

Dudley Long Term Plan for Towns (LTPFT)

Board Meeting no1 – 10th May 2024

Agenda Item no 4 – Governance Arrangements

Purpose - *For Decision*

The paper introduces the three accompanying governance documents which the Board is required to have in place. These are for review and adoption by the Board.

Recommendations

- That Board members review the draft documents in Appendices 1-3 and agree them as the initial governing documents, subject to any amends put forward and agreed by the Board.
- That the Towns Fund subgroup, set out in the paper, be recognised as a subgroup to the Town Board with a sole focus on the Towns Fund project.

Context

The Long Term Plan for Towns (LTPFT) guidance articulates a set of expectations for Town Boards in relation to how they are constituted and how they operate, and while there are some specific requirements, the guidance is not prescriptive on all aspects.

Town Boards are required to have, as a minimum:

- Terms of Reference
- Code of Conduct
- Conflicts of Interest Policy

While these are a requirement, it is for each Town Board, working with the Council as the Accountable Body, to set out and agree the governance arrangements which provide the framework for the Board's operation. Department for Levelling up Homes and Communities (DLUHC) has not provided a standard set for adoption nor a template to be completed, rather the approach and contents of the documents are for local determination, provided they are in accordance with the LTPFT guidance.

At the end of March 2024, prior to the Board having been established, DLUHC requested a copy of each of the above documents to unlock a tranche of capacity funding. In order to meet this deadline, Dudley MBC officers drafted an initial version of each of the above and submitted to Government, stating that they were subject to board approval. These drafts are anchored in the LTPFT guidance and built on those used for other Town Boards.

In order to proceed with the full and proper functioning of the Board, these governance documents need to be agreed and adopted by its members then reviewed and updated on a regular basis over the lifetime of the Board. Board members are therefore asked to review the draft documents and put forward any amends with a view to the governance documents being agreed and adopted at the meeting.

Within the Terms of Reference there is the ability to utilise subgroups, as agreed by the Board, to further the work of the Board and Investment Plan. It is proposed that an existing group focused on the Towns Fund project, consisting of Andrew Lovett, Neil Thomas and DMBC representatives, continues and exists as a subgroup to the Town Board.

Appendices:

1. Draft Terms of Reference
2. Draft Code of Conduct
3. Draft Conflicts of Interest Policy