



## **How the North Meets South Big Local Steering Group works**

### **1. Background**

This document describes the North Meets South Big Local Steering Group and how it works.

### **2. The Steering Group**

The North Meets South Big Local steering group is a group of people that provide overall direction of Big Local in the area. They sign a memorandum of understanding with Local Trust on behalf of the area. While Local Trust refers to this group as the Big Local Partnership, we are known as the North meets South Big Local Steering Group.

### **3. Area of benefit**

The area of benefit is the North Meets South Big Local area (Marks Gate and north Chadwell Heath).

### **4. Aim and purpose**

The aim of the Steering Group is to develop North Meets South Big Local area as a thriving community, taking full advantage of the support and opportunities offered through Big Local.

- A. Promoting Big Local and an understanding of the programme throughout the North Meets South area
- B. Working and engaging with a range of people in the community as appropriate and where possible
- D. Agreeing a shared vision for the area
- E. Creating a Big Local plan that reflects the vision and priorities
- H. Working with an appropriate nominated support body (locally trusted organisation) to administer the distribution of funds
- I. Reviewing the Big Local plan



## 5. The guiding principles

At all times the Steering Group will be mindful of the following principles:

- A. Building the Steering Group into an effective working team that makes use of the mix of skills, experiences and interests
- B. Adhering to the meeting ground rules
- C. Give opportunities for the community to be involved
- D. Applying principles of equal opportunity and integrity
- E. Accepting there will be conflict and disagreements and commit to address these in a constructive way
- F. Listening to all points of view and respecting them
- G. Reflecting on achievements and sharing lessons for the future
- H. Developing good relationships within the team
- I. Supporting and respecting each other

## 6. The North Meets South Steering Group

The Steering Group is the decision making body for Big Local in the area.

### Purpose

The Steering Group ensures the activities and operations, set out in section 4 and 5, are carried out effectively and efficiently.

The Steering Group will make decisions relating to Big Local in the North Meets South areas, including the use of the funding but they do not actually hold the money. This is undertaken by the locally trusted organisation (LTO), a nominated support organisation. The LTO(s) will ensure that funding decisions and procedures meet the requirements of Local Trust to ensure transparency, accountability and best practices. This means that no individual (as part of the Steering Group decision-making body) will be legally liable in any way.

The Steering Group signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Local Trust, who endorses the Steering Group (as the Big Local partnership).



## **7. Engaging with the community**

We are committed to engaging meaningfully with members of the North meets South area, and offering a range of opportunities for people to get involved with Big Local. To this aim we will hold or be part of a minimum of three community based events a year in the area.

## **8. Membership of the Steering Group**

The aim is to achieve a membership of the Steering Group that reflects the area. Voting membership of the Steering Group is open to anyone who lives or works in the North Meets South area and shares the aims of the Steering Group and is at least 16 years of age. There will be between 8 and 15 members of the Steering Group at any one time, of which at least 55% will be residents of the North Meets South Big Local Area.

While members may be from different neighbourhoods of the Big Local area, they will be making decisions for the benefit of the whole area and not just representing the part of the area they live in or group/organisation that they might be a member of.

There will be no payment for the work undertaken in the role of Steering Group member, however necessary expenses will be considered for this, subject to circumstances.

In very rare instances when a member may have an interest in a delivering a project in a paid contractual capacity in order to progress a core North Meets South priority, their Steering Group role will be suspended for the duration of the contract. In such cases, there will always need to be a clear match between the member's professional experience/skills and the contract requirements.

## **9. Terminating membership of the Steering Group**

Individual membership of the Steering Group may be terminated by the Steering Group in line with our normal decision-making processes. Reasons for this might be on the grounds of a member acting against the aims of the Steering Group, breaching the code of conduct, bringing the Steering Group into disrepute, or missing two consecutive meetings without a reasonable excuse.

### Training and team building



All members will be expected to undertake training and team building as part of the role. Once formed, the Steering Group will identify ongoing support and training needs.

### Officers

The Steering Group is currently led by three Senior Partners and revolving meeting Chairs. The Senior Partners will be resident members/long-standing volunteers in the North Meets South Big Local area. This might be reviewed.

## **10. Recruitment of Steering Group members**

If there are vacancies in the voting membership of the Steering Group, the existing voting members of the Steering Group can vote to appoint people to fill those vacancies.

Individuals can also ask to join the Steering Group at any time. They will usually be invited to up to three meetings, after which time a decision will be made by members of the Steering Group in line with our normal decision-making processes.

All people wishing to be on the Steering Group must demonstrate they will keep to the guiding principles within this document, sign a code of conduct, will fairly represent all sections of the community, act in the best interests of Big Local and want to serve the community and not use their personal agenda to make decisions.

## **11. Decision-making and voting**

All members of the Steering Group have one vote. All Steering Group decisions shall be taken on the basis of a consensus of all those present. In the event that a consensus is not possible in a reasonable time, the voting members shall be required to take a vote on the matter involved. In the event that a vote is tied, the meeting Chair shall have the casting vote.

## **12. Meetings and attendance**

- A. The Steering Group will try to support anyone with any particular needs to ensure their full participation in all meetings
- B. There will be a Steering Group meeting at least once every two months approximately



- C. Any member of the Steering Group with 2/3rds of the Steering Group's agreement can call an extraordinary meeting
- D. The meetings will enforce the Ground rules agreed by the steering group
- E. If necessary, the Steering Group can hold occasional meetings and make decisions via email and telephone conference call and the procedures as outlined in this document apply
- F. If there is urgent business, the Senior Partners might call an additional meeting

There shall be a quorum when at least half of the voting members are present at a meeting and 55% are residents.

The Agenda will be determined by the meeting Chair (with input from other Steering Group members) and distributed prior to each meeting, with relevant papers attached.

### **13. Declarations of interest and loyalty**

At the beginning of every meeting of the Steering Group or task-groups, members will be required to declare any direct or indirect financial and other interest they have in any agenda item being discussed at that meeting and may be asked to leave the meeting during a vote.

#### **Declaration of interest and loyalty**

*In line with the code of conduct, members of the partnership will need to declare any conflicts of interest and loyalty.*

Where a member has a clear private or personal interest in a matter under consideration, they must both declare that interest and, if necessary, withdraw from the meeting. The interest need not be of a purely financial nature but could include membership of a club or organisation connected with the matter under discussion. Interests can be positive or negative especially where a competitive element is introduced. For example, a member may wish to support a particular course of action because it impacts more favourably on an organisation they are a member of, or impacts favourably on their friends/relatives.

The Steering Group will work out when a member has to withdraw from the



meeting because most people in the Steering Group will know the people and organisations under discussion.

If in doubt, an individual should avoid being in any position where suspicion could be raised for any appearance of improper conduct - if in doubt, the individual should declare the interest and seek guidance from the Big Local Rep for future meetings.

Where an individual has declared an interest a statement should appear in the notes of the meeting. For example:

XXX declared a financial/non-financial interest in the above item and withdrew from the meeting, taking no part in the discussion or decision.

or

XXX declared non-financial interest in the above item and remained in the room during its consideration, but took no part in the discussion or decision.

#### **14. Concerns or disputes**

Wherever possible, any issues or concerns that members have between meetings should be raised first through a Senior Partner.

Any member who feels they have not been treated fairly or has a complaint about proceedings should raise the matter at a Steering Group meeting, or separately with a Senior Partner informally, or if the issue is related to a Senior Partner then separately with another Senior Partner. Additionally the Big Local rep can hear disputes in the first instance.

Complaints passed the point of informal discussion should be put in writing to the Steering Group via the LTO ([alan.horne@crestwf.org.uk](mailto:alan.horne@crestwf.org.uk)).

If the dispute is unable to be resolved at the Steering Group meeting then it needs to be escalated and mediation with an independent person or organisation shall be used as a dispute resolution technique.

#### **15. Alterations to these Terms of Reference**

These Terms of Reference may be altered by the Steering Group in line with our normal decision making processes.