

# Environment and Sustainability Committee



30 June 2021

<b>Title</b>	<b>Formation of new Task Groups under the Committee system</b>
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report Author</b>	Ann Biggs, Strategic Planning Manager
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	N/A
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Housing Economic Development Clean and Safe Environment
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Committee is asked to:</b>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Agree the composition of the Local Plan Task Group (Appendix A)</li><li>2. Agree the composition of the Staines Development Task Group (Appendix B)</li><li>3. Agree the composition of the Community Infrastructure Levy Local Spending Boards and the draft governance arrangements (Appendix D, with Appendix C included for information only)</li></ol>
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	Under the new Committee system, it is a requirement that the first meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Committee agrees the formation of the task groups that were set up under the previous system.

## 1. Key issues

- 1.1 The three task groups subject to this report were set up by the Leader under the previous system before the Committee system commenced on 27 May 2021. As such, they require reconstituting under the current system. This report sets out the functions of these task groups and the recommendations for their future formation.

### Local Plan Task Group (LPTG)

- 1.2 This group was formed to steer the preparation of the new Local Plan and the proposed Terms of Reference are included at Appendix A. The work is of paramount importance as the existing Core Strategy 2009 is out of date and needs replacing. The decisions made will have an effect on the whole borough and its future in terms of meeting housing need, facilitating employment growth, delivering infrastructure requirements and protecting our important open spaces. It is particularly sensitive as the need for new homes is high and requires careful consideration of the options available to meet that need.
- 1.3 The former LPTG comprised the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning as Chair and a Member selected from each ward plus the Chair of Planning Committee and the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny. Whilst a large group, this ensured there was representation across the borough. Progress on the new Local Plan has been delayed due to a number of factors including the pandemic response, changes in national policy and guidance, and the change in Spelthorne's Administration last year, which saw the creation of the LPTG. However, a new Local Development Scheme timetable is due for publication shortly, which appears elsewhere on this agenda, and there has been positive progress in the past few months towards agreeing a revised strategy.
- 1.4 It is recommended that the composition of the LPTG virtually remains the same, with the Chair to be the Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee (ESC). The Vice Chair of ESC is recommended as an addition, who can also act as Vice Chair of the LPTG, replacing the now defunct Chair of Overview and Scrutiny. The Chair of Planning Committee would remain a member. Then a Member from each ward will be appointed, as per the former arrangements. It is further recommended that the nominated Members themselves remain largely the same (unless their new role as Chair or Vice Chair requires a new ward member to be appointed). This would ensure consistency and that the work done so far is able to progress at pace in order to meet the timetable for delivering the new Local Plan. Significant new membership would delay this progress whilst they are getting up to speed with the process and related tasks.

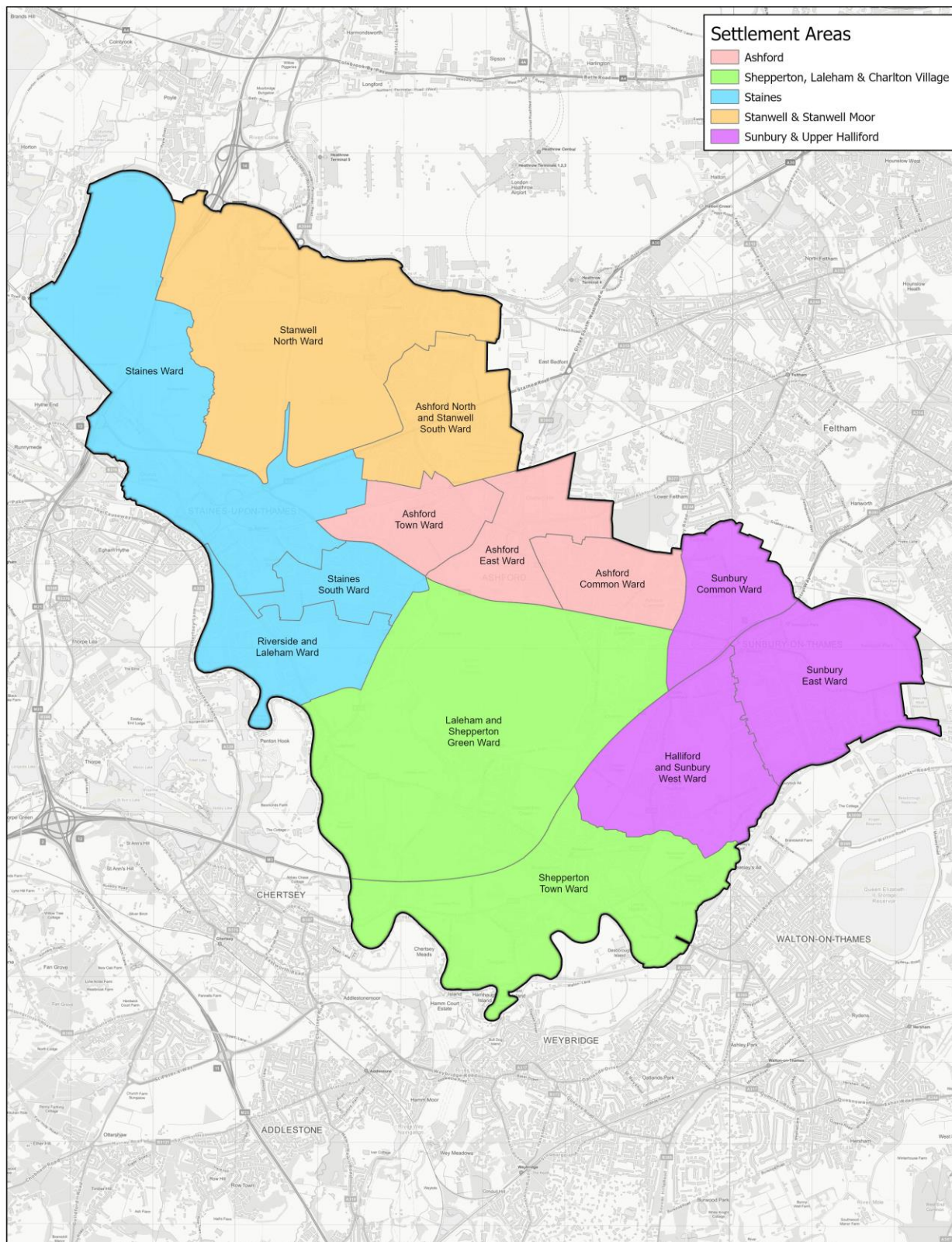
### Staines Development Task Group (SDTG)

- 1.5 This group was formed to steer the progress of the Staines upon Thames Development Framework (SDF) and the proposed terms of reference are included at Appendix B. They are largely unchanged but for amendments required arising from the new committee system. The SDF will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to support the new Local Plan and will set out policies to deliver the growth and ambition for a thriving town centre.

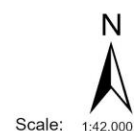
- 1.6 The proposed terms of reference for this group are found at Appendix B. The former composition was the Leader as Chair, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning, Chair of Planning Committee and each Member for the Staines wards. As with the Local Plan Task Group, whilst there have been delays there has also been significant progress made and the group has agreed the Review and Analysis paper, the Objectives and Options report and the questionnaire for the consultation that is currently underway. It is recommended that membership remains the same in order to maintain consistency and productivity (unless their new role as Chair or Vice Chair requires a new ward member to be appointed). The positions of Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning would be replaced by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee, acting as Chair and Vice Chair of this group respectively.

#### Local Spending Boards for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 1.8 The Community Infrastructure Levy Task Group is responsible for making recommendations on how CIL is to be spent on infrastructure schemes in the borough. The funds are accrued from payments required of new developments to mitigate their impact on communities through additional pressure on services such as healthcare, education and highways. The Task Group is constituted by the Spelthorne Joint Committee and the Terms of Reference (Appendix C) were agreed at its meeting on 9 March 2021, which also agreed the first round of spending on a number schemes. As the task group comprised the Leader of Spelthorne Council, the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and the Chair of the Joint Committee, this task group will need to be reconstituted on commencement of the Committee system, but it will be for the Joint Committee to agree this and no decision is required on Appendix C from the Environment & Sustainability Committee.
- 1.9 The CIL Task Group will make recommendations to the Joint Committee to fund strategic infrastructure schemes in the borough. However, there is also 15% of CIL funds available to be spent on local schemes. As such, the previous CIL Task Group had been considering the draft local governance arrangements (Appendix D) for this spend. They agreed that there would be five Local Spending Boards set up for the following areas with funds apportioned as per the governance arrangements:
- Ashford
  - Shepperton, Laleham & Charlton Village
  - Staines
  - Stanwell & Stanwell Moor
  - Sunbury & Upper Halliford



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- 1.10 As the decisions on local spending should rest with those local boards and not decided upon by Members outside of that area, these will not be referred to the Joint Committee and therefore it is for the Environment and Sustainability Committee to agree on their composition. It will be proposed to the Joint Committee (subject to the agreement of this Committee) that the composition of the CIL Task Group will include the Chair of each Local Spending Board so it falls to this committee to agree the membership and the chairs before the Joint Committee can agree the CIL Task Group composition. It is recommended that each Local Spending Board will comprise a Member from each ward falling within that local area, to be decided upon by this committee together with a chair for each board, and details of the ward groupings can be found within the draft governance arrangements. These arrangements have not yet been finalised, so it is further recommended that this committee confirms the Local Governance Arrangements.

## **2. Options analysis and proposal**

- 2.1 Whilst there is no alternative option but to reconstitute the tasks groups listed in this report, there are various ways in which they can be constituted and the individual selection of Members. For the LPTG and the SDTG, changing the composition is likely to incur delay and erode the consistency and productivity achieved so far. At this critical time and with the need to remain on track under the new timetable for Local Plan and Staines Development Framework preparation, an alternative composition is not considered to be a feasible option.
- 2.2 There is more leeway with the Local Spending Boards for CIL as these had not been set up prior to the introduction of the committee system. The suggested composition is equitable and pragmatic to ensure local communities and individuals are represented in the process and that there is a clear line of communication between the boards and the CIL Task Group in making strategic decisions on spending. This is critical as there can be grey areas between which schemes should be funded from the strategic spend and which from the local spend. The selection of individual Members from the wards is down to the E&S committee and no options are set out for this.

## **3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 Until the CIL Local Spending Boards are agreed and the CIL Task Group constituted by the Joint Committee, no further CIL funding can be allocated to infrastructure schemes. The next meeting of the Joint Committee is on 19 July 2021 and if the task group is agreed then we can progress to present schemes to the group shortly after for recommendation. Otherwise there will be a delay in funding important projects that will benefit our community.

## **4. Other considerations**

4.1 No further considerations.

## **5. Equality and Diversity**

5.1 None identified.

## **6. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

6.1 The task groups are a key component of plan making, which includes sustainability appraisal as a requirement throughout the process. In particular, policies and site allocations need to have regard to environmental sustainability and climate change alongside social and economic considerations.

## **7. Timetable for implementation**

7.1 The task groups need to be constituted at this meeting so implementation will take place immediately and before any further meetings of the groups can be held but these are scheduled on an ad hoc basis. New terms of reference would be drawn up for the task groups as soon as possible to reflect the decisions made at this committee meeting.

**Background papers:** There are none

### **Appendices:**

**Appendix A:** Local Plan Task Group Terms of Reference – proposed June 2021

**Appendix B:** Staines Development Task Group Terms of Reference – proposed June 2021

**Appendix C:** Community Infrastructure Levy Task Group Terms of Reference (for information only)

**Appendix D:** Local Community Infrastructure Levy Governance Arrangements – proposed June 2021