

## **Scrutiny Proposal Form – Officer Advice**

**Date: 19<sup>th</sup> July**

**Briefing Paper by: Stephen Walford, Chief Executive Officer**

### **Reason for Brief:**

This briefing note is to accompany the scrutiny item proposal made by Cllr Warren and has been drafted at his request to ensure that the committee are aware of the issues contain herein prior to (and alongside) his proposal being considered formally by the committee.

### **Overview**

The scrutiny proposal form has been implemented by the committee in order to allow members the opportunity to discuss various items ahead of any decision to scrutinise these in detail – either as a committee, or via the creation of any such working groups as they might deem appropriate. In this instance, the proposal risks duplication or overlap with another formal body of members created by full council and hence it is right that members consider the extent to which they might wish to proceed or consider a number of alternative options.

### **Points to Note**

The scrutiny proposal suggests providing a level of oversight in relation to delivery of strategic growth sites. A formally-constituted member body already exists to undertake this function; the Development Delivery Advisory Group (DDAG). This was considered by:

- Cabinet on 22/11/18
- Standards on 12/12/18
- Then recommended to Full Council on 19/12/18

All reports, including DDAG terms of reference, are available on moderngov in the usual way.

The DDAG group last met on 26/02/21 and is scheduled to meet quarterly. Membership includes:

- Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Regeneration
- Chair of Scrutiny (providing they do not sit on Planning Committee)
- 6 other non-Planning Committee Members who have attended planning training or have previously served on the Planning Committee.

As you can see, the Chair of Scrutiny would normally have a seat on this group, but in the current instance is not able to take it up due to a conflict (members of the planning committee cannot sit on DDAG).

### **Options for Scrutiny to Consider**

There are a number of ways the Scrutiny Committee could approach the consideration of this item proposal:

1. It could seek to progress the proposal despite the duplication. It would be my strong advice not to consider this as a viable way forward, since not only would it replicate the administrative arrangements already made and duplicate the workload of relevant officers, but it would seem to be in direct conflict to the stated position of Full Council, which has already created a member body specifically for this purpose.

2. It could refuse to consider the proposal on the grounds that an alternate member body, created by Full Council, already exists to do this work.
3. It could establish the level of concern with committee member and, if a majority saw fit, it could formally request that DDAG considers not only this issue but the appropriateness of establishing a standing agenda item (or similar) to track progress related to this area of concern.
4. It could request a written update from the relevant Cabinet Member, which may or may not alleviate the committee's concerns.
5. It could consider any number of variations on the themes as set out above. Officers will be on hand to advise during the scrutiny committee meeting as required.

### **Summary**

The scrutiny proposal form has allowed for a number of issues to be highlighted in advance of the committee formally considering this item, as such I am grateful to the Chairman for seeking this written briefing note prior to the meeting in order that members can consider this alongside the item being put forward for discussion.