

Annex E - Updated Terms of Reference: Local Plan Working Group

Background

The Council has committed to producing a new Local Plan covering the period up to 2041.

Council established a Local Plan Working Group in July 2023 to ensure that the views of Members are taken fully into account during the process of developing a new Local Plan.

Key Purpose

The group will meet to discuss the emerging Local Plan as it takes shape. This will include the consideration of technical supporting evidence as it is produced and the development of plan content and policies.

The group will provide input and a steer directly to the Planning Policy Manager and the Executive Member for Planning.

The Local Plan Working Group will be augmented with all Member briefings/workshops at appropriate junctures which provide a further forum for discussion on key issues arising.

Meetings and access to information

Meetings of the working group will take place regularly (e.g. every 8 weeks or more frequently as required) from summer 2023.

The Working Group is not a formal committee or sub-committee and is not subject to access to information regulations. To ensure that attendees feel that they can speak openly about the issues, meetings will not be open to the public but will be open to all West Oxfordshire District Councillors. The content of the meetings is to be treated as confidential and not shared beyond the membership of the Council.

Meetings will generally take place in person and will not be webcast. Remote attendance may be an option at the discretion of the Chair.

Membership

The Group will comprise members of all political groups and the quorum for a meeting to take place will be any three members:

4 Liberal Democrat

3 Conservative

2 Labour

1 Green

The Group will be chaired by the Executive Member for Planning who will be an ex officio member.

Substitute members will be permitted on the Working Group, with members being substituted by a member from the same political group.

Officer Support

The Group will primarily be supported by the Council's Planning Policy Manager.

Democratic Services will provide administrative and governance support to the Group.

Suggested Areas of Focus

In line with the emerging Local Plan, it is proposed that the Working Group will focus on the following main areas:

1. Tackling the climate and ecological emergency
2. Healthy, safe, strong and inclusive communities
3. An enhanced natural and built environment
4. Attractive, accessible and thriving places
5. Meeting the housing needs of all
6. A vibrant, resilient and diverse local economy

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