



Halton's Protocol for Joint Working between the Community and Voluntary Sector as represented by Halton Together, Local Community Empowerment Network (HT) and The Halton Strategic Partnership Board (HSPB)

In the spirit of Local Compact this protocol seeks to be a fundamental reference document which will establish key principles, shared vision and undertakings, to promote understanding between partners so that they may work together to build trust and improve the lives of people who live and work in Halton.

This provides a basis to help the Halton Strategic Partnership (HSP) streamline and improve service provision, with the maximum inclusion of the community and voluntary sector at every level and to respond to and be driven by the needs of the local community.

This protocol confirms the role of Halton Together (HT) representatives as equal partners on the Halton Strategic Partnership board (HSPB) and its sub partnerships and working groups. It also provides a foundation for joint working strategies and approaches.

Shared Commitments for Halton Strategic Partnership and Halton Together

1. All involved in the HSPB, HT and all the relevant sub partnerships will be aware of and sign up to the Community Strategy, priorities process, partnership strategies and terms of reference as required.
2. All members' organizations must comply with the equality and diversity policies of HSPB, adhering to the principles and values of the Partnership on equality and fairness.
3. All representatives are encouraged to make relevant contributions to the agenda, whilst ensuring that fair and timely progress is made.
4. At all levels of representation HSPB and HT will work towards eliminating any barriers for members to access and fully participate in the process. This will include an induction for new representatives, and relevant training and ongoing support from Partnership and HT staff.
5. All representatives should strive to communicate in a user-friendly manner using plain English and reduce or explain jargon wherever possible.
6. Representatives of all sectors should never disclose or use confidential information to the advantage of themselves, their organisation, anyone they know or to the disadvantage/discredit of the Partnership.
7. All partners will agree, adhere to and review this protocol 12 months after its agreement.
8. HSPB and HT will actively work towards a relatively even spread of representation over the geographical area of Halton.
9. All representatives will receive relevant communications and correspondence which will be provided in the most appropriate and accessible format depending on the needs of the individual representative.

10. Minutes, reports and agenda will be provided (by email where ever possible) at least 7 days before meeting dates with hard copy of documents being sent at least 5 days before.
11. Representatives will respect other people their behaviour will be in accordance with the policies adopted by the HSPB and HT.
12. The HSPB will recognize the full range of responsibilities that HT is charged with by central government and the relevant levels of emphasis placed on each.
13. Whilst recognizing that Members represent organizations, within Partnership structures they will act in the best interests of the borough rather than advancing their own personal or organizational agendas.
14. HSPB and HT will play an active in promoting and marketing the local Compact.
15. If any disputes should arise between partners, they will be resolved using the mediation processes enshrined in the Compact.
16. VCS representatives approached directly by HSPB and its subsidiary partnerships and not through HT executive will be fully briefed by the partnership support team about their responsibility to feedback through HT mirror groups and HT will be notified of any such additional VCS representation. A commitment from HT will ensure that all additional VCS representatives are inducted regarding the structures of HT and mechanisms to gather and feed back information.

Commitment of Halton Strategic Partnership Board to support the full involvement of Halton Together

1. There will be at least 2 HT representatives on the HSPB and each of the Specialist Strategic Partnerships (SSPs)
2. Wherever possible, each SSP will invite representation from HT onto all sub partnerships and working groups.
3. All representatives are entitled to receive appropriate support and assistance from the Halton Partnership Team, Halton Together support team and or SSP coordinators to enable them to fully participate in meetings

The commissioning processes adopted by HSPB and its subsidiary partnerships will recognize the need to allow plenty of time for dialogue and consideration by all partners, especially the voluntary and community sector through HT.

Commitment of Halton Together to support the advancement of the work of the Halton Strategic Partnership

1. HT representatives will be openly and democratically elected through the Halton Together Network and its recognised sub networks and forums.
2. Halton Together will endeavour to ensure that all representatives have the relevant expertise or are provided with opportunities to develop their knowledge.
3. Continuity of representation will be aimed for within HT representatives who will be elected for a term of office no less than 12 months and no greater than 2 years, although they may be re-elected.
4. The relevant section or meeting of the HSPB will be informed as soon as possible by HT of any changes to representation, likely absences or the attendance of a named designated "substitute".

5. HT representatives will have the responsibility to ensure that they gather information from and feed back to the wider network the content and context of their involvement and will in turn report to and inform the relevant aspect of the HSPB of the work of HT.
6. HT support team will collate updated information on local group activity to support the work of the HSPB.