

Draft Planning Performance Agreement Charter: -

The Charter sets out how the Joint Committee will work with developers, the community and other key stakeholders to ensure that all large and complex development proposals are carefully considered in a constructive, collaborative and open manner. This approach is endorsed as a way of developing proposals to meet the vision and objectives of the Joint Committee.

For the purposes of this report, the Draft Charter assumes that briefings and discussions for major and significant proposals will fall within the remit of the Joint Committee.

The Council Structure

It is envisaged that an approach to the Joint Committee will initially be through the Joint Technical Unit. However, when a project is defined, it is likely that it will involve cross discipline working to include local authority staff not based with the Joint Technical Unit.

The make up of the Project Team will be determined according to the needs of the project by the Joint Technical Unit Manager. For large strategic projects an officers' Steering Group will be established and will be chaired by a corporate Director or Head of Service. The Chair of the Steering Group will be responsible for corporate delivery, progressing the project and communication to Council Members and the Public. In addition, a Project Manager will be identified. The Project Manager will be responsible for the co-ordination of the project team and the primary interface with the developer's Project Team, ensuring tasks are delivered to agreed timescales, regular reporting and liaison with other stakeholders.

All members of the project team will work on behalf of the Joint Committee in the wider public interest and to secure the best quality scheme delivering the objectives of the Local Development Framework and relevant policy documents. Officers will express their own professional opinions which will form guidance to the applicant. The guidance will not bind officers to final recommendation nor override the requirement for a formal planning application to be determined without prejudice and within the statutory requirements of current planning legislation.

Partner Organisation Commitment

The Joint Technical Unit is committed to co-ordinated inter-departmental working. However, for large complex schemes other stakeholders from partner organisations are likely to be required to provide a timely, proactive response to each project. The importance of the Statutory Agencies "buying-in" to this cannot be underestimated. Furthermore, where major development

sites straddle local authority boundaries, the Joint Committee will ensure that the joint working approach is fully embraced.

The Joint Committee and Partner organisations are committed to sharing existing information.

Community Engagement

As set out in the Statement of Community Involvement, the Joint Committee is committed to open and constructive community engagement. In all projects within the scope of this Charter, community engagement will be established in liaison with the Local Strategic Partnerships. For large strategic projects the Joint Committee is likely to seek developer's commitment to an independently facilitated Enquiry by Design process.

Notwithstanding the above, separate consultation will be undertaken as part of the formal planning application process as a statutory procedure, in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.

Member Involvement

The Joint Committee believes that Members should be appropriately and openly engaged with the development of the project, whilst ensuring that their decision making function is not compromised. This for example could be undertaken in an "Issues Report" to Committee setting out what progress is being made before an application is submitted. This will allow Members to develop an understanding of issues and raise their own issues and concerns that they wish to be addressed. Members will not express views about the overall planning merits of any case and will not engage privately with the developer interest.

Expectations from the Applicant

The Joint Committee will expect the developer interest to approach any proposal in an open and collaborative and creative manner. The developer interest will be expected to employ high quality staff/consultants with sound expertise in delivering sustainable communities. All projects will be delivered through a robust project management process and as with the Joint Committee, applicants will be expected to use best endeavours to meet agreed timetables.

Where there are multiple developer interests the Joint Committee will seek a single steering group member and separate project manager empowered to represent the collective developer interest.

Funding

The Joint Committee will have an expectation that the preparation of the application material, production of technical reports, and community engagement activity will be funded by the applicant. Prior to the commencement of individual tasks the Joint Committee and the Applicant will agree a brief to define the scope of the work.

In addition the applicant will be expected to fund the Joint Committee's input into pre-application activity in accordance with their individual Planning Performance Agreements.

Process Requirements

The Joint Committee will expect the promoters of schemes covered by this Charter to engage in and sign a Planning Performance Agreement. The process will involve the following key elements:

- Meet and review the project proposal at an early stage;
- Agree a vision and development objectives;
- Form a Project Steering Group with key decision makers and the Project Manager (Joint Committee lead). Technical working groups may be required when technical tasks are identified (which will be co-ordinated by the Project Manager). The Steering Group should deal with any issues/conflicts arising, not the mechanics of the project;
- Produce a Project Plan based on identification of project issues and subsequent tasks; and
- Produce a Programme directly linked to the Project Plan and agree with the applicant to deliver key milestones.

The Project Plan and Programme will be updated regularly to reflect ongoing work of the project. The Programme can be reviewed accordingly, in agreement with both applicant and the Joint Committee.

Planning Performance Agreements

The Joint Committee require that applicants undertake a collaborative process with officers and other stakeholders as set out above and agree key elements in writing :

- Decision Making Group and communication structure;
- Vision and Development Objectives;
- Project Plan and Programme.