

Report of:	Executive Member for Regeneration
Submitted to:	Council
Date:	25 October 2023
Title:	Review of the Terms of Reference and membership of the Local Plan working group.
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Strategic priority:	Physical environment
Key decision:	No
Why:	Not applicable
Urgent:	No
Why:	Not urgent

Executive summary

This report recommends that the Council formally agrees the terms of reference and changes to membership of the local plan working group.

The key reasons for this are:

- Changes in the council's political arrangements.
- Development of the new Local Plan means that the existing terms of reference do not align with the priorities set.

Purpose

1. To request members to approve the change of membership and terms of reference to the Local Plan working group.

Background and relevant information

2. Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is required to prepare a statutory development plan for the borough that sets out the policies and land allocations to guide development in the area.
3. As part of this process, the Council has a Local Plan Member Working Group that is made up of senior local politicians to provide leadership and direction on matters associated with the Local Plan. It is widely recognised that a political steering group is best practice for Local Plans, and the Planning Advisory Served recommended that we have such a group when they provided us with advice earlier in the year.
4. Following discussions with officers and the Mayor, the terms of reference of the working group were asked to be developed, as the current ones are outdated. The terms of reference, also includes changes to the membership of the group.
5. The proposed terms of reference and membership is attached at Appendix 1.

What decision(s) are being recommended?

6. That Council approve the new terms of reference and membership of the local plan working group.

Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

7. With the emerging Local Plan, the new terms of reference will align to the scope and strategic direction of the Local Plan.

Other potential decision(s) and why these have not been recommended.

8. **Continue with the existing terms of reference.** As detailed above, there have been significant changes to the policy and legislative context within which the Local Plan and the existing terms of reference do not align with the Plan.

Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Legal

9. Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is required to prepare a statutory development plan for the borough that sets out the policies and land allocations to guide development in the area.

Strategic priorities and risks

10. The following risks are affected by this report:

O8-055	If the Council doesn't respond effectively and efficiently to legislative changes it could be in breach of statutory duties in relation to service delivery and fail to make the most of opportunities.	There is a legal requirement for the Council to prepare a Local Plan. The report will help ensure the Local Plan is prepared in an effective way.
O1-005	If poor economic growth occurs, then this will reduce public and private sector investment in the town, including town centre retail, housing development and business.	Having an up to date Local Plan helps to ensure that the Council is able to support economic growth in the area. The report will help ensure the Local Plan is prepared in an effective way.
O1-051	A major downturn in housing growth that results in a significant decline in new housebuilding in Middlesbrough, resulting in lower house building rates lower Council Tax receipts and thereby increasing the risk of impact on successful delivery of the MTFP.	Having an up to date Local Plan helps to ensure that the Council is able to support housing development in the area. The report will help ensure the Local Plan is prepared in an effective way.

Human Rights, Equality and Data Protection

11. No protected groups are affected by the decision.

Financial

12. There are no financial implications arising from the content of this report.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Amend the Terms of Reference on Modern Gov	Susie Blood	31 October 2023

Appendices

1	Proposed Terms of reference: Local Plan working group.
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Background papers

Body	Report title	Date

Terms of reference – Local Plan Working Group (September 2023)

LOCAL PLAN WORKING GROUP

Mayor (Chris Cooke)

Executive Member for Regeneration (Councillor Theo Furness)

Executive Member for Environment (Councillor Peter Gavigan))

Executive Member for Finance and Governance (Councillor Nicky Walker)

Membership/Restrictions: Working Group
Need not be politically balanced.

The Mayor C Cooke

Chair: Councillor Furness

Members: Councillors Gavigan, Furness and N Walker

Any other Ward Members, at the invitation of the Mayor or Chair of the Local Plan working group.

Purpose of the group:

- Guide preparation of the Local Plan and other planning documents as appropriate.
- Help speed up Local Plan preparation.
- Advise on Local Plan timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- Facilitate an information exchange between members and officers.
- Advisory only as decisions on Local Plan are a function of the Council.
- Possible role in championing the Local Plan review and providing updates to other members.

Local Plan matters to consider:

- Strategy of Local Plan e.g., growth strategy/ housing numbers.
- Ensure integration with other Corporate Strategies e.g., Strategic Plan.
- Consider key issues for local plan and options to address those issues - drawing on members local knowledge.
- To provide informal feedback on policy direction.
- Role in consultation/engagement as per the Statement of Community Involvement.
- Engage positively in establishing evidence base and the response to it.

Other Planning Documents:

- LPMWG maybe used to guide the preparation of other planning documents e.g., Statement of Community Involvement, Supplementary Planning Documents/development briefs/ masterplans/Other documents.

Format of meetings:

- Format should be informal business as usual discussions with information to be assumed to be confidential until the formal approval process has commenced.
- It may be appropriate to invite other Councillors or relevant stakeholders to the meetings on an ad hoc basis.

Frequency of meetings:

- A programme of regular meetings will be diarised and agreed to deliver the Local Plan timetable set in the LDS.
- There may be a need for more frequent meetings informed by key stages of the Local Plan review.

Training:

- A training programme will be established for Members of the Working Group, and it will be expected that Members will engage positively with this.