APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – LPCPWG

Bromsgrove District Council

Local Plan Cross-Party Working Group

Terms of Reference

24.04.26

1. Purpose

The Local Plan Cross-Party Working Group ("the Working Group") is established to support the timely and effective preparation of a new Bromsgrove District Local Plan in accordance with the new plan-making system, national planning policy and guidance, and the Council's vison and strategic priorities.

The Working Group will provide focused councillor oversight and strategic, advisory input to assist plan-making, ensuring that the Local Plan is:

- Evidence-based and transparent
- Deliverable and infrastructure-supported
- Legally compliant and capable of being found sound
- Aligned with community needs and the Council's corporate objectives

The Working Group is advisory in nature only and has no decision-making powers. All formal decisions will be taken in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

2. Key Objectives

The Working Group will:

- Provide appropriate governance, resourcing oversight and information dissemination regarding Local Plan preparation
- Facilitate constructive cross-party dialogue to support efficient and transparent plan-making
- Support the development of a robust and proportionate Local Plan evidence base, including previous consultation responses
- Use consultation evidence and technical studies to help shape an emerging Vision and spatial strategy
- Oversee programme progress to enable formal Local Plan commencement in June 2026 and delivery within 34 months of commencement (see Appendix 1)
- Promote plan-led development that is infrastructure-supported and deliverable
- Ensure that their groups are kept informed and updated regarding discussions, actions and proposals from the group

APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – LPCPWG

3. Role and Functions and Key Tasks

The Working Group will:

- Provide strategic oversight of Local Plan preparation and programme delivery including understanding the impacts of development management decisions on the emerging local plan and ensure that appropriate evidence from plan making is fed into the development management process
- Review emerging evidence base documents and policy options (See Appendix 2 for evidence base task list)
- Consider site options and spatial strategies
- Support the development of draft policies and proposals
- The evidence base will be prepared and validated by officers. The Working Group may provide input but shall not direct technical conclusions.
- Monitor progress against key project plan milestones (See Appendix 3) and identify delivery risks
- Provide advice and recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Planning
- Cascade agreed outcomes wider and support effective communication through All-Member Local Plan Briefings

The Working Group shall not:

- Make formal decisions on Local Plan content
- Pre-empt decisions of the Full Council

4. Governance and Accountability

- The Working Group operates in an advisory capacity only
- Overall accountability for delivery of the Local Plan rests with the relevant Cabinet Member
- The Working Group does not replace or override the role of the Council
- Actions will be agreed at each meeting, assigned to named leads, and monitored to completion, with due regard to pace and urgency

5. Membership

- To provide resilience for plan making the Working Group shall comprise 9 voting trained members and 1 non-voting chair (to be reviewed after 6 months) appointed in political proportion where applicable
- Meetings require the minimum attendance of 5 trained Members

APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – LPCPWG

- Members will have shared accountability for the work of the Group
- The Cabinet Member for Planning will be a Member of the Group, where the portfolio holder is not a member of a political group, they will attend the LPCPWG as a non-voting member
- The Chair will be appointed by the Group
- Any substitutes will need to be trained, named and fully briefed by the Member that they are representing
- Members may act as lead Members for specific topic areas (e.g. housing, economy, transport, natural environment)

6. Officer Support

The Working Group will be supported by:

- Planning Officers
- Relevant technical, specialist, and partner officers as required (including health, education, and transport)

Officers will:

- Provide professional planning, legal and policy advice
- Prepare reports and manage the evidence base
- Ensure compliance with planning legislation and national policy
- Support agenda setting and meeting administration

7. Meetings and Working Arrangements

- Meetings will be held regularly in line with the Local Plan work programme
- Agendas and papers will be circulated at least 5 working days in advance where possible
- Agenda items must be submitted in advance and agreed with the Chair and lead officer
- Minutes and key actions will be circulated no more than 5 working days after the working group meeting.
- Briefings or presentations from external organisations may be permitted where relevant

8. Conduct, Predetermination and Confidentiality

Members must:

APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – LPCPWG

- Adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct
- Avoid predetermination and maintain an open mind until formal decision-making stages
- Respect confidentiality, particularly in relation to:
    - Draft site assessments
    - Viability information
    - Emerging policy positions

Members may express predisposition but must not indicate a fixed or final position on site allocations or policy options prior to formal decisions.

9. Programme Management

The Working Group will:

- Monitor progress against the Local Plan timetable (see appendix 1)
- Identify and escalate risks with proposed mitigation actions
- Promote the adoption of digital tools and data-driven practices to support accelerated plan preparation
- Support efficient, transparent and proportionate working practices

10. Outputs and Reporting

Each meeting will produce minutes including:

- Key issues discussed
- Agreed actions
- Any advisory recommendations

11. Training

All Members of the Working Group must:

- Complete Local Plan training
- Agenda to include updates on any planning policy and legislation changes

12. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed:

- Six months after adoption, and

APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – LPCPWG

- Thereafter annually, or earlier if required due to legislative, policy, or Council priority changes

Appendix 1 Local Plan Timetable

Jun-26	Notice of intention to start plan making to release MHCLG funding Scoping undertaken
Oct-26	Gateway 1 self assessment published to release MHCLG funding
Jun -Jul 27	Draft Plan Consultation
Sep-27	Gateway 2 Draft Plans
Jun - Jul 28	Submission plan consultaion
Sep-28	Gateway 3 Submission plans
Mar-29	30 months timetable ends new plans adopted

The Timetable above is based on start date of June 2026, and is 34 months to take into account the notice of intention to start plan making and the Scoping consultation. The 30 month element will begin in October 2026.

APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – LPCPWG

Appendix 2 Evidence Base Task list

The list below is the key evidence base tasks that have or will need to be completed, this list is not exhaustive and will change due to the iterative nature of plan making.

Consultation responses

Sustainability Appraisal

The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)

Site Assessment and Site Selection Methodology

Exceptional Circumstances for Green Belt Release/ Housing Land Supply Evidence

Green Belt Purposes Assessment (Part 1)

Green Belt Study (Part 2)

Green Belt study Grey Belt Assessment

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Strategic Transport Assessment / Worcestershire Strategic Transport Model

Design Coding and Site design

Settlement Hierarchy Review

Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show person Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)

Playing Pitch Strategy

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2

Water Cycle Strategy

Infrastructure Planning Evidence Health

Health Impact Assessment

Infrastructure Planning Evidence Education

Infrastructure Planning Evidence Social Infrastructure

Retail Needs Assessment

Windfall Assumptions & Lapse Rates Topic Paper

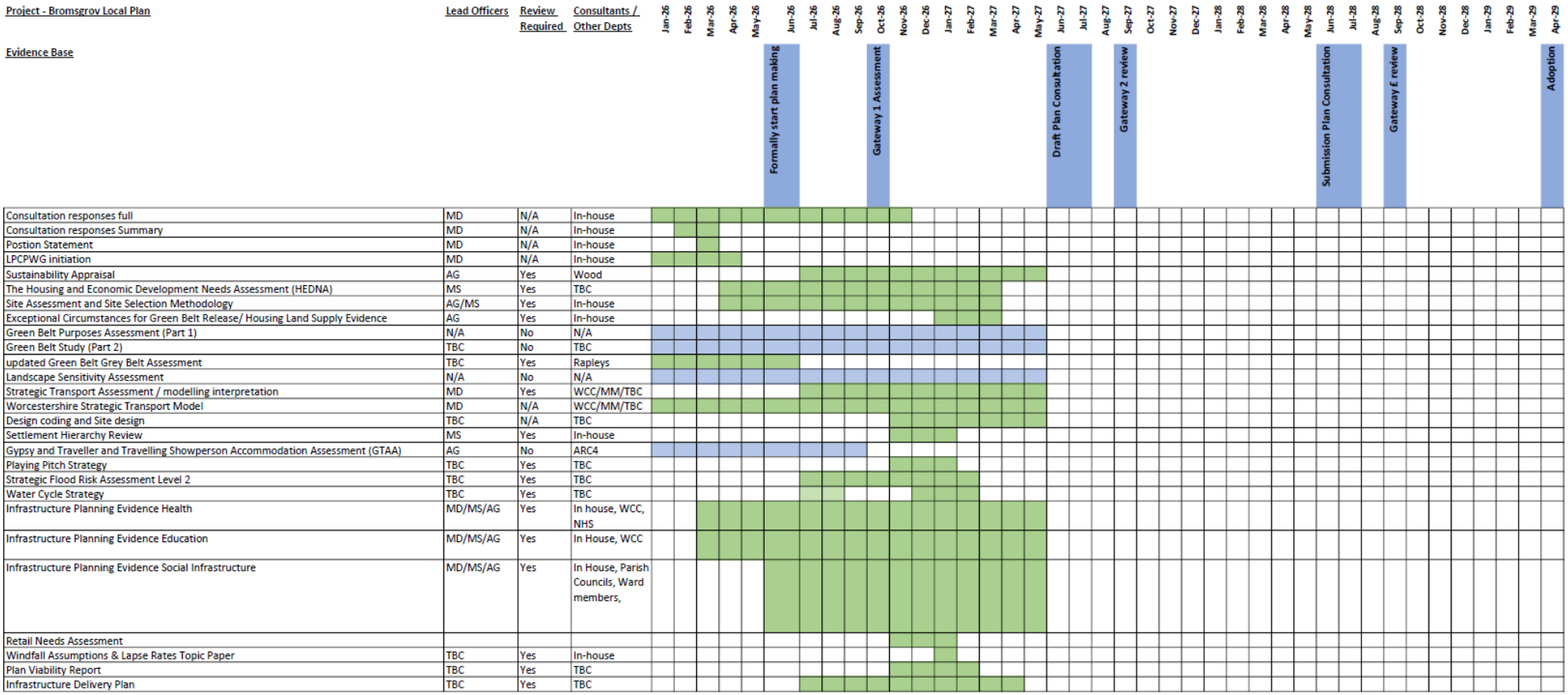
APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – LPCPWG

Plan Viability Report

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – LPCPWG

Appendix 3 Local Plan Work Programme



APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – LPCPWG