

**Report of the Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer  
to  
the Standards Committee  
on  
4th July 2018**

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**PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF A GROWTH DELIVERY GROUP &  
DEVELOPER FORUM**

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**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Mansfield District Local Plan is due to be submitted to the Secretary of State to be examined by an Independent Inspector this autumn. Prior to, and as part of the Examination in Public (EiP), the Council is expected to demonstrate its commitment to delivering housing and other forms of development to meet the identified need.
- 1.2 As such, a new proactive approach on to improving the delivery of housing and other uses is needed which will improve the delivery of schemes that have planning permission and have effectively stalled and also encourage new schemes to come forward. It is therefore recommended that a Developer Forum is established to actively engage with the development industry and that the findings of this forum are reported to a Growth and Delivery Group which will be established.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation to the Standards Committee:-**

- (i) that the Committee notes the content of the report;

**Recommendation from the Standards Committee to Council:-**

- (ii) that a Developer Forum be established (Terms of Agreement at Appendix A)  
(iii) that a Growth Delivery Group be established (Terms of Agreement at Appendix B)

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Local Plan Programme Board is made up of the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Place and Well Being, Development Services Manager and Planning Policy Team Leader. The Board meets monthly to discuss progress on the Local Plan. The Programme Board met on 26<sup>th</sup> April and 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018 where it was agreed that the Council should adopt a more proactive approach

in order to provide evidence to the Inspector at the Examination about the Council's commitment to improving the delivery of housing and employment. It was therefore recommended that the Council establish a Growth Delivery Group (GDG) comprising of senior officers, members and partners.

- 3.2 The GDG would monitor housing and employment delivery in the district and agree appropriate actions to improve delivery. As part of this new proactive approach, the Programme Board also recommended that a Developer Forum be established. This would involve meeting with national and local developers to understand issues facing delivery in the district.
- 3.3 Officers undertook local assessments to ascertain how the Council's Duty to Co-operate (DtC) partners were tackling the issue of delivery. It was established that Bolsover District Council host a Developer Forum jointly with North East Derbyshire District Council every 6 months. At the end of each forum 121 sessions are held with officers. Officers at Bolsover District Council shared this approach and felt that this opened up access to Council officers for developers, and raises the potential for greater pre-application discussion. Newark & Sherwood District Council's Forum is set up similarly to that at Bolsover. Bassetlaw District Council is following a similar approach to monitoring at Mansfield in that; telephone calls are made to obtain updates from developers.
- 3.4 The Terms of Agreement of the CDG have been drafted in consultation between the Council's Planning Policy, Development Management and Regeneration Teams. It is these three teams from which the Developer Forum will be led. The Terms of Agreements for the GDG and the Developer Forum can be found in Appendix A and B of this report.
- 3.5 Figure 1 below explains the relationship between the Developer Forum and the GDG and the proposed reporting structure. Until the first Developer Forum has been held, it is not known what type of developers would be interested in meeting with the GDG. As such, it is not known what types of recommendations will come out as a result of the GDG. It is anticipated that some recommendations may be for changes to be implemented by officers in-house, some may be of a strategic nature and will need to be reported to Central Government and some may be of a technical nature and will require partnership working with the County Council and / or Local Enterprise Partnership. As such, it should be noted that the GDG will have the option to report to Full Council but will not be required to.

**Figure 1: Reporting Structure of Developer Forum to the growth Delivery Group (GDG) to Full Council.**



#### 4. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The preparation and the delivery of the Local Plan is one of the specific actions that needs to be undertaken as part of the Corporate Priorities and the establishment of a Developer Forum and a Growth Delivery Group are important steps.

#### 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (a) Relevant Legislation – No direct implications.
- (b) Human Rights – No direct implications.
- (c) Equality and Diversity – No direct implications.
- (d) Climate change and environmental sustainability – No direct implications.
- (e) Crime and Disorder – No direct implications.
- (f) Budget /Resource - No direct implications.

#### 8. COMMENTS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

- (a) Monitoring Officer – no specific comments
- (b) Section 151 Officer – no specific comments

**9. CONSULTATION**

None

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**Appendix A: Developer Forum – Terms of Agreement**

# Developer Forum

## Terms of Agreement

### 1. Purpose

The Developer Forum forms part of the Council's new proactive approach on improving the delivery of housing and other uses. This includes schemes with, and schemes which have yet to obtain, planning permission.

In addition to addressing delivery issues, the Forum will look to improve working relations between Developers and Council officers.

### 2. Aims

- To help improve delivery of schemes with planning permission that have yet to be implemented and schemes that have yet to proceed through the planning process.
- To create open and transparent channels of communication between Developers and council officers to improve working relations between Developers and council officers, which in turn will improve the pre-application and planning application process.
- To help provide evidence to the inspector at the forthcoming Local Plan Examination in Public, demonstrating the Council's commitment to improving delivery of housing.

### 3. Objectives

- To provide an informal opportunity to discuss schemes on a 121 with Council officers prior to (but not instead of) the pre-application process
- To seek interest from Developers in meeting with the next Growth Delivery Group (GDG)
- To encourage new development schemes to come forward
- To help maintain the Council's 5 Year Housing Land Supply
- To provide developers with regular Planning Policy, Development Management (DM) and Regeneration updates
- To provide a networking and learning environment for developers

### 4. Outputs

At the end of the forum, developers will be able to discuss existing and proposed schemes on a 121 with Council officers. These conversations will not be recorded, due to commercial sensitivity. Developers are encouraged to notify officers if they have an interest in being invited to the next GDG.

Officers will produce a report of the forum as a public record (negating commercially sensitive information received via the 121 sessions at the end of the forum). This report will be presented by the Director of Place and Well Being at the following GDG.

In addition to the updates, formal requests will be made by officers after the Developer's Forum requesting that individual Developers be invited to attend the next GDG meeting.

### **Attendance**

The Developer Forum will be hosted by Council officers from Planning Policy, Development Management and Regeneration. To ensure there is an appropriate level of officers present to undertake the 121 sessions at the end of the Forum, 2 officers from each of the teams (Planning Policy, Development Management, and Regeneration) are required (totalling 6 officers).

Each of the Forums will be attended by an industry specialist or government bodies to provide one –off specialist advice related to delivery.

A list of Developers using the Local Plan consultation database (in line with the new GDPR regulations) will be extracted and agreed upon.

### **5. Frequency**

The Developer Forum will meet every 4 months (3 times a year before each of the GDG meetings) for a period of 1 year. After the first year, the overall approach to delivery will be reviewed by the GDG to ascertain whether positive changes to the Council's approach to delivery have been implemented. If there is merit to continue the GDG (and thus the Developer Forum) further, then this will be agreed by the Council's Local Plan Project Board.

The Developer Forums will take place on Friday mornings (during working hours) at the Civic Centre. Meeting dates will be agreed by officers (in consultation with Democratic Services noting future meeting dates for the GDG).

Note that the first Developer Forum is being launched on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

### **6. Support Arrangements**

The secretariat duties will be the responsibility of Mansfield District Council. An Example Agenda of the Developer Forum can be found in Appendix 1 of this Agreement.

### **7. Code of Conduct**

To ensure that all business of the Developer Forum conducted in a professional and productive manner, all of its attendees will agree to abide by the Values and Code of

Conduct, as can be found at <http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/article/5988/The-Mansfield-Constitution> We emphasise through these Terms of Agreement that the Forum is not an opportunity to challenge officers in a public arena.

**Appendix B: Growth Delivery Group – Draft Terms of Agreement**

# **Growth Delivery Group**

## Terms of Agreement

### **8. Purpose**

The Growth Delivery Group (GDG) will implement and steer the Council's new proactive approach on improving the delivery of housing and other uses.

### **9. Aims**

- To improve the delivery of schemes with planning permission that have yet to be implemented and schemes that have yet to proceed through the planning process.
- To provide evidence to the inspector at the forthcoming Local Plan Examination in Public, demonstrating the Council's commitment to improving delivery of housing

### **10. Objectives**

- To review and/or maintain the Council's 5 Year Housing Land Supply
- To review updates provided by the Developer's Forum
- To meet with Developers (as recommended via the Developer's Forum)
- To review any known general issues to deliverability.

As noted above, updates will be provided from the Developer's Forum which will be held prior to each of the GDG meetings. In addition to the updates, formal requests will be made by officers after the Developer's Forum requesting that individual Developers be invited to attend the next GDG meeting.

### **11. Outputs**

A series of recommendations will be produced after each of the meetings held by the GDG which will aim to implement positive changes in the way the Council manages deliverability.

These recommendations have the option, but are not required, to be reported to Full Council by officers. It should be noted that not all recommendations will be suitable for formal reporting due to their nature e.g. recommendation for in-house officer training.



The recommendations will also be collated as a record of evidence for the forthcoming Local Plan EiP, to demonstrate the Council's commitment to improving delivery.

Note that commercially sensitive information will not be recorded as part of the formal minutes of the GDG.

## **12. Attendance**

The GDG will be attended by senior officers, appropriate elected members and relevant partners. The following attendees are initially recommended to be present at:

### Officers:

- Chief Executive Officer – Mansfield District Council (**Chair**)
- Director of Place and Wellbeing – Mansfield District Council
- Director of Communities – Mansfield District Council
- Director of Economic Growth- Mansfield District Council
- Director of Commerce and Customer Services– Mansfield District Council

### Elected Members:

- Executive Mayor of Mansfield District Council
- Elected Member –Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities
- Elected Member – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Growth
- Elected Member – Portfolio Holder for Housing

### Partners:

- Nottinghamshire County Council
- The Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham Nottinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

## **13. Frequency**

The GDG will meet every 4 months (3 times a year after each of the Developer Forums have taken place), for an initial period of 1 year. After the first year, the overall approach to delivery will be reviewed to confirm whether the GDG has implemented positive changes to delivery and whether there is merit in continuing the GDG, this to be agreed by the Council's Local Plan Project Board.

The GDG meetings will take place during working hours at the Civic Centre. Meeting dates will be agreed by democratic services. Note that the first meeting will take place after Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018 which is when the Developer's Forum is being launched.

## **14. Support Arrangements**

The secretariat duties will be the responsibility of Mansfield District Council. An Example Agenda of the GDG meeting can be found in Appendix 1 of this Agreement.

## **15. Code of Conduct**

To ensure that all business of the GDG is conducted in a professional and productive manner, all of its attendees will agree to abide by the Values and Code of Conduct, as can be found at <http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/article/5988/The-Mansfield-Constitution>

