Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board

Terms of Reference — Seacombe

1. Purpose

The Pride in Place Programme empowers local people to shape the future of their neighbourhood. Supported by long-term investment of up to £20 million over 10 years, the Pride in Place Programme will enable local people to shape their place, address local priorities, and deliver lasting positive change.

Based on deprivation levels and community need, Seacombe has been identified by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to receive investment.

The Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board ('The Board') will provide community-led leadership and decision-making for the delivery of the Pride in Place programme in Seacombe, bringing stakeholders together and ensuring that investment reflects the needs, aspirations and priorities of local communities, in line with the programme's strategic objectives.

Guiding Principles

In carrying out its responsibilities, the Neighbourhood Board will be guided by the following principles:

- Community leadership, with local residents placed at the centre of decision-making.
- Openness, transparency, and public accountability in all actions and decisions.
- Inclusivity, ensuring all sections of the community have the opportunity to participate.
- Collaboration with the wider community, the local MP, Wirral Borough Council, and partner organisations whilst maintaining the Board's independence.
- Respect for differing views and encouragement of constructive challenge through proper Board channels.
- Evidence-led decision-making based upon identified community need.
- Responsible stewardship of public funds and commitment to achieving value for money.
- Equality of opportunity, fairness, and mutual respect.
- Strict adherence to the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

2. Programme Objectives

The Pride in Place programme aims to:

- Build stronger communities;
- Create thriving places;
- Empower people to take back control;
- Protect, celebrate and enhance local heritage, community assets and neighbourhood identity.

3. The Seacombe Neighbourhood Area

A Neighbourhood Board will be established to represent the Seacombe community and is responsible for its defined neighbourhood area, subject to any approved boundary changes.

The Programme will operate for the benefit of the community within the agreed Pride in Place neighbourhood boundary as defined for the Pride in Place Programme. The Board may agree that specific interventions extend beyond the geographic boundary where there is

a clear rationale and the benefit is felt by residents within the agreed boundary, consistent with published programme guidance.

Any proposal to amend the boundary must be supported by the Board, and Wirral Borough Council (as Accountable Body) and the local MP. Any such proposal must be submitted to MHCLG in accordance with published programme guidance. No boundary change will take effect unless formally approved by Government.

4. Role and Responsibilities of the Neighbourhood Board

The Neighbourhood Board is the primary forum for programme decision-making for the Pride in Place Programme at neighbourhood level, including priorities, the Regeneration Plan and investment choices. The Board will take decisions within its remit in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

The Neighbourhood Board will:

- Co-create a long-term Pride in Place Plan setting out the community's vision and priorities for change over the next 10 years with the wider community and the local MP, supported by Wirral Borough Council in its role as Accountable Body;
- Provide strategic, resident-led leadership for the Pride in Place programme in their area;
- Identify local priorities through extensive and inclusive community engagement;
- Decide how Pride in Place funding is allocated, in line with programme guidance and agreed governance arrangements;
- Act as a bridge between the community, Wirral Borough Council (as Accountable Body), and other partners;
- Monitor progress against the Pride in Place Plan and ensure transparency and accountability to the wider community;
- Act in the best interests of the whole neighbourhood, not individual, organisational or political interests; and
- Publish regular updates on progress, expenditure, and key decisions, actively seeking ongoing community feedback throughout the programme.

The Neighbourhood Board must adhere to the timeframes and guidance as set out by MHCLG.

5. Community-Led Approach

The programme is community-led. Decision-making authority sits with local residents through the Neighbourhood Board. Board members act as custodians of public investment on behalf of the whole neighbourhood and shall act in the interests of the community as a whole rather than any individual organisation, sector or interest group.

The Board will actively engage with the wider community to ensure that a diverse range of people are heard, including those who are underrepresented or less frequently engaged. The Board shall demonstrate how it has engaged with residents who do not traditionally participate in consultation activities and with groups that are under-represented in local decision-making. Significant Board decisions will be informed by proportionate community engagement, and the Board will formally demonstrate how community feedback has influenced its final choices.

6. Board Membership

The Board will be resident led, with at least 51% of members being residents living or working within the Pride in Place neighbourhood as defined. The Board should seek to maintain a majority resident membership. The Board will comprise a minimum of eight

members, drawn from a broad range of backgrounds and experiences, including residents, community leaders, businesses, voluntary and faith groups, and other local stakeholders.

The Board shall seek to reflect the diversity and geography of the neighbourhood and include representation from:

- Local residents;
- Young people;
- Social housing tenants and tenant organisations;
- Community and voluntary organisations;
- Local businesses;
- Faith groups;
- Education providers;
- Health and wellbeing organisations; and
- Other community stakeholders as appropriate.

The Board should seek to include at least one representative aged between 16 and 25 years or establish a Youth Reference Group to provide advice and input into Board decision-making. Youth representatives appointed to the Board shall hold full voting rights, and recommendations from any Youth Reference Group will be formally tabled for Board review.

Appointments to the Board should be made through an open and transparent process. The Board shall seek to encourage applications from a broad range of residents and community stakeholders. Where vacancies arise, replacements will be recruited through an open and transparent public process that maintains the resident-led balance and diversity of the Board.

All Board members shall complete and maintain a Register of Interests. The Register shall be reviewed annually. Board members must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest. Where such a conflict exists, the member may participate in the discussion but shall withdraw from decision-making on the relevant matter.

Membership Review

Membership will be subject to periodic review to ensure that the Board maintains an appropriate balance of skills, experience, representation and commitment to the aims of Pride in Place. Members are appointed for an initial term until 31st March 2027 (inclusive of that day) to align with the Pride in Place programme and the end of Year 1. Reviews will take place annually on 31st March by a designated panel against transparent criteria, and may be undertaken more frequently where necessary.

Standards of Conduct

All Board members are expected to:

- Comply with the Board's Code of Conduct and the Nolan Principles of Public Life and any other relevant policies;
- Act in accordance with the purpose, values and objectives of Pride in Place;
- Demonstrate appropriate standards of behaviour, integrity, and respect in all interactions;
- Attend meetings regularly and contribute constructively to the work of the Board. A member's participation will be formally reviewed if they fail to attend three consecutive meetings without reasonable explanation.

Where concerns regarding a Board member's conduct or participation arise, the Chair will, in the first instance, seek to address these informally with the individual to agree appropriate improvements or support. If concerns are not resolved informally, a formal review may be

initiated by the Chair in consultation with Wirral Borough Council and the local MP. This process will provide the member with written notice, an investigation, and a formal right of reply. A decision to remove a member shall require a transparent vote by the Board. A Board member may be removed where there is a sustained failure to meet expected standards, or where continued membership is considered not to be in the best interests of Pride in Place.

Complaints concerning the Chair may be raised by any Board member and considered independently of the Chair. In the first instance the Vice Chair will seek to address the matter informally. If concerns are not resolved informally, a formal review will be undertaken by the Vice Chair, Wirral Borough Council and the local MP. This process will provide the Chair with written notice, an investigation, and a formal right of reply. A decision to remove the Chair shall require a transparent vote by the Board.

Resignation

Board members may step down at any time by providing written notice to the Chair.

7. Leadership and Functional Role Holders

Independent Chair

The Neighbourhood Board will be led by an independent Chair who will chair meetings of the Board and act as a champion for the neighbourhood and the community-led ethos of the programme.

The Chair is responsible for facilitating fair, balanced and inclusive decision-making, ensuring all voices are heard. The Chair represents the Board externally and supports effective engagement with the wider community. The Chair is not the sole decision-maker and does not lead day-to-day delivery.

The Board will conduct an Annual Review of the Chair considering leadership, impartiality, meeting facilitation, and adherence to these Terms of Reference.

Vice-Chair

The Board shall formally elect a Vice-Chair from its membership for a defined term. If the Chair is not able to attend, the elected Vice-Chair will chair the meeting.

8. Delegating Tasks & Sub-Groups

Sub-Groups may be established to complete specific tasks or appropriate elements of the Board's business. The Board should agree what sub-groups are required.

Each Sub-Group should be chaired either by a Board Member or a Board-approved nominated representative. Progress on tasks of the Sub-Group should be updated and reported to the Board, to a schedule agreed by the Board as appropriate to its agenda.

Additional non-Board members may be invited to provide skills, resources, insight and capacity to the work of the Board but must abide by the decision-making structures, Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference of the Board.

Where Sub-Groups are established, they will be responsible for:

- Providing views, opinions and ideas on options and proposals;
- Inputting into and advising on proposed engagement and consultation plans to encourage and help ensure relevant, proportionate, and timely engagement with stakeholders;
- Supporting the programmes and projects;
- Acting as a critical friend offering local knowledge and perspective; and

- Making recommendations / creating reports detailing the views to the Board / Project Leads, as appropriate.

All Sub-Groups will operate under written Terms of Reference approved by the main Board. Non-board members on sub-groups shall act in an advisory capacity without main Board voting rights, and sub-groups shall have no independent spending authority unless explicitly delegated by the Board.

9. Role of Wirral Borough Council (Accountable Body)

Wirral Borough Council will act as the Accountable Body for Pride in Place funding, with responsibility for:

- Holding and managing funds in line with funding conditions;
- Ensuring appropriate governance, financial management and assurance arrangements are in place;
- Ensuring transparency through the publication of agendas and minutes;
- Supporting Neighbourhood Boards to operate effectively while respecting community-led decision-making;
- Ensuring that Programme governance and delivery arrangements reflect the Pride in Place guidance issued by MHCLG, including the Council's responsibilities as Accountable Body; and
- Providing regular written updates to the Board regarding Accountable Body decisions, funding releases, and administrative management activities.

Over time, there may be opportunities to increase delegated responsibilities to Neighbourhood Boards, subject to agreement and appropriate safeguards.

Procurement processes will be governed by the Financial Regulations and Procurement Procedures for any goods or services procured by Pride in Place funds for which the Council is the accountable body.

The Board will operate in accordance with these Terms of Reference and applicable MHCLG guidance. In exercising its Accountable Body functions on behalf of the Board, Wirral Borough Council shall use existing and relevant governance structures, standards and.

10. Pride in Place Plan

The Neighbourhood Board will:

- Co-create a Pride in Place Plan with the wider community and the local MP, supported by Wirral Borough Council in its role as Accountable Body;
- Ensure the Plan reflects extensive community engagement and a shared long-term vision. The Plan should identify both short-term projects capable of delivering visible community benefits within the first two years and longer-term transformational priorities for the neighbourhood; and
- Submit the Plan to Government for assessment and approval.

11. Meetings and Decision-Making

Meetings will be scheduled on a monthly basis or as required until the submission of the Pride in Place Plan. Following submission of the Plan the Board shall meet no fewer than 4 times a year. To maximize participation, meeting dates and times will reflect members' availability, with evening options and hybrid/online attendance options available where they can be accommodated.

Board members and local residents are invited to submit proposed agenda items up to 10 working days prior to each meeting. The agenda will be finalised by the Chair with support from the Council's secretariat and circulated with supporting papers no less than five working days prior to the meeting.

Decision-making will be transparent, inclusive and based on consensus wherever possible. Consensus will always be the primary objective, with formal voting utilized only when all reasonable efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted. If consensus cannot be agreed the Chair will mediate towards satisfactory resolution based on an evidence led approach. If the Board still cannot reach consensus the decision will be made on the basis of voting. Where decisions are made by vote, a simple majority shall apply unless otherwise specified. In the event of an equal vote, the Chair shall exercise a casting vote.

Records of meetings and decisions shall be minuted by the secretariat. Minutes will clearly record the final decisions, the reasons for those decisions, any alternative options considered, and any declared conflicts of interest. Draft minutes will be circulated promptly to all Board members and will be made available to the public.

Within 10 working days of its meeting, the Chair will report the Board’s work programme to the Council’s Pride in Place Lead.

The meeting will be quorate when at least 50% of the total membership is present. Members attending via approved hybrid or online video platforms count toward quorum, provided that a quorate meeting always maintains a majority of resident members. Where a meeting is not quorate, it may proceed for discussion, but no formal decisions may be taken.

All decisions of the Board shall be taken in accordance with applicable regulations and grant conditions and shall not fetter or override any statutory duties or reserved powers of the Council required by relevant legislation.

The Board shall hold at least one Annual Community Assembly each year. This event shall provide residents with an opportunity to review progress, expenditure, project delivery and future priorities. The Board will include a formal public question-and-answer session during the Assembly and publish a written response to key resident feedback within 20 working days.

An Urgent Business Protocol allows the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Council Lead to approve time-sensitive operational items between meetings up to an agreed financial limit, provided all Board members are notified within 24 hours and the item is formally ratified at the next meeting.

12. Timescales

The timescales of the initial phase of the Board’s work programme shall be as follows:

- July 2026: Inaugural meeting of the Neighbourhood Board;
- November 2026: Pride in Place Plans submitted to Government;
- Spring 2027: Expected Government approval and release of first substantive delivery funding;
- 31st March 2027 and annually: Board membership and leadership reviewed.

13. Expenses

Reasonable expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of the duties of the Chair and Board members on approved Board business will be reimbursed. Expenses will be claimed in accordance with the Council’s Expenses Policy approved by the Board and administered

by Wirral Borough Council, consistent with MHCLG guidance. Full copies of the Expenses Policy will be provided to all Board members prior to formal adoption of these Terms of Reference.

The Council, as Accountable Body, will publish appropriate and proportionate information on the use of programme capacity funding and aggregate information on expenses reimbursed to Board Members, in accordance with transparency requirements, data protection legislation and national programme guidance.

14. Communications, Press and Media Protocol

Press and media enquiries received by Board members and relating to the Pride in Place Programme should be co-ordinated through the Chair in liaison with the Council to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Any communication regarding the Board and Programme should reflect agreed Board decisions, be accurate and constructive, and avoid undermining the objectives or reputation of the Programme or its partners. This protocol shall not restrict Board members from raising legitimate governance, ethical, or procedural concerns through proper internal Board channels.

All communications, publications, publicity materials and digital content relating to the Programme must comply with Government branding and grant acknowledgement requirements as set out in the guidance.

15. Board Development & Training

All Board members will receive a comprehensive induction covering MHCLG Pride in Place guidance, governance responsibilities, financial roles, equality, safeguarding, conflicts of interest, and the Accountable Body framework.

The Board will conduct an annual self-assessment to review its overall effectiveness, diversity, governance standards, and community engagement practices.

16. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference are a draft and will be reviewed and agreed by the Pride in Place Board once established. They may be amended by agreement of the Board **and the local** MP, in concurrence with Wirral Borough Council, to reflect evolving responsibilities and programme requirements.

The Board shall undertake a formal governance review annually on 31st March to assess representation, effectiveness, community engagement and transparency arrangements.