

- 21.1 The agenda for Southwark Alliance meetings will be set by the chairperson with the assistance of the Partnership Manager.
- 21.2 The agenda page(s) for each meeting will be published by the Partnership Manager at least five working days in advance of each meeting.
- 21.3 A member of the Southwark Alliance wishing to add an item of business to the agenda shall send a notice to the Southwark Alliance Partnership Manager at least five clear working days before the meeting. The request should state whether the item of business is proposed to be transacted in the presence of the public and should include appropriate supporting information.

22. Papers

- 22.1 Any reports or papers for consideration at the meeting will be distributed five clear working days in advance to Southwark Alliance members.

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- 22.2 Agendas/reports for meetings will be distributed electronically and by post.
 - 22.3 With the agreement of the chairperson, all members of the Southwark Alliance will be able to put papers on the agenda or raise matters verbally.
 - 22.4 Papers shall be made available in other formats, as required by Southwark Alliance members and the public.
- 23. Confidentiality**
- 23.1 Reports that are deemed by the chairperson with officer advice, to contain confidential or exempt matters (see above) will not be made public with the other agenda papers.

Interpretation of the Standing Orders

24. Standing Orders

- 24.1 The Southwark Alliance Partnership Manager shall give a copy of the Standing Orders to each member of the partnership and appropriate officers. An alteration to these Standing Orders can only be made during a full Southwark Alliance meeting.
 - 24.2 The Southwark Alliance will aim to work by consensus and where this is not possible a decision will be made through voting.
 - 24.3 The chairperson shall be the final authority in the interpretation of Standing Orders
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SECTION C: SOUTHWARK ALLIANCE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Southwark Alliance Rights and Responsibilities shall be effective from the date that the Southwark Alliance has signed off as agreeing to it/ratifying it.

25. Members

25.1 Members are expected to hold senior positions within their nominating agencies, organisations or forums.

All Southwark Alliance members are expected to:

25.2 *Be a team member*

- Use and share their skills, knowledge and personal experience to steer the work of the Southwark Alliance, working alongside colleagues from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors as equal partners
- Participate in the debates and decisions of the Southwark Alliance and contribute to building and maintaining a constructive relationship between all partners.
- Seek to identify resources that can be utilised to achieve the aims of the Southwark Alliance and its strategic plans.
- Work on a consensual basis and demonstrate collective responsibility, which includes publicly supporting all Southwark Alliance decisions.

25.3 *Training and capacity building*

- Be committed to build capacity as individuals and part of a team, including attending Southwark Alliance meetings, training/information sharing events, workshops etc.

25.4. *Participate in strategic and policy development*

- Contribute to the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Southwark Alliance policies and strategic plans.

25.5 *Be involved in personnel matters*

- As a non-legal body, the Southwark Alliance cannot directly employ staff. Recruitment of staff relating to Southwark Alliance activity is the responsibility of the statutory agency responsible for that activity. In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for a Southwark Alliance member to act as an observer during a recruitment process.

25.6 *Equalities*

- Promote equality of opportunity in the work of the Southwark Alliance and constructively challenge discriminatory practice, which may prevent participation in the work of the Southwark Alliance.

25.7. *Ethical Standards*

- Need to observe the ethical standards of the Southwark Alliance (see below)

25.8. *Communications*

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- Represent the Southwark Alliance at public meetings, events, workshops, and conferences in accordance with the communications protocol attached as Annex 1.

25.9 *Representatives of Organisations, Sectors and Partnerships*

- Represent the interest of their organisation/ sector/ partnership at meetings of the Southwark Alliance and report back to their bodies on the outcome of Southwark Alliance meetings.
- Ensure that their attendance is consistent and that they are properly briefed and properly empowered by their organisation.
- Must be clear and transparent about the extent of their authority to commit resources, and clear about the timetable and process to gain commitment if they are not so empowered.
- Should ensure that they are in touch with their organisation, collecting sufficient views in advance of issues arising to act as an authoritative voice for their organisation and reporting back sufficiently to ensure that agreed actions happen smoothly.
- Have a collective responsibility to the aims of the Southwark Alliance; which includes, as far as practicable, accepting a responsibility to achieve the outcome agreed, supporting decisions taken, and delivering agreed outcomes.

26. **Ethics and standards – the Nolan principles for involvement in public life**

26.1 All Southwark Alliance members shall adhere to the following principles:

Ethics or standards for those in public life

Selflessness: Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends

Integrity: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties

Objectivity: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate for their office

Openness: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands

Honesty: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest

Leadership: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by

leadership and example

27. Members' Induction and Development

- 27.1. Southwark Alliance members will receive induction and ongoing support to enable them to perform their role as Alliance members.
- 27.2. It is the responsibility of the Southwark Alliance Partnership Manager to organise the induction of new Southwark Alliance members.

28. Expenses

- 28.1. Members will normally claim any expenses for attendance at Southwark Alliance meetings or associated activities, such as conferences, training and workshops, from their parent organisation.
- 28.2. In exceptional circumstances, and by prior agreement of the Partnership Manager, expenses incurred may be reimbursable to members of the Alliance.

29. Chairperson and Vice Chair

The chairperson, with the assistance of the vice chair, is responsible for:

- 29.1 *Leadership and Relationship Management*
 - Providing fair and impartial leadership
 - Setting out the partnership's vision, together with the ability to drive the Southwark Alliance forward along the agreed strategic path
 - Creating an environment where all members are able to make a full contribution to the Southwark Alliance's business
 - Ensuring that key issues are discussed by the Southwark Alliance in a timely manner and with appropriate information to support decisions
 - Developing and maintaining a constructive relationship with all the sectors represented on the Southwark Alliance
 - Develop a professional and effective relationship with Southwark Alliance officers
 - Ensuring the Southwark Alliance takes due responsibility for its tasks as the Local Strategic Partnership for Southwark
 - Maintaining an overview of, and developing, maintaining and using links with, a range of other initiatives, partnerships and organisations with which it is important for the Southwark Alliance to be involved
- 29.2 *Strategic*
 - Providing leadership to the partnership to set the strategy and policy of the partnership.
 - Monitoring the implementation of the work programme
 - Ensuring that the partnership regularly reviews its structure, role and performance
 - Acting as a signatory on behalf of the partnership

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29.3. *Membership issues*

- ❑ Dealing with complaints against the Southwark Alliance as a whole and named Southwark Alliance members.
- ❑ Reviewing the attendance of Southwark Alliance members who are not attending consistently
- ❑ Ensuring an appropriate induction process is provided for new Southwark Alliance members

29.4. *Communications*

- ❑ Promoting and representing the Partnership at meetings and functions and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate

29.5. *Meetings*

- ❑ Chairing Southwark Alliance meetings
- ❑ Handling urgent matters
- ❑ Drawing up the agenda of the Southwark Alliance with the Southwark Alliance Partnership Manager
- ❑ Responsible for determining whether reports for Southwark Alliance meetings are confidential, with advice from the Southwark Alliance Partnership Manager
- ❑ Interpreting Standing Orders
- ❑ Explaining the purpose of the meeting
- ❑ Keeping to the agenda within the agreed time
- ❑ Explaining the purpose of each item on the agenda
- ❑ Making sure the meeting is recorded in an appropriate manner
- ❑ Keeping discussions in order, providing information, encouraging discussion and ensuring discussions are made when they need to be
- ❑ Ensuring that all members have a chance to put their views across
- ❑ Ensuring that all members are aware of the action they need to take after the meeting
- ❑ Motivating members of the partnership.

29.6. *Day-to-Day Functions*

- ❑ Taking decisions that concern the day to day running of the Southwark Alliance, and any other decisions delegated by the Southwark Alliance Board.
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MEDIA GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOL – Annex 1

1. Communicating with the Media

1.1 When communicating with the public and the media the members of the Southwark Alliance and thematic partnerships will operate under the following key principles:

- The Southwark Alliance is one partnership and will communicate with one voice
- When communicating with the media, members are clear as to who they represent
- Communication on behalf of the Southwark Alliance will be done by people who have been given the authority by the Alliance
- These guidelines will not impact on the members'/organisations' right to talk to the media
- Any Southwark Alliance communication with the media will be co-ordinated and or recorded by the secretariat
- Where possible, members will inform the Southwark Alliance of any contentious issues they have raised with the media as individuals or organisations. This will assist the Alliance to be aware of the issues within the borough and nationally.

1.2 Responsibility for communications on a particular matter will rest with the most appropriate partnership/organisation, as defined by their remit and responsibilities. Thus, for example:

- (i) Southwark Alliance will lead on issues across the whole 'system' of provision and on work that it has undertaken, or has been undertaken on its behalf;
- (ii) the Safer Southwark Partnership will lead on issues specifically concerned with community safety and
- (iii) the Metropolitan Police will lead on issues solely relating to operational policing matters.

The same principle will apply across other service areas.

1.3 Partnerships and organisations will share information about forthcoming events and planned communications activity. Partnerships and organisations will seek to keep each other informed of any contentious issues raised with or by the media, particularly where an issue may have implications for partner bodies.

1.4 Media enquiries should be dealt with by the most appropriate professional communications officer, rather than programme and project managers. Which communications officer takes the lead on any initiative will be governed by the nature of the issue. Thus, Southwark Alliance will generally lead on 'system-wide' issues; thematic partnerships on crosscutting issues within their terms of reference and individual organisations will lead on matters that are specific to them.