

CENTRAL WALES - WEST MIDLANDS

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON CROSS BORDER COLLABORATION

Terms of Reference

For the Central Wales / West Midlands Strategic Forum

1. **Background:**

A cross border working group was established by the West Midlands Regional Rural Affairs Forum following on from a piece of work that was carried out, to explore the potential for cross border co-operation, that would add value to the regeneration of the West Midlands/Mid Wales border area and exploring and identifying ways in which this could be achieved.

As a result of the work of the Group, a Memorandum of Understanding, (MoU), was agreed and signed by representatives of the Welsh Assembly Government and the West Midlands Regional Assembly on 5th March 2007. The aim of the MoU is to promote better collaboration between partners and organisations that operate both along and across the Border between Wales and England.

Partners and organisations have been asked to indicate their adoption of the principles of the MoU and to sign up to its terms and conditions.

As a result of the work of the original Cross Border Group, it was decided to establish a Central Wales – West Midlands Strategic Forum under the provisions of the MoU.

2. **Objective.**

The Central Wales – West Midlands Strategic Forum is established to oversee the implementation of this Central Wales - West Midlands Memorandum of Understanding on Cross Border Collaboration, to address strategic policy issues and opportunities for collaboration that arise as a result of the work carried out under the provisions of the MoU.

3. **The Parties and Membership of the Strategic Forum.**

The primary signatories to the MoU will be the core members of the Strategic Forum together with additional partners that have a responsibility for policy and programme development and implementation that will affect communities across the Border.

The Strategic Forum will comprise:

The Welsh Assembly Government
The West Midlands Regional Assembly

Together with senior representatives from those organisations that have signed up to the Memorandum of Understanding [See Appendix 1]

The list may be extended to include other organisations with the agreement of the Chair.

At the discretion of the Chair, other appropriate organisations and the Press may be invited to attend the Strategic Forum on an occasional basis as Observers.

Members of Powys, Shropshire and Herefordshire Councils, together with Oswestry, Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Councils and South Shropshire District Council have a standing invitation to attend the annual Forum meetings as Observers.

All Mid Wales Assembly Members have a standing invitation to attend the annual Forum meetings as Observers.

All Members of Parliament and MEPs with constituencies within the border area have a standing invitation to attend the annual Strategic Forum meetings as Observers.

4. Election of Chair.

At its annual meeting the Forum will elect a Chair for the following year from among the representatives of the Parties.

5. Strategic Forum Meetings

- The Strategic Forum will meet annually in April.
- Additional meetings may be called:
- Either by the Chair in consultation with the primary signatories; or by a petition signed by a third of the representatives of Forum, Membership (as defined in paragraph 3 above).

6. Secretariat Support for the Strategic Forum:

The primary signatories to the MoU will provide secretarial and officer support for the Strategic Forum sufficient to ensure its effective running. Other parties to the forum will provide support through the Strategic Forum sub-group, the Core Officer Group and the Working Groups.

7. Strategic Forum Sub Group

The primary signatories will appoint a sub-group, the primary purpose of which will be to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the MoU in promoting and achieving cross border working.

The Sub Group will consist of one member from WAG and one from WMRA plus the Chair of the Strategic Forum and the Chair of the Core Officer Group, the two Vice Chairs, the core financial supporters and the Secretariat.

In addition the sub-group will:

- determine the content of the agenda for meetings of the Strategic Forum;
- ensure that decisions of the Forum are implemented;

- respond to consultations (which had not been delegated to any Chairs of Sub groups any other matters of urgency);
- respond and give guidance on the role of the Forum and resolve potential conflict;
- review the Forum's objectives and future work programme and make recommendations to the Forum
- advise the Forum on recommended changes to the MoU
- receive reports from any Working Groups

The sub- group will meet as often as necessary to provide the necessary support and to carry out monitoring and evaluation as required in the terms of reference.

8. Media and Publicity:

Any statement to the media regarding the proceedings of the Forum shall either by agreed between the Primary signatories or having regard to all the circumstance surrounding the statement be made by mutual consultation between the Chair and the primary signatories.

Any press release issued in the name of the Forum shall wherever possible be copied to each forum member in advance of publication.

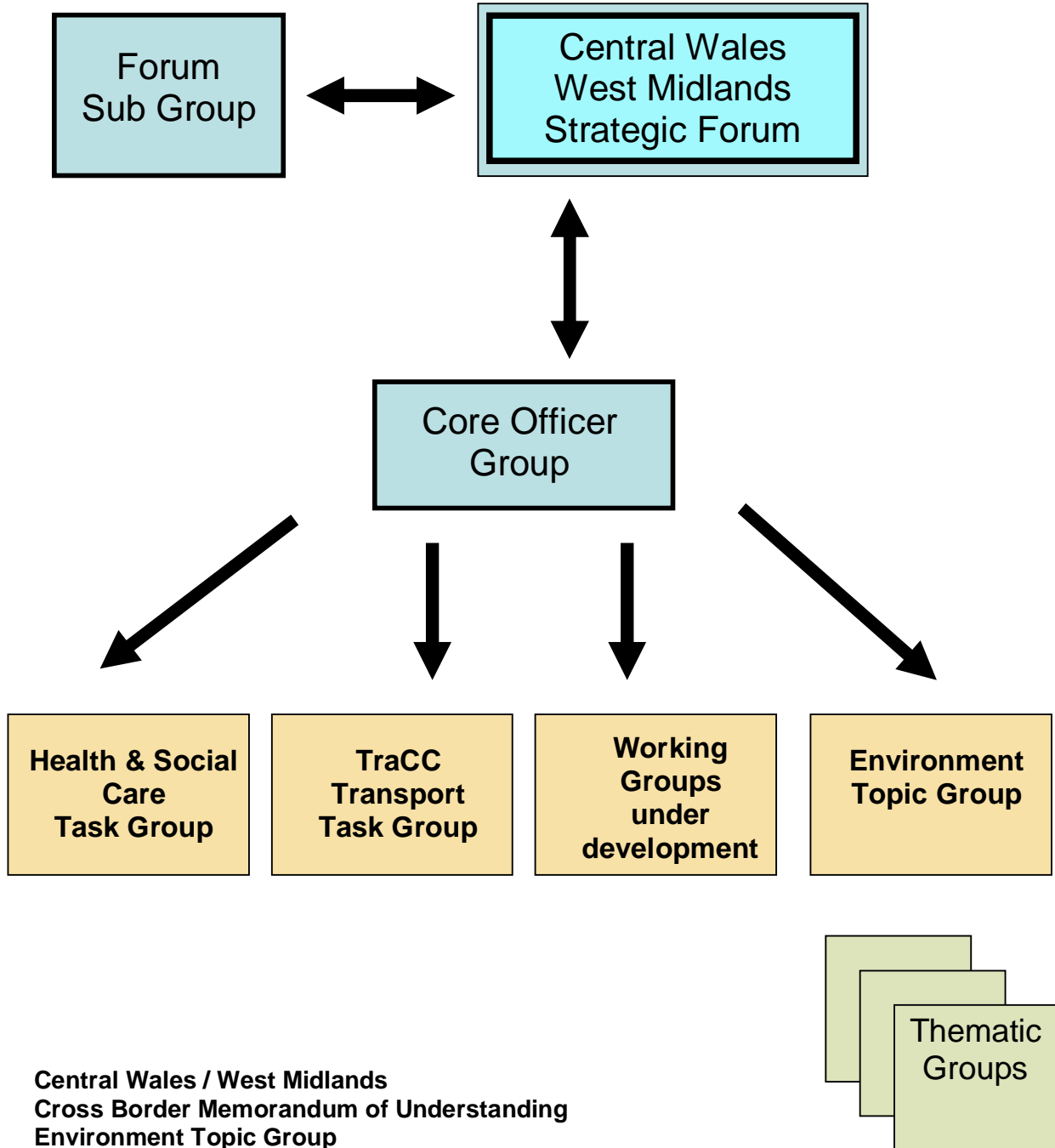
Appendix 1

West Midlands Rural Affairs Forum
 Advantage West Midlands
 Government Office for the West Midlands
 Herefordshire Partnership
 Shropshire Partnership
 Mid Wales Partnership
 Shropshire County Council
 Herefordshire Council
 Powys County Council
 Oswestry Borough Council
 Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council
 South Shropshire District Council
 Shropshire PCT
 Herefordshire PCT
 Powys Local Health Board
 Ceredigion Local Health Board
 Gwynedd Local Health Board
 Conwy Local Health Board
 Herefordshire PCT
 Shrewsbury PCT
 Robert Owen and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospitals PCT
 Natural England
 English Heritage
 CADW

Countryside Council for Wales
Environment Agency
Environment Agency (Wales)
West Mercia Police
Dyfed Powys Police
Powys Fire and Rescue Service
Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service
Herefordshire Fire and Rescue Service
West Midlands Ambulance Service
Powys Ambulance Service
Severn Trent Water
Welsh Water
Shropshire Association of Local Councils
Herefordshire Association of Local Councils
One Voice Wales
Herefordshire Chamber of Commerce
Shropshire Chamber of Commerce
Powys Chamber of Commerce
Learning and Skills Council
National Farmers' Union
Farmers Union of Wales
Country Land and Business Association
Community First
Community Council of Shropshire
Hereford Voluntary Action
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Shropshire Hills AONB
Coleg Powys
Arriva Trains
Freight Transport Association

Annex 1

Structure of the Cross Border Groups



Central Wales / West Midlands
Cross Border Memorandum of Understanding
Environment Topic Group
Terms of Reference
April 2008