

Title of paper:	Valleys Taskforce Priorities and Ways of Working
Purpose of paper:	To agree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the priorities of the taskforce • the governance arrangements to support the delivery of the priorities • the revised terms of reference
Action required:	The Taskforce is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the proposed priorities of the taskforce (para. 2) • consider the proposed governance arrangements (from para. 4) • consider the revised terms of reference (annex b) <p>Comments will be invited at the meeting.</p>
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Background

1. The existing workstreams and workstream leads, as published in Version 1 of *Our Valleys, Our Future: Delivery Plan* (November 2017) are:
 - **Business growth and start-ups** – Andrew Diplock, entrepreneur, business advisor and Angel Investor
 - **Employability** – Fiona Jones, director of work services Wales and national employer and partnership team, Department for Work and Pensions
 - **Foundational Economy** – Martin Mansfield, general secretary, Wales TUC
 - **Strategic Hubs** – John Howells, Director of Housing and Regeneration, Welsh Government
 - **Community Hubs** – Andrew Morgan, leader of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council
 - **Valleys Landscape Park** – Jocelyn Davies, former Plaid Cymru Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration
 - **Digital** – Ann Beynon, chair of the Cardiff Capital Region Board

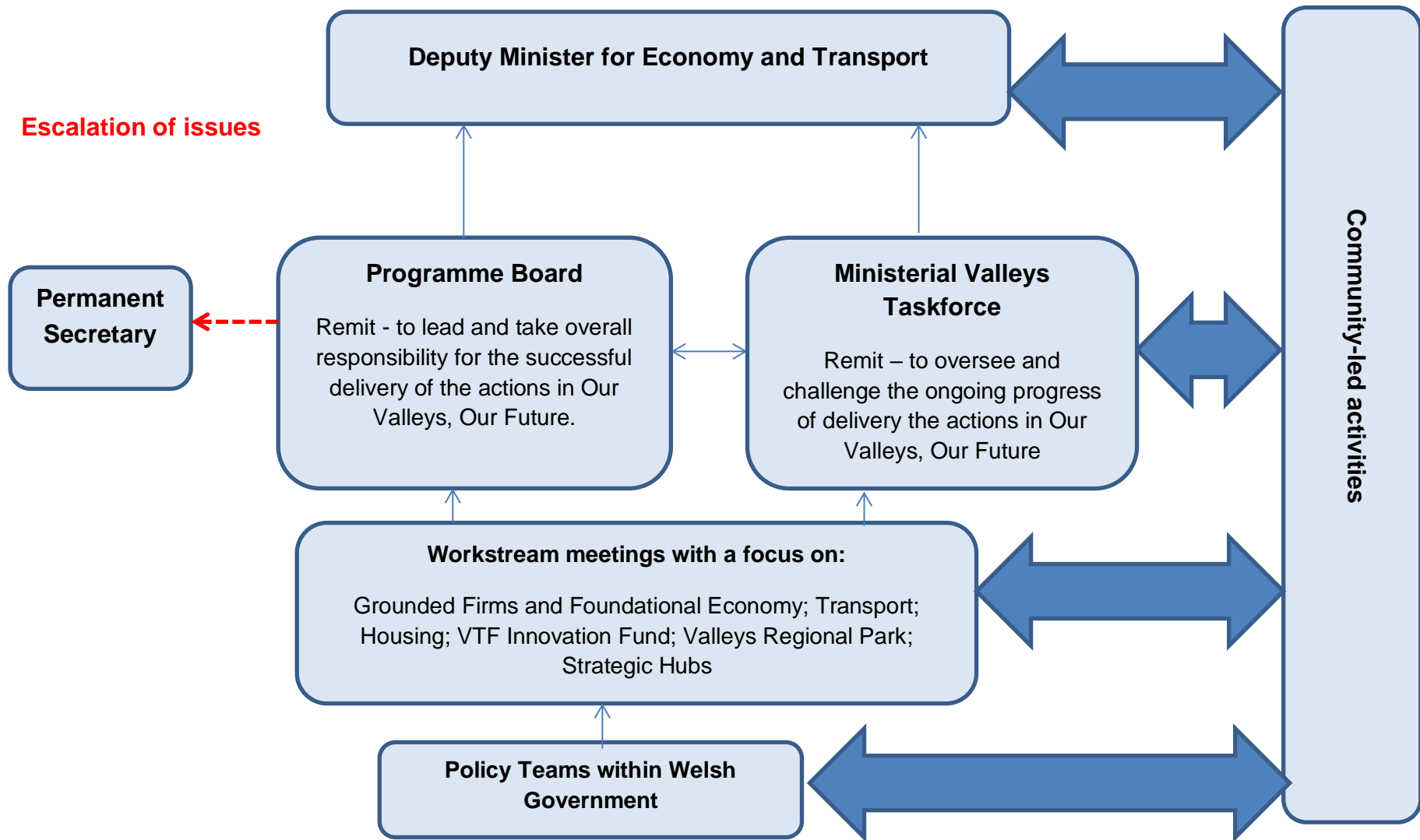
New Priorities

2. Given the discussions that the Deputy Minister has had with leaders of local authorities it is proposed that the following become the taskforce's priorities, going forward:

- **Grounded Firms and Foundational Economy**
 - *Including business growth and start-ups, entrepreneurship*
 - **Transport**
 - **Housing**
 - *Including the RCT Empty Homes model*
 - **VTF Innovation Fund**
 - *Including Alumni*
 - **Valleys Regional Park**
 - **Strategic Hubs**
 - *Including A465 and digital*
3. Identifying priority areas in such a way will allow the Valleys taskforce team and taskforce members to drive and influence these activities ensuring the greatest impact for people living and working in the Valleys during these final two years of the programme and for years to come following that.

Governance

4. It is proposed that a member of the taskforce will be appointed to 'lead' each of the priorities. In order to ensure continued oversight of all activities, it is the expectation that priority leads will continue to update other taskforce members of progress made both at meetings and via the Valleys Taskforce Team between meetings, as appropriate.
5. Taskforce meetings will focus on these priorities.
6. Sub-groups to take forward priorities will be convened, the outputs of which will be reported at taskforce meetings.
7. In order to continue to deliver what we were told people in the Valleys want and need, all other actions will continue to be reported on and monitored through the Valleys Taskforce programme board. Reports on the activities of all other actions in *Our Valleys, Our Future* will also be provided to the taskforce at key milestones within the reporting year.
8. Any issues and risks will be managed and escalated to the Deputy Minister if appropriate.
9. Governance arrangements for the VTF programme are summarised as a diagram at Annex A.
10. Following agreement of the priorities, a review of current membership will be undertaken in order to ensure the taskforce continues to fulfil its remit.
11. Revised terms of reference can be found at Annex B. These are based on the original version, agreed in November 2016, and the remit discussion paper, agreed November 2017. They will be updated once priorities are agreed and membership is reviewed.



**Valleys Ministerial Taskforce
Terms of Reference
Revised - May 2019¹**

1. Purpose

1.1 The Valleys Ministerial Taskforce has been established to advise the Welsh Government on a new approach to investing in the future of our valleys. An approach which will engage and empower local communities, build on their assets and restore a sense of hope and aspiration.

2. Context

2.1 The South Wales Valleys have a strong proud industrial history. This was, however, devastated by, and indeed is still being impacted by, the closure of the pits. There has been significant investment in the Valleys. The Heads of the Valleys programme provided effective leadership and coordination for part of this area. The Western Valleys Strategic Regeneration Area aligned with this. A new Valleys approach needs to be both broader and more flexible.

2.2 The primary focus of the taskforce will be to engage and involve people living in the valleys, existing businesses, local government, third sector and civic organisations in developing a cohesive approach to promote the region for investment, to better co-ordinate existing investment, and to address issues such as transport, connectivity, housing and social deprivation.

3. Terms of Reference

3.1 The taskforce will advise on the collaborative actions required to develop an integrated approach to:

- engage and empower local communities;
- further economic development and regeneration;
- promote business efficiency and competitiveness;
- promote sustainable employment;
- enhance the development and application of skills relevant to employment;
- improve effectiveness of public services;
- and contribute to sustainable development.

3.2 The taskforce will work across the whole duration of this Government, recognising a long term approach is required.

3.3 Working with people living and working in the South Wales Valleys, the taskforce is key to shaping the work of the Welsh Government, particularly in

¹ This revised version of the terms of reference is based on the original version, agreed in November 2016, and the remit discussion paper, agreed November 2017. They have also been updated to include changes to taskforce members and reflect changes to priorities.

changing and setting government policy in relation to the Valleys. Although the taskforce is made up of independent experts, it is not an independent organisation, separate from Welsh Government.

3.4 To succeed, the taskforce must bring all the resources of the Welsh Government and its many partners together to support the Valleys. A wide number of public sector organisations – including Welsh Government; local authorities; the two city deals; the NHS; schools and universities; third sector partners and private business, will need to work together to deliver the actions outlined in *Our Valleys, Our Future*. The focus will be good quality jobs and the skills to do the, better public services and my local community.

3.5 Members of the taskforce will oversee and challenge the ongoing progress of delivery against the plan. Working groups have been set up to look at specific areas of the plan and each is led/chaired by a member of the taskforce. These working groups and leads have recently (May 2019) been reviewed.

The workstreams and leads, as at June 2019, are:

[Update once discussed at 5 June meeting]

4. Support

4.1 The Ministerial Taskforce for the South Wales Valleys is supported by the Valleys Taskforce Board whose purpose is to:

- provide clear, realistic, evidence-based advice and recommendations to inform and steer the work of the Ministerial Taskforce for the South Wales Valleys to help achieve the ambition and vision set out in “Our Valleys, Our Future”;
- lead and take overall responsibility for the successful delivery of the key actions and activities set out in “Our Valleys, Our Future”.

4.2 Subgroups may be established to take forward specific pieces of work. Secretariat support for the Board support will be provided by Welsh Government officials.

5. Timing

5.1 The taskforce will meet quarterly, perhaps more frequently at key milestones, as appropriate.

6. Membership

[Update following agreement of priorities]

Additional contributions will be sought from relevant experts as required.

7. Secretariat

7.1 Secretariat support for the Taskforce will be provided by Welsh Government officials.

7.2 Abridged minutes will be published on the Welsh Government website following each meeting, and all papers available on request.