

Valley Gardens Cross Party Working Group

Draft Terms of Reference

Background

On 1st July 2014, Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee agreed that:

- “(a) Business Case for Local Growth Funding should be submitted to the Local Enterprise Partnership to enable delivery of physical improvements to the northern section of Valley Gardens”
- “a cross party working group (should) be established to oversee delivery of the Scheme”, and authorised
- “the Executive Director of Environment, Development and Housing to take all steps necessary, conducive or incidental to the implementation of the Scheme, following consultation with the cross party working group in relation to any proposed changes to the approved Scheme”

The following document sets out the Terms of Reference for the Cross Party Working Group.

Objectives of the Cross Party Working Group

The provisional Local Growth Fund funding to deliver Valley Gardens is allocated in financial years 2015-16 and 2016-17.

Whilst the principles of the scheme presented in the Business Case will remain unchanged, it is likely that details will develop and change as designs continue to be refined. An example is the specific arrangement of junctions, which cannot be finalised until further micro-modelling and detailed design has taken place.

It is not practical to deliver the project within funding timescales if all decisions relating to such potential amendments are made at Committee. The Cross Party Working Group provides a mechanism to combine the benefits of ongoing and regular member involvement and project momentum through detail design and implementation.

Operating Principles

The Cross Party Working Group will be chaired by the Valley Gardens project manager and shall comprise:

- One representative of the Labour Group
- One representative from the Conservative Group
- One representative from the Green Group

Political representatives will be identified by the leader of each party.

Appendix 5

The Cross Party Working Group will meet monthly or as required. The Project Manager will schedule monthly meetings. In the week before each scheduled meeting, the Project Manager will identify any aspects of project development that may be of interest to the Steering Group. These will generally, but not exclusively, be deviations from the established project approach, along with a recommendation from the Project Manager as to how the project should proceed. Members will then decide whether a meeting is required, or whether the Project Manager's recommendation can be agreed remotely.

If a pressing issue arises that needs member approval outside the scheduled meeting timetable, the Project Manager will agree a suitable interim meeting date with members of the Working Group.

It is expected that the majority, if not all, items considered by the Cross Party Working Group will be resolved by mutual agreement of the best way forward.

If any elements prove to be particularly contentious, the Cross Party Working Group can defer these to the Executive Director of Environment, Development and Housing, who will make a final decision using relevant delegated powers.

All information discussed by the Working Group, unless agreed otherwise by the Working Group, will be treated as confidential. Any public dissemination of information relating to project progress will take place through the Valley Gardens Communications Officer. All meetings of the Working Group shall be held in confidential session.

Administration of the meetings of the Working Group (agendas, minutes, catering, venues, display equipment etc) shall be provided by the Project Manager.