

Growth and Innovation Group

Proposed Draft Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the growth and innovation group is to assist Cabinet in forming strategy and policy on key issues that influence the growth agenda within West Suffolk. Its prime purpose is to push thinking by using personal insights and knowledge to inform debate. It is not a duplicate of Cabinet decision making.

They may assist Cabinet through:

- Participating in strategic workshops and the development of new thinking on key growth issues which respond to Growth outcomes in the Strategic Plan and beyond.
- Help shape the development of key strategies and policy documents which flow from the Strategic Plan such as the Investment and Housing Strategies as well as the emerging West Suffolk Local Plan.
- Considering government consultations and assisting in developing potential responses to these;
- Support the Councils' ambition in being trail blazing authorities in developing new and innovative ways to contribute to the Growth agenda
- Monitoring how the Council and key stakeholders are delivering key growth priorities of the Council;

Membership

There is no defined membership of the Growth and Innovation Group. Agenda topics will be given to all members, who may attend wherever the subject matter is of interest to them.

Members who wish to attend meetings are expected to be informed of the key issues at stake, through having read key strategy and policy documents in advance of meetings, and undertaken necessary research or background reading (for example, through reading government white papers). Officers will assist members through providing links to key research materials in advance of meetings.

Facilitation

Meetings shall be facilitated by the Portfolio Holders for Growth and lead officers for the subject area. The Portfolio Holder members will be responsible for steering the agenda for discussion at these meetings in consultation with the lead officers.

Decision Making

The Growth Group is not a decision making body. Members are expected to express views, and be challenged on these. Robust discussions may take place in an atmosphere of mutual respect following "Chatham House" rules. Facilitators will be expected to draw conclusions from debate in

order to then take forward key actions or present back to Cabinet. Growth Group members should be aware that Cabinet may not draw the same conclusions as the Growth Group on matters under consideration.

Formal minutes of growth group meetings will not normally be taken. Officers will capture key actions and conclusions from debates.

Confidentiality

As a non-decision making, forming Group, meetings shall not be open to the public. Where appropriate, officers and the Portfolio Holders may request that other stakeholders attend meetings.

Wherever matters under discussion are confidential, officers will endeavour to make this clear to members and similarly, members will be expected to maintain the confidentiality of the discussions that take place in line with the Code of Conduct for members.

Sub-Groups

Some aspects of the group's work may require the formation of sub-groups to assess detailed proposals, for example consideration of development plan documents.

Where this is the case, separate terms of reference may be formed, and it may be more appropriate for the sub-group to operate in traditional committee format, with nominated members, a chair, voting arrangements and operate to the standard Council's rules of debate.

Where such sub-groups will be formed, it is expected that members of Cabinet should be briefed by the Portfolio Holder on their purpose and terms of reference and Cabinet will have the right to approve or amend such terms of reference as they see fit.