

REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN MEMBERS STEERING GROUP - DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The Members Steering Group has been established to play a formal role in the preparation of the Revised LDP (RLDP). The need for this group was identified in the formulation of the Delivery Agreement for the revision of the LDP. A summary of its purpose is to provide an effective local focus and mechanism for discussion and consultation on the needs and aspirations of, and opportunities for, local communities, and on the appropriateness of particular policies or land allocations to meet them through the revision of the LDP.

A number of formal forums and steering groups will be formed through the LDP revision process. A number of consultation methods and techniques will also be employed in order to facilitate involvement throughout the plan-making process. These will include discussion groups, focus groups and workshop sessions in a bid to maximise engagement and ensure a community-led approach.

It is considered that the role of the RLDP Member's Steering Group is to serve as a mechanism to incorporate the views of its specific representative Members, through meetings and workshop discussion and consultation. This will be throughout the key preparatory stages of the LDP revision process, being the identification of the vision, aims and objectives of the Plan, which will then feed into the preparation of the Preferred Strategy and ultimately the draft (Deposit) RLDP. The further objectives of the Member's Steering Group are set out below.

Objectives

- To assist in the overall Plan making process, including Visioning, Strategy formulation and Policy development.
- To facilitate better communication, consultation and liaison across the Authority through early and regular involvement in the RLDP process.
- To consider the community's response to consultation on land use policy issues.
- To help achieve consensus through open and transparent dialogue on key strategic and policy issues.
- To keep under review the conformity of RLDP policies with relevant European and National guidance and in particular RCT and regional level strategies.

Membership

The LDP Forum shall comprise of an appropriate number of Members, from a range of all geographic parts of RCT, if possible.

On occasion, 'visiting members' may be asked to attend the group to assist in particular areas of discussion.

The responsible Cabinet Member will be invited to participate in the discussions, update on progress and respond to members comments.

Conversely, the Members Steering Group, or Members within, will be invited to take part in broader RLDP engagement events, alongside members of other steering groups and forums. These may include officers, public bodies, private industry, community groups and representative members of the public.

Chairing of the meeting

The Members Steering Group will determine the Chair and Vice Chair at the Inaugural Meeting.

Responsibilities

The LDP process can often be controversial, bringing together many different opinions and views on the future development of an area. It is important therefore to seek to establish the general responsibilities for all members of the Member's Steering Group, to ensure the process is undertaken in a fair, open and efficient manner.

It is the responsibility of RLDP Member Steering Groups:-

- to make a commitment to the process – to attend, contribute and generally assist the process of seeking consensus.
- to be willing to listen and engage in discussions and do so with an open mind.
- to respect the opinions of others.
- to put the wider interests of the Community before other interests.
- to highlight what they consider to be any gaps in the evidence base.
- to acknowledge the strict timetable for the production of the RLDP and, as far as is practicable, to work to the timetable set out in the RLDP Delivery Agreement.

Meetings

Member Steering Group meetings will be held at specific key stages of the preparation of the LDP revision process. This is unlikely to be more than quarterly, although may be more or less infrequent as the progression of the stages require.

Declaration of Interest

Members of the Forum should declare publicly any interest they or the organisation they represent may have in a particular stage or element of RLDP preparation, before discussion of the matter begins, particularly where they or the organisation they represent would stand to benefit directly or indirectly. Such declarations will be recorded formally in the minutes of the meeting.

Any member declaring a direct or personal financial interest may be asked by the Chair to withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the discussion of that item, or may otherwise be required not to participate in that discussion or in any decision arising therefrom.

National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales

It should be further noted that Rhondda Cynon Taf Council has endorsed the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales, to which the Revised LDP will follow. The principles and standards have been developed and endorsed by the Welsh Government to make sure that participation happens in consistent and effective ways.

- 1. Engagement is effectively designed to make a difference** - Engagement gives a real chance to influence policy, service design and delivery from an early stage.
- 2. Encourage and enable everyone affected to be involved, if they so choose** - The people affected by an issue or change are included in opportunities to engage, as an individual or as part of a group or community, with their views both respected and valued.
- 3. Engagement is planned and delivered in a timely and appropriate way** - The engagement process is clear, communicated to everyone in a way that is easy to understand within a reasonable timescale, and the most suitable method(s) for those involved is are used.
- 4. Work with relevant partner organisations** - Organisations should communicate with each other and work together wherever possible to ensure that people's time is used effectively and efficiently.
- 5. The information provided will be jargon free, appropriate and understandable** - People are well placed to take part in the engagement process, as they have easy access to relevant information that is tailored to meet their needs

6. **Make it easier for people to take part** - People can engage easily as any barriers for different groups of people are identified and addressed.
7. **Enable people to take part effectively** - Engagement processes should try to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of all participants.
8. **Engagement is given the right resources and support to be effective** - Appropriate training, guidance and support are provided to enable all participants to effectively engage, including both community participants and staff.
9. **People are told of the impact of their contribution** - Timely feedback is given to all participants about the views they express and the decisions or actions taken as a result; methods and forms of feedback should take account of participants' preferences.
10. **Learn and share lessons to improve the process of engagement** - People's experience of the process should be monitored and evaluated, to measure its success in engaging people and the effectiveness of that participation. Lessons should be shared and applied in future engagements.

Consultation during the RLDP will also be consistent with these standards once published.