

Terms of Reference

The Vale of Montgomery Rural Cluster

The cluster partnership has been created as a working group of the community councils listed below, to provide public services, co-ordinate specific cross-Cluster projects as deemed appropriate from identified community needs and to operate as a forum for debate, sharing of best practice and to give the area's inhabitants a voice in decisions impacting upon them.

The geographical area is comprised within the boundaries of Montgomery, Llandyssil & Abermule, Kerry, Sarn, Dolfor, Berriew and Churchstoke community councils. New members of the partnership may only join with the agreement of all current members. All new members, upon joining, accept and agree to all current terms and conditions of the group.

1. Mandate

- a.** To provide the services the councils delegate to the partnership. The partnership will operate as a joint committee from the parent councils, according to the regulations and legislation that govern sub-committees of town and community councils.

2. Membership

- a.** The partnership will consist of representatives of the parent councils
- b.** Each individual council will be given a basic membership of two councillors. County Councillors may be invited as observers. The councils can select reserve representatives for each two representatives, with the right to send a maximum of two voting representatives to meetings.
- c.** The representatives will be elected by the individual councils and will serve for a term of one year at a time. Following the initial appointment, the representatives will be elected at the annual meeting of their individual councils. Representatives may be re-elected at the end of their term (membership is dependent on being a current community councillor)
- d.** If a member of the partnership should resign as a councillor their council will have the right to elect a representative to replace them.
- e.** Representatives from public bodies may be invited to meetings as required.
- f.** Meetings will be held in public and may be attended by members of the public as observers.
- g.** Role and responsibilities of members.
 - i. Take part in discussions to provide and improve public services within the cluster area
 - ii. Contribute to the process of managing, supervising and monitoring of the partnership's work.
 - iii. Monitor the partnership's finance.
 - iv. Report back to their individual councils via their Clerks and verbally at their council's meetings.
 - v. Represent and make decisions on behalf of their individual council and residents.

3. Meetings

- a.** The partnership will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair annually. Officers may be re-elected for one further term. A term being defined as one year duration. Officers may serve for a maximum of two years. A new Chair or Vice-Chair must always be elected from a different member Council as that of the Chair or Vice Chair currently in position.

- b. The partnerships quorum will be a third of the members allowed to vote.
- c. The partnership will meet at least every quarter or more frequently as necessary.
- d. The partnership will decide on the venue for its meetings.
- e. Decisions will be made through a majority vote. The Chair will have a casting vote in addition to their original vote.
- f. Notices, agendas and minutes will be produced for each meeting according to regulations for community councils.
- g. Annual meetings for the partnership will be held during June, following the annual meetings of the parent councils.

4. Reporting

- a. A copy of the minutes of each partnership meeting will be provided to the clerk of each parent council in a timely manner

5. Administration

- a. The partnership will appoint a Clerk to undertake all administration duties as specified in their Job Specification.

6. Risk identification and management

- a. The partnership will develop a risk assessment to identify and manage risks in all specific activities, and it will be updated annually.

7. Communication

- a. The partnership will develop a plan to communicate its activities with the cluster communities represented, the role of community newsletters letters and websites being the prime focus.

8. Withdrawing from and winding up the partnership

- a. Members of the partnership can wind the partnership up, and also each individual council has the right to withdraw their membership from the partnership. This will be done in an annual meeting or in a meeting arranged especially for this purpose. Any remaining monies, if the partnership is wound up, will be divided equally between those Councils that have been fully paid up members for a minimum of two years.

9. Conflict resolution

- a. There will be a responsibility on each member to abide by the code of conduct at all times.

10. Financing

- a. Each partner council will contribute equally to the cost of administration.
- b. Payment of any service awarded by contract will be assigned pro-rata to each of the individual partner councils.

Vale of Montgomery Rural Cluster July 2025

Signed

Date