

PLACE COMMITTEE

31ST OCTOBER 2018

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES

FUTURE OF THE 'MELTON LOCAL PLAN WORKING GROUP'

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To determine the role of, or replacement of, the Melton Local Plan Working Group "MLPWG" in the context that the Local Plan is now adopted and in the context of the findings from the Governance Review held in March 2018.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Disestablishes the Melton Local Plan Working Group**
- (ii) Agrees to establish a Planning Policy Task Group based on the Terms of Reference forming Appendix A.**
- (iii) Nominates composition of the new Task Group from the existing membership of the Place Committee**

3. Key issues

- 3.1 The MLPWG was introduced in 2014 when we embarked on a new local plan. It contained an element of bespoke governance and management arrangements for the development of the Local Plan, which also included the decision making responsibilities being retained by Council (otherwise delegated to REEA by the Constitution at the time). This was motivated by a desire to increase Member participation in the development of the Plan, and to seek improved consensus.
- 3.2 MLPWG has served this purpose well and has been valued by Members and staff, owing to its informal style and flexibility regarding arranging meeting arrangements, their timing and duration etc. It has been a forum to allow discussion of key issues, problem solving sessions regarding policy formulation and provided project management/ timetabling overview.
- 3.3 However, Members will recall that one of the intentions of the Governance review was to create clear 'routes' for decision making and reduce the number of meetings required in order to make a final decision on any given issue, including referral and recommendations from one Committee (or other internal body) to another.

- 3.4 However this was not intended to be at the expense of creating opportunities for the raising and informal discussion of new issues and issues of concern and the Policy and Regulatory Forums were devised for this purpose.
- 3.5 As Members are aware, the Local Plan process per se is now complete and the Plan was adopted on 10th October 2018. Therefore the *main* purpose for which the MLPWG was established will have been fulfilled and it coincides with the embedding of new Governance arrangements.
- 3.6 Members have expressed a view that the MLPWG has demonstrated great value and has very productively contributed to formulating our approach to local planning issues. The ‘space’ afforded by the MLPWG has allowed for the discussion of issues that are difficult and complex, and sometimes controversial, as part of this process.
- 3.7 The remit of the Group was not *exclusively* limited to the production of the Local Plan with other issues contained within its ‘terms of reference’. Importantly, the Local Plan exercise has not be fully completed. Following its completion we will move forward into the ‘delivery phase’ including the production of Supplementary Planning Documents (for example on design and affordable housing), master planning for major sites and introduction of CIL) and, looking ahead, the prospects for Local Plan Review.
- 3.8 The MLPWG reports directly to the Council, however under the new Governance arrangements Planning Policy functions are delegated to Place Committee. So as to ensure there is not duplication, ambiguity or the Place Committee is not disempowered, it is therefore suggested that the MLPWG be replaced with a task group fulfilling a similar function but to, make its recommendations to Place Committee, as the body responsible for this area of decision making. Membership would need to come from the Place Committee so as to ensure members are fully conversant with the detail of on-going issues and indeed new ones arising (such as the need for a LP Review, if and when required.)
- 3.9 The Group will be a non decision making group.

4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Constitution allows for the Council’s Policy Committees to create Task Groups:

“Article 7 – Task Groups, Local Strategic Partnership and Forums

Task Groups

7.1 The Policy Committees may appoint task groups to deal with specific projects or, exceptionally, for more general purposes”.

5.0 **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The arrangement would be along similar lines to the MLPWG in preceding years and can be serviced/supported from existing resources, principally from the Planning Policy team.

6.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

7.1 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

8.0 **EQUALITIES**

8.1 There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

9.0 **RISKS**

L I K E L I H O O D	A	Very High				
	B	High				
	C	Significant				
	D	Low				
	E	Very Low	1			
	F	Almost Impossible				
			Negligible 1	Marginal 2	Critical 3	Catastrophic 4
			IMPACT			

Risk No	Risk Description
1	The Task Group fails to add value to the issues it examines.

10.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

10.1 There are no climate change implications associated with this report.

11.0 **CONSULTATION**

11.1 Consultation has taken place with the current Chair of the MLPWG and Policy Forum.

12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 All wards may be affected as applications could come from anywhere in the Borough.

Contact Officer J Worley Asst Director of Strategic Planning and Reg. Services
Date: 22nd October 2018

Appendices :
Appendix A : Terms of Reference

Background Papers:

