



**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

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**to  
COUNCIL  
18 MARCH 2021**

**ESTABLISHING A PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to establish a Planning Policy Working Group to consider and inform the work being undertaken on developing the Local Development Plan (LDP) Review and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) as set out in the Local Development Scheme 2021-2024.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

That a Planning Policy Working Group of up to six Members be established.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

**3.1 Background**

- 3.1.1 At its meeting on 23 February 2021, the Council resolved to update its statutory Local Development Scheme 2021-2024, which would bring forward an LDP Review.
- 3.1.2 Paragraph 3.4.3 of the earlier report to the Council advised that "...consideration will need to be given to the establishment of a Planning Policy Working Group to ensure there is adequate, cross party Member engagement in the development of policy and guidance documents set out in the LDS. This will be addressed in a future report to Council".
- 3.1.3 Part 1, paragraph 4.2 of the Maldon District Council Constitution – October 2020 establishes that the Council can receive advice on policy areas from Committees, Member Panels or Working Groups.
- 3.1.4 The Planning Policy Working Group proposed would work to support the constituted role of the Strategy and Resources Committee in overseeing the LDP Review and SPD preparation as included within Term 1.1(d) of the Committee's Terms of Reference, providing supplementary time for the examination of evidence, issues and option appraisals, policy development and engagement feedback.
- 3.1.5 The Planning Policy Working Group will provide regular updates to the Strategy and Resources Committee on their work to inform the Strategy and Resources Committee's decisions in relation to the LDP Review and SPD preparation.

- 3.1.6 For clarity, as stipulated in the Constitution, the Council remains the decision-making body for the approval or adoption of the LDP and associated SPD and this decision does not affect that.

## 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Establishing a Planning Policy Working Group will provide greater opportunity for Member input into the LDP Review and SPD programme, as specified in the Local Development Scheme 2021-2024 as its progresses over the coming years.

## 5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 The Strategic Themes of Place, Prosperity and Community seek to manage the council's response to strategic issues facing the District and the LDP Review will ensure that Maldon District Council is able update its planning policy framework to address these matters collectively.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The LDP Review will require engagement and consultation with various local, regional and national customers and stakeholders. The proposed Working Group can help to ensure these activities are effective and proportionate.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – The Council aims to understand the needs of staff and customers and making sure that our policies are designed to meet those needs and are implemented and reviewed appropriately. The LDP Review will include an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) as part of its evidence base and the proposed Working Group can help ensure all impacts on equalities are adequately considered.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – A Risk Management Register is being developed to support the delivery of the LDP Review. The proposed Working Group will help ensure that there is adequate Member engagement is managed as part of the process of developing the LDP Review, reducing the risk that Members and the local community will not be bought into the policy options.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The LDP Review and Local Development Scheme had a programme budget agreed by the Council on 23 February 2021. The proposed Working Group does not increase the need for additional resources.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – The proposed Working Group will not cause a negative impact on human resources, but it will be supported by officers.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – The LDP Review will include a review of evidence and planning policy options for the management of the built, natural and historic environment in Maldon District. The proposed Working Group

will help ensure that there is adequate Member engagement in the process of developing the LDP Review and any SPD considering any impacts on the environment.

- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** - The LDP Review will include a review of evidence and planning policy options for communities in Maldon District. The proposed Working Group can help ensure that there is adequate Member engagement in the process of developing the LDP Review and any SPD considering any community impacts.

Background Papers: None.

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