

**LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES (LBRUT)  
VOLUNTARY SECTOR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (VSSP)  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Aims**

- To strengthen, support and develop the voluntary and community sector in LBRUT
- To bring together representatives from voluntary and community groups who work in LBRUT, to ensure that the voluntary sector is fully represented in cross-sector planning structures, in particular the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
- To ensure that the voluntary sector's collective views have an influence on planning and policy decisions.
- To ensure that the views of all voluntary and community groups are identified through the representative structure of the VSSP and its appropriate nominated representatives

**Objectives**

The VSSP will achieve these aims by:

- Through the nominated representative structure, ensuring that all VCS organisations have the opportunity to contribute to current and ongoing strategic issues, through a range of communication and meeting channels.
- Keeping abreast of political, social, economic, legal and environmental developments which may have an impact on the work of the VCS in LBRUT and disseminating this information as widely as possible.
- Providing a co-ordinated response to influence decision making on key issues affecting the VCS in LBRUT, including the Community Plan, Local Area Agreements, and other relevant local plans and policies.
- Encouraging and developing partnership working and sharing of knowledge within the VCS and between the VCS and the statutory and private sectors.
- Identifying specific concerns and issues and organising meetings to address these.
- Inviting any representatives from relevant organisations, who will help to promote and advance the aims of the VSSP, to attend meetings.
- Electing or seeking nominations to represent the VCS on local partnerships, boards, and other structures as required.
- Providing an accountability mechanism for these elected VCS representatives to report back to, and consult with the VCS.
- Contributing to and supporting the development of the LBRUT Compact or other protocols designed to improve relationships between the public and voluntary sectors in partnership with the Compact Working Group.
- Through its representative structure, ensuring that VSSP is accessible and that Equal Opportunities principles and practices are applied.
- By reviewing its Work Plan annually to assess the effectiveness of current structures and representation.
- By reviewing the VSSP Representation Procedure to ensure that representation is effective, inclusive and is appropriately managed by each nominated agency.

**Membership**

The VSSP is a formal structure, which is managed by Richmond upon Thames Council for Voluntary Service (RCVS). It will comprise of up to 20 nominated or elected representatives from each constituency of interest, whose responsibility will be to liaise with their sector. Membership will be reviewed as appropriate to ensure that the representative structure meets current strategic developments. A full review of representatives is held annually (see Appendix A).

**Meetings**

The VSSP will meet four times a year; three meetings of members of the Partnership and one meeting annually involving the wider sector. Additional meetings may be called to consider urgent agenda items. RCVS will notify VCOs of each meeting, administer and facilitate the meetings, and will report back in the form of open minutes and reports that can be circulated widely.

Agreed August 2009 – to be reviewed August 2010