

LDP Focus Group - Terms of Reference

Primary Purpose

The Local Development Plan (LDP) Focus Group will test policy and proposals at key stages throughout the plan preparation process as outlined in the Delivery Agreement.

Objectives

The LDP Focus Group will:

- Monitor the progress of the LDP in relation to the scheduled time-table contained in the Delivery Agreement.
- Fulfil the function otherwise carried out by full Council to sign off intermediate stages of plan preparation in order to speed up decision making.
- Contribute to the plan preparation process by meeting at key stages to help to generate options and alternatives for inclusion in draft policy papers and documents.
- Receive and take account of the recommendations from the SA/SEA working group with regard to sustainability issues arising from the plan preparation process.
- Receive and take account of the comments from the Stakeholder Panel arising out of the various public involvement stages in the plan preparation process.
- Receive and take account of the representations from the General Public arising out of the various public involvement stages in the plan preparation process.

Mandate

- To be an internal group of key individuals; both Members and Officers of the Council.
- To be an active working group, functioning to create a corporate consensus view rather than as individuals pursuing sectional interests.

Composition

The group will comprise a small group of key Elected Members and cross-directorate representatives:

- Leader (substituted by Deputy Leaders as appropriate)
- Cabinet Member for Transportation & Planning
- Cabinet Member for Living Environment & Housing
- Cabinet Member for Regeneration
- Cabinet Member for Education and Leisure
- Chair of the Planning Committee

- Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee
- Leader of the Majority Opposition
- A nominated member of the Majority Opposition
- A nominated member representing both Independent Groups
- A representative of the Sustainable Development Advisory Panel
- Chief Planning Officer
- Chief Engineer
- Chief Property Officer
- Chief Housing Officer
- Head of Public Services
- Head of Public Protection
- Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure, Education & Leisure
- Head of Planning and Strategy, Education & Leisure
- Director of Social Services
- Head of Policy & Central Services
- Head of Economic Development, Tourism & European Affairs
- Principal Solicitor for Planning, Land and Highways
- Living Environment Partnership Co-ordinator
- Regeneration Partnership Co-ordinator
- Sustainable Development Co-ordinator

(Note: individuals are invited to join the group based on the role they fulfil within the authority and not on the basis of their individual interest. Therefore as officers/members leave their current role/post their place on the group would also be relinquished.)

Chairman

An Elected Member will be appointed to Chair the LDP Focus Group in the inaugural meeting.

Quorum

It is recognised that not all officers and members identified will be available to attend every meeting scheduled throughout the process, nor would that be necessarily appropriate at every stage. It is agreed that substitutes will only be acceptable where they were of equal or sufficient status to have both the capacity and authority to make high level decisions on behalf of the Council.

To enable a LDP Focus Group Meeting to proceed it is proposed that there should be a quorum of seven people, four of whom should be Elected Members.

Frequency

The LDP Focus Group will meet as necessary in order to provide its advice on the key stages in the Plan preparation process. In order to assist Members of the group, these meeting dates will be established as far in advance as possible by reference to the Timetable produced as part of the LDP Delivery Agreement. Where any meeting is likely to take a full day to

complete business it will be scheduled over two half days instead in order to fit more easily with other work commitments.

Agendas

It will be the responsibility of the Team Leader, Strategic and Development Plans to agree the agenda in consultation with the Leader, or one of his Deputies, and the Focus Group Chairman. All material for discussion by the Group will be released onto the 'web' for public access.

Group Members will receive all papers seven days before meetings. If there are no adverse comments within these seven days these papers will subsequently be published on the 'web'. Requests for the Group to deal with 'Any Other Business' will be considered by the Chairman.

Reporting Mechanism

Minutes of the LDP Focus Group will be submitted for scrutiny purposes to the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. Any matter requiring a Policy decision will be reported to Council. Every Member of the Council will be able to access the minutes via the internet and a copy placed in the Members Room.