

# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

9 DECEMBER 2021

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>ESTABLISHMENT OF STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD</b>			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To seek the Committee's approval for the establishment of a Strategic Planning Advisory Board, as an officer/member advisory body considering matters of strategic planning policy and reviewing their implementation.			
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>Environment Committee RESOLVES to:</b>  <b>a) Establish the Strategic Planning Advisory Board</b>  <b>b) Approve the draft Terms of Reference for the proposed new Board, attached as Appendix A.</b>			
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	The proposal and draft Terms of Reference have been discussed with the Council's Strategic Leadership Team as well as a cross-party group of elected members.			
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<b>Options</b>	The option of not establishing the Board has been considered.  This is not recommended because it would hinder the ability of the Council to develop policy, advise and respond to matters of importance to the strategic planning of the area.			
<b>Background Papers</b>	None			
<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix A – Draft Terms of Reference for Strategic Planning Advisory Board			
<b>Implications (further details at the end of the report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

### 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Members of the Committee will be aware that a Planning Review Panel (PRP) existed previously, with a remit to examine key issues affecting local and national planning policies and to consider their impact upon the Council's strategic planning work.
- 1.2 PRP was first formed in 2014 and, in recent years, has played an important formative role in the development of the draft new Local Plan, approved by Environment Committee and Full Council and recently submitted to Government.
- 1.3 Originally, PRP had been established as an advisory body to Strategy and Resources Committee. However, the responsibility for strategic planning policy now rests with

Environment Committee. It is important that linkage to a committee is clear, both in terms of the proposed function and membership.

- 1.4 This report now proposes the establishment of a Strategic Planning Advisory Board, linked more clearly to Environment Committee.

## **2. THE PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD**

2.1 The proposed new Strategic Planning Advisory Board will act as an officer/member advisory body to Environment Committee, considering matters of strategic planning policy and reviewing their implementation. A draft Terms of Reference is attached as Appendix A.

2.2 Separately, and outside matters relating to strategic planning policy, it is acknowledged that concerns have been raised by members about the Council's development management (planning applications) service, including the planning enforcement function. These matters, which are the responsibility of the Development Control Committee (DCC), have recently been the subject of an in-depth review by the Council's Internal Audit Service, with recommendations presented to Audit and Standards Committee on 30 November 2021. One of the key recommendations was for the establishment of a new member/officer working group, with elected members drawn from DCC to oversee performance management of the Development Management Service and other issues. Work is now under way to establish this Group and a report will come to DCC in early 2022.

2.3 To provide clarity and avoid any potential confusion with the development management service and the separate matters referred to in para 2.2 above, it is proposed that the new body is titled the *Strategic Planning Advisory Board*.

2.4 Further details of the proposed new Board's role, membership and reporting arrangements are provided within the draft Terms of Reference attached as Appendix A.

## **3. IMPLICATIONS**

### **3.1 Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this decision.

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### **3.2 Legal Implications**

There are no significant legal implications arising directly from this report. The proposed Board will be purely advisory and as such the Board will not have any decision making power.

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### **3.3 Equality Implications**

An EIA is not required because there are no any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision. However, equality impact assessments may be carried out in the future, based on activities and recommendations of the proposed Board.

### **3.4 Environmental Implications**

There are no significant environmental implications at this time, arising from a decision to establish a Board. However, the activities and recommendations of the proposed Board will be likely to have environmental implications which will be assessed at the appropriate time.