

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



This document was approved by the Big Local SW11 Partnership Committee on 3 February 2021. It has since been updated to reflect a year of testing new ways of working. Updates in December 2022 and agreed in the Partnership Committee meeting on 18 January 2023.

This document explains Big Local SW11 Partnership Committee and covers:

- The committee's vision, purpose and values.
- Who can be on the committee and how they are appointed
- The committee's role and functions
- How decisions are made, recorded and communicated
- Standards of behaviour expected of committee members
- How conflicts of interest are handled
- Accountability to the SW11 community

### 1 MISSION, AIMS AND VALUES

#### 1.1 Mission statement:

Big Local SW11 (BLSW11) is an independent, resident led group that has been awarded £1 million from Local Trust (Lottery funded) to invest in projects that improve opportunities for local people and strengthen our community by supporting and funding change through networking and communicating in partnership with local people and organisations.

#### 1.2 Vision:

As residents and workers in Big Local SW11, we have a long term vision of our community as a place where...

- Everyone has the opportunity and confidence to widen their horizons and to maximise their potential for learning, working and achieving. (Achieving & Potential).
- A community where everyone feels safe, that they belong. (Safety & wellbeing).
- Where everyone can have a voice, shape their future and influence the design of space and services in a way that develops ownership. (Influence & ownership).
- We all have the opportunity to meet and interact across the wider community, to learn and belong. (Community & belonging).
- We're committed to work in partnership to make this happen over the next 10 years and be sustainable for even longer.

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



### 1.3 Values

- Quality and excellence
- Local ownership of solutions
- Honesty and transparency
- Social responsibility
- Equality and diversity
- Innovation and creativity
- Enthusiasm, energy and proud
- Contribution from all
- Community within and across social boundaries
- Positive attitude to advocacy
- Hope
- Exchange and reciprocity

### 1.4 Aims

- See an increased sense of hope and aspiration, leading to flourishing individuals and community. (Achieving & Potential)
- Develop an all age programme of activities throughout the BLSW11 area using outdoor spaces, leading to increased sense of safety, improved spaces and greater community unity. (Safety & Wellbeing)
- See an increased sense of participation for carers and those with disabilities in BLSW11. (Safety & Wellbeing)
- Work with agencies to improve all spaces that are identified as dark, unsafe &/or depressing e.g. railway tunnel, 'dog mess alley'. (Influence & Ownership)
- Ensure people in our community are informed of things that affect them and have a way to respond, whether planning applications or groups and clubs available to them. (Influence & Ownership)
- Work with people to increase respect & care of the area and its people. (Influence & Ownership)
- Create an environment where all individuals can come together on common ground; to share skills, values and contribute towards a cohesive community. (Community & Relationships)
- Organise annual sustainable/self-sufficient events that celebrate Big Local, our community and its values. (Sustainability)
- Generate income to ensure continuity and a sustainable legacy for BLSW11. (Sustainability)

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



### 1.5 Themes of our work

All BLSW11 work will fit under our core themes of improving mental health and combating loneliness and isolation.

### 1.6 Definitions

“BLSW11” for the purposes of this document means Big Local SW11 Partnership.

“Area” is that which was defined by Local Trust and attached as Appendix C.

“Community” – People and groups that live, work, volunteer or study in the geographical area defined by Big Local SW11.

“Conflict of Interest” means any direct or indirect interest of a Member, whether personal, by virtue of a duty of loyalty to another organisation, or otherwise, that conflicts, or might conflict with the interests of BLSW11.

“Partnership Committee”- the members tasked with the management of BLSW11 affairs.

“LTO” - Local Trusted Organisation.

## 2 MEMBERSHIP

### 2.1 How do people join the Partnership Committee (PC)?

Members will be recruited to the PC by advertisement, word of mouth and recommendations. Prospective members may be invited by the PC to attend one or more meetings as observers prior to the PC deciding on their appointment as a member of the PC.

PC membership is voluntary, and members participate ‘in their own right’, which means they cannot represent the views of any other person or organisation. Members will not personally gain materially or financially from their role as a member.

All members must take responsibility for keeping up to date with BLSW11 matters if they are unable to attend meetings.

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



### 2.2 How many voting members are on the PC?

The PC will have a minimum of 8 and maximum of 15 voting members, in line with the Big Local programme guidance. At all times, at least half of the voting membership, must be residents of BLSW11 area.

Total members	Residents of BLSW11 area
15	8
14	8
13	7
12	7
11	6
10	6
9	5
8	5

If resident members leave or step down so that there are insufficient resident members, then the most recently appointed non-resident member will no longer have a vote until a replacement resident member is appointed. The non-resident member may continue to attend meetings as a non-voting member.

### 2.3 Who else attends meetings?

The PC can invite to its meetings regular or occasional observers, who are non-voting and advisory. Regular observers will be included in the mailings for all meetings. Occasional observers may be invited to attend a specific meeting because of a relevant item on the agenda. The LTO rep and the Local Trust rep may both attend all meetings but are non-voting.

Contracted worker(s) may attend PC meetings by invitation, and are non-voting. PC members cannot be contracted workers.

Local elected politicians can be voting members of the partnership if they attend meetings in a resident capacity not in their role as a Councillor. Local elected politicians can become partnership members but are not permitted to vote. BLSW11 is non-political.

### 2.4 What happens if members don't attend meetings?

Members should send apologies in advance to the facilitation team if they know they will be unable to attend a meeting. Any member who does not attend three consecutive meetings without giving apologies will be considered to have resigned, unless the PC decides that there are special circumstances and allows the member to continue.

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



### 3 MEETING GUIDELINES

#### 3.1 How often does the PC meet?

The PC aims to meet at least 10 times a year, ideally every month. A schedule of meeting dates will be agreed by the PC before the beginning of each year so that everyone can book them in their diaries.

#### 3.2 How public are the meetings – who can attend as observers?

Residents of BLSW11 are welcome to attend meetings as an observer, provided they contact the facilitation team in advance. The chair of the meeting will ask such observers to leave the meeting during discussion of any confidential or sensitive items.

#### 3.3 How formal are the meetings?

The meetings will be business-like but friendly. We agree to stick to the agenda, to speak through the Chair, and to conduct ourselves in a sensible friendly manner. The Code of Conduct (Appendix A) sets out the standards for acceptable behaviour at meetings.

#### 3.4 How is the agenda created?

The agenda will be developed collaboratively by the facilitation team and will be set and distributed one week in advance of the meetings. Anyone on the PC can request an item to be put on the agenda, and should send it to the facilitation team two weeks before the meeting. Urgent items of Any Other Business must be notified to the chair before the beginning of the meeting. Every agenda will include standing items:

- Declarations of interest. This will be early on the agenda so that members can declare any actual or potential conflict of interest or loyalty they have in any agenda item being discussed at that meeting. Where a participant has a private or personal interest in a matter under consideration, they must both declare that interest and, where deemed necessary, withdraw from the meeting. If they remain, they may be asked to leave the meeting during discussions and / or a vote accordingly. The interest need not be of a purely financial nature but could include membership of a club, organisation or political group or relationship with a person 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.

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



- Financial report. This will update members on actual spending and future spending plans.

Reports from BLSW11 funded/supported projects will also be on the agenda when needed. Examples include:

- Coordinator / Comms and admin worker report
- Youth Voice / Volunteer Coordinator report
- Battersea Alliance report
- Community and Belonging Forum

### **3.5 What paperwork is provided in advance of the meeting?**

An agenda is provided one week in advance electronically, together with minutes/notes of the previous meeting and any reports or information that is needed for the meeting. Paper copies of these documents can be brought to the meeting by the facilitation team/workers for those without printing access, if requested in advance.

### **3.6 How are records of meetings (minutes) kept?**

The Comms & Admin worker will take the notes at the meetings, and ensure that all members of the partnership and regular attenders receive copies within 2 weeks after the meeting but only after they have been approved as a fair record by the chair of the meeting. The minutes/notes will be a written record of the key items discussed and the key points made. They will clearly record decisions and action points where someone makes a commitment to take a specific action. They will also record conflicts of interest and how the PC decided these should be handled. The minutes/notes will not normally record the details of what people said at the meeting.

### **3.7 Who can call extra meetings?**

Any member of the BLSW11 PC can request a meeting outside of the routine meetings, by contacting the facilitation team to explain the reasons. If satisfied of the need, a meeting will be called. Only the facilitation team, can cancel a meeting.

### **3.8 How many members need to attend in order to make a decision (i.e., what is a quorum)?**

To be quorate, meetings must have 5 voting members of the partnership present.

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



### 3.9 How are decisions made?

Wherever possible, the PC will try to reach agreement within the group by listening to one another's views and then reaching a consensus. This sometimes means that group members' need to compromise in order to reach a decision that is acceptable to everyone rather than supported by some members and opposed by others. However, it is not always possible to reach consensus and so decisions sometimes require voting. Each voting member will have one vote, and in the event of equal votes, the chair of that meeting will have a casting vote. The meeting minutes/notes will record whether decisions are taken by consensus or voting.

If partnership members are unable to attend a meeting, they will be able to pass their vote to a fellow partnership member to cast on their behalf – a buddy vote.

### 3.10 What happens if a decision is needed before the next scheduled PC meeting?

Decisions can be made by electronic means if they are urgent and cannot wait until the next Partnership meeting. If someone believes an urgent decision is required they should email the issue to the facilitation team for confirmation that it requires an urgent response. If agreed, the facilitation team will arrange to send an electronic message to all members with "URGENT APPROVAL REQUIRED - PLEASE RESPOND BY X TIME ON Y DATE" in the subject line. The message can also be sent out via WhatsApp.

The response time should be ideally be a minimum of 48 hours. The decision request must ask for a clear yes / no reply. If no response is received from any member within the stated timeframe then this will be deemed as an abstention. If anyone is not in agreement or they have any objections or points of concern, they should reply to all (within the required timeframe) so that everyone is aware of the issues raised and can consider / change their response if required. The normal quorum set out in 3.8 applies to these decisions. Urgent approval requests must then be noted and minuted at the next PC meeting.

### 3.11 How are issues, conflicts and disagreements resolved?

All members are required to sign the Code of Conduct (set out at Appendix A) to indicate their commitment as a member of BLSW11 Partnership Committee. The Code of Conduct is reaffirmed by the PC annually. If a breach occurs, the partnership will follow the process outlined in Appendix B.

Any member who feels they or another participant have not been treated fairly or has a concern or complaint about attitudes, behaviours or proceedings should raise the matter at a BLSW11 meeting, or separately with the facilitation team informally. If the issue is related to a member of the facilitation team, then the matter should be raised with one of the other facilitation team members. Additionally the Big Local Area Coordinator can hear expressions of concern and disputes in the first instance.

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



Expressions of concern and complaints past the point of informal discussion should be put in writing to a minimum of two people out of the facilitation team and Big Local Area Coordinator/LTO. The process outlined in Appendix B will then be followed.

### **3.12 What are the roles of the facilitation team and how are they elected?**

The PC will elect their facilitation team. The facilitation team will be three people, ideally from the current PC. One member should be a resident of the BLSW11 area. If it proves difficult to elect three members from within the PC, an independent member may be recruited at the agreement of the PC. The facilitation team will be elected at a PC Meeting whenever a new plan is approved, or in the case of a vacancy, the next PC meeting.

### **3.13 What are the roles of the facilitation team?**

Recognising the workload of a Chair, we have decided to create a leadership team. The team will consist of three people and is designed to share the workload and provide support in what can be a challenging role. The facilitation team will facilitate the plan's delivery and ensure the ethos of the BLSW11 is maintained. This includes, but not limited to:

- Chair PC meetings to progress the formation, delivery, and review of the plans
- Exemplify the values and Code of Conduct stated within this document.
- Ensure that all members are encouraged and enabled to make contributions and decisions.
- Review and agree the minutes after each meeting.
- Agree the agenda prior to the meeting.

The facilitation team will also ensure appropriate support for the BLSW11 workers, alongside our LTO. They will ensure workers:

- Manage the email account [info@biglocalsw11.co.uk](mailto:info@biglocalsw11.co.uk) and therefore act as contact point for external enquires.
- Maintain open access records for PC members including all minutes, reports, etc.
- Promote the work of BLSW11 and ensure two way communication between the PC and our community.
- Drive forwards the ambitions of the PC and support eh PC to deliver the BLSW11 plan.
- Are supported in their roles.

The facilitation team will work with our Locally Trusted Organisation (Providence House) to:

- Ensure the PC understand the BLSW11 Plan Budget in order to be able to monitor spending against the plan budget and advise the PC about budget constraints on its spending decisions.
- Have oversight of all invoices ensuring they are correct and appropriate to the Plan Budget. The LTO must ensure that invoices are legal and follow their internal due diligence and governance arrangements.



# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



### **3.14 What is the role of sub-groups and how are they formed?**

The PC may establish sub-groups to oversee particular aspects of the plan or to carry out specific functions. When doing this the PC will agree the terms of reference for such groups and these must:

- Set out the sub group's aims and purpose
- Make clear the extent of their delegated authority, that is what sorts of decisions they can make without needing prior approval from the PC.
- Have at least 3 members
- Have a minimum quorum of 2 to make decisions.
- Ensure all members have an opportunity to take part in decisions.

Ideally, sub-groups will include at least one PC member who will be responsible for regular reports to the PC on the group's work. Sub groups should actively seek to involve the wider community.

### **3.15 How does the PC ensure it is accountable to the local community?**

The PC will use a variety of methods to keep residents informed of its plans and its activities. These will also ensure that residents have opportunities to comment on plans and make proposals for initiatives that will benefit the community. Each year there will be at least one public event at which the work of BLSW11 is demonstrated to the community and this will include opportunities for residents to get involved in the PC itself and/or other activities promoted by the PC.

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



### APPENDIX A - CODE OF CONDUCT

#### 1. Purpose

The purpose of the code of conduct is to ensure that all members of the BL SW11 Partnership Committee (PC) operate the highest standard of integrity at all times. The PC has discussed and agreed this code of conduct and all members are expected to sign to indicate their commitment on appointment.

#### 2. What does good conduct look like?

- Mutual respect
- Courtesy
- Listening skills
- Patience
- Being friendly, welcoming, and kind
- Proactively including and seeking the views of others
- Willingness to compromise for the good of the whole
- Focus on meaningful positive impact
- Intentionally inclusive, fun and accessible meetings
- Respecting the full spectrum of cultures and communities in the partnership and the wider community
- Acknowledging, valuing, and uplifting the skills of the full PC
- Being team players (working together)

#### 3. Unacceptable behaviour

The PC will not tolerate behaviour which produces damaging or hurtful effects, physically or emotionally, on people. Inappropriate behaviour includes abusive, threatening or intimidating behaviour and applies to phone calls, emails, letters, social media, in person and face-to-face meetings.

This includes:

- Insults and name-calling
- Swearing, offensive language and gestures
- Inappropriate jokes
- Ridiculing and undermining behaviour
- Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact
- Physical assault or threats of physical assault
- Intimidating, coercive or threatening actions and behaviour
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- Isolation, non-cooperation or deliberate exclusion

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



- Inappropriate comments about a person's appearance
- Intrusive questions or comments about a person's private life and malicious gossip
- Offensive images and literature
- Pestering, spying or stalking.

#### **4. Noncompliance of BLSW11 Partnership's Code of Conduct**

All PC members have an individual responsibility towards the upkeep of the code of conduct. Firstly, by monitoring their own behaviour so that if they recognise that they may have breached the code they will acknowledge this and seek to rectify the situation including apologies to other members.

Secondly, where they believe that others have acted in a way that breaches the code, to politely but firmly call out the behaviour and ask the person responsible to acknowledge and rectify their position. When someone appears to breach the code but is not willing to acknowledge, then the chair of the meeting will talk to the person concerned initially to raise the issue and state that their behaviour has been noted.

If the behaviour persists the chair will arrange a meeting to talk through the behaviour or incident using the restorative practise format below.

Everyone is given a two week cooling off period after any conversation or meeting.

A substantial breach of any part of this code may result in removal as a member if the restorative practice method does not lead to an increased understanding and compliance with this document. Removal of partnership members must be done with a majority vote of the partnership.

Should partners resign, they will inform the chair in writing, stating the reasons for resigning.

#### **5. Declaration**

As a member of the PC, I agree to abide by our values as set out in the constitution.

I also agree that:

- Everything the PC does will stand the test of scrutiny by people in the BLSW11 area, Local Trust, community members, stakeholders, funders and the courts.
- Integrity, respect and honesty are the hallmarks of all conduct when dealing with others within the PC and equally when dealing with individuals and institutions outside it.
- The PC will strive to maintain an atmosphere of openness throughout the community to promote confidence of the public, stakeholders, Local Trust, the Big Lottery Fund, charity regulators and government. In particular:
  - I will not break the law
  - I will abide by our local Big Local SW11 policies and procedures.
  - I will always strive to act in the best interests of Big Local SW11 and the local community

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



- I will declare any conflict of interest or of loyalty, or any circumstance that might be viewed by others as such, as soon as it arises so that I do not gain any improper personal benefits from my role on the partnership, nor will I permit others to do so as a result of my actions or negligence.
- I will engage in debate and voting in meetings according to procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making my voice heard.
- I will maintain confidentiality (where this has been agreed by the PC) about what goes on in the meeting.
- I will respect equality of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- I will respect BL SW11 PC as politically neutral and will refrain from party political comments or statements within meetings.

I understand that substantial breach of any part of this code may result in my removal as a member. Should I resign as a member I will inform the Chair in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



### APPENDIX B - How we resolve conflict, complaints and breaches of our code of conduct

We have learnt that how we communicate with each other is fundamental in creating a supportive, engaging and effective community partnership. As well as using the listening circle technique\* we

#### Rules for restorative practice meeting

- Listen with respect – there will be a chance for everyone to speak, if not in the formal questions then afterwards.
- Know the difference between behaviours and people – no personal insults.
- No swearing or shouting.
- Approach with a mind for resolution.
- Be kind.
- Common objective is to resolve the conflict and to ensure ongoing relationships for the work of BLSW11 and the BLSW11 community.

#### Follow these questions

Questions for the person causing harm – Person A

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- Who has been affected by what you did?
- In what way have they been affected?

Questions for the person harmed - Person B

- What happened?
- What were your thoughts at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- How has this affected you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?

Question for Person A – is there anything you want to say?

Question to Person B– what do you think needs to happen next?

Questions for Person A – what do you think needs to happen next?

will also follow the restorative practise approach to conflicts and complaints.

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



\*Listening Circles are when we all are given the same amount of time to share how a certain incident made us feel. Everyone must listen and no one can comment on what each other says or mention names, they must focus on how they feel. Once everyone has spoken, the meeting moves on.

### APPENDIX C - CONFLICTS OF INTEREST GUIDELINES

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a PC member's personal interests or loyalties might influence their decision-making.

There are three main reasons why someone involved in BL SW11 might have a conflict of interest:

- They might get a financial benefit- for example, if they work for a local organisation or business that receives BL SW11 money to deliver activities or services, or owns a meeting space that BL SW11 pays to use.
- They might get an indirect financial benefit- for example, if a close relative or friend is employed by an organisation that receives BL SW11 money, or is doing work paid for with BL SW11 money.
- Their loyalty to BL SW11 might conflict with their loyalty to another group or organisation. This might be because they are a member or trustee of, or have links with, an organisation or group outside BL SW11. Although the member may not personally gain any financial benefit, their decision-making could be influenced by their other interests.

All PC members, as well as BL SW11 staff & volunteers will strive to be transparent and professional in dealing with any conflict of interest. The purpose of these guidelines is to protect the integrity of the BLSW11's decision-making process, to enable our stakeholders and the community to have confidence in our integrity and to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and PC members.

Examples of conflicts of interest include:

- A PC member who is also on the Committee of another organisation that is competing for the same funding.
- A PC member who has shares in a business that may be awarded a contract to do work or provide services for the organisation.
- A PC member with a substantial position in another organisation which is proposing to apply for a contract/proposal to supply services to BLSW11.

All PC meetings will include an early agenda item where members can declare any potential conflicts of interest.

After disclosure, the PC member may be asked to leave the room for the discussion and may not be able to take part in the decision depending on the judgement of the other PC members present at the time.

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

## BIG LOCAL SW11



When a potential conflict of interest becomes apparent, the PC will decide how it should be handled and this will be recorded in the minutes. This could mean:

- asking the person to leave the room and not be involved in the discussion or decision
- allowing the person to be involved in the discussion, perhaps to enable them to provide information, but then asking them to withdraw from the decision.
- allowing the person to remain for the discussion and decision on the grounds that the conflict was not significant and that it was also now transparent having been declared.

These guidelines are meant to supplement good judgment, and staff, volunteers and PC members should respect its spirit as well as its wording.