

[Name of Group]

## DRAFT Terms of Reference to be Approved by [name of parent] Committee\*<sup>1</sup>

### 1 Background

*This section should include information as to why the Group is needed.*

### 2 Purpose of the Working Group

*This section should include concise detail of what the Group's purpose is / how they will deliver it \*<sup>2</sup>*

### 3 Membership of the Group, Chairmanship and Appointments\*<sup>3</sup>

- 3.1 The [name] Group shall comprise [insert no] Members including the serving [insert political roles if required].
- 3.2 The remaining Members of the Group shall be appointed by [name of parent committee of Council ] but do not need to serve on that committee **OR** must serve on that committee.
- 3.3 Membership will comprise [cross party / cross district representation / specific area]
- 3.4 The Working Group shall elect a Chairman at its first meeting **OR** The Chairman of the Working Group shall be [insert political role]
- 3.5 For continuity purposes the Membership of the Group shall remain in place until [date/ or task completed] **OR** Membership will be re-constituted annually through Annual Council.
- 3.6 The Group will be disbanded following submission of closure report to its parent committee / Full Council
- 3.7 Other elected Members may attend the [name] Group, but their level of contribution will be at the discretion of the Chairman.

## **4 Frequency of Meetings and Quorum\*4**

- 4.1 The quorum for a meeting shall be [insert no.] Members.
- 4.2 The [name] Group shall determine its own meeting frequency dependent upon need **OR** The Groups shall meet every [set time period]
- 4.3 Meetings will be called with at least [insert no.] days' notice.

## **5 Reporting Lines, Accountability and Milestones \*5**

- 5.1 The [name] Group is directly responsible to the [name of parent Committee]
- 5.2 The [name] Group has no direct decision making powers and will make recommendations to the [name of parent] Committee/ if required.
- 5.3 The [name] Group will report to the [name of parent] Committee, at the following intervals / stages : -

*Add detail relevant to your Group*

## **6 Resources \*6**

- 6.1 The [name] Group does not have a supporting budget. **OR** The Group has the following supporting budget [amount] approved by [committee] **OR** allocated through service budget.
- 6.2 If Budgets/ additional budgets are required they will be identified on recommendations made to the relevant Policy Committee.
- 6.2 Officers from the following Teams will support the [name] Group and provide advice, information, guidance and logistical support: -

*Add detail relevant to your Group*

- 6.3 Administrative support will be provided by [name of Team] Services. Agendas will be set for each meeting and notes from each meeting will be retained.

## **7 Review**

- 7.1 Following approval these Terms of Reference will be reviewed as minimum every two years if the [name] Group is still operating.

**Date/ Meeting – Document Approved - xxxx**

## **Supporting Notes and considerations in Preparing a Working Group / Task and Finish Group Terms of reference**

- \*1 All Working Groups / Task Finish Groups and meetings of this nature must belong to a Parent Committee (the parent is determined by nature of the Group and what activity the Group will carry out – seek advice from Democratic Services)

As such the establishment of a working Group must be agreed by a Committee or Full Council. The Terms of Reference for any proposed Group must also be approved by their parent Committee before work commences

### **REMEMBER!**

- **WORKING GROUPS MUST BE ESTABLISHED BY A COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL**
- **WORKING GROUPS CAN NOT APPROVE THEIR OWN TERMS OF REFERENCE.**
- **WORKING GROUPS CAN NOT AMEND THEIR OWN TERMS OF REFERENCE THEY MUST RECOMMEND CHANGES TO THEIR PARENT COMMITTEE**

- \*2 Examples of concise clear functions

- To oversee the delivery of xxxx
- To produce a draft xxxxx
- To develop a communications plan
- To develop a budget plan for

Include timescales if appropriate

- \*3 **This Section requires you to think about the size and make-up of your Group.**

Do you want or need Members who hold particular positions?

Do you need Members with specific skills or which serve on specific committees? Should Membership be dependent on another Committee appointment?

Should the Group be cross party ? Should it have Members from across the District or from a specific location? – (“true” political balance rules do not affect working groups)

Do you want the Group to elect its own Chairman or do you want that to be set in the Terms of Reference, linked to position, for example Chair of a Committee?

Do you want to keep the membership for the life of the Group? Do you want it change every year? Councillors are elected to four-year cycles – any Group running over 4 years will naturally by default have new appointments made in an Election Year.

Groups should always be formally disbanded by a report back to the Committee which established them.

We do not prevent Members from attending Groups they are not appointed to but you should set out the level of input they can have.

Sample Text is included but this is the minimum information that should be included.

**REMEMBER!**

- **WORKING GROUPS CAN NOT APPOINT THEIR OWN MEMBERS OR CHANGE THEIR MEMBERSHIP WITHOUT A REPORT TO THEIR PARENT CTTEE OR COUNCIL**

- \*4 This Section requires you to think about the minimum number of Members you need to have present to allow the meeting to proceed.**

It is recommended 3 should be the minimum.

Officers need to give careful consideration that they do not set this too high and make operation difficult when apologies are received.

How often do you want to meet? Do you want flexibility here? Or a set pattern?

How many days notice will you give for calling a meeting – there is no statutory time frame but Officers should be mindful of Members commitments.

Sample Text is included but this is the minimum information that should be included.

**REMEMBER!**

- **WORKING GROUPS / TASK AND FININISH GROUPS SHOULD NOT MEET WITH LESS THAN 3 MEMBERS PRESENT**

- \*5 This section should set out how often the Group will be report back to its parent to keep the work in the public arena and ensure progress is being made.**

This could be a time period – for example annually or could be on completion of a specific task dependent on the nature of the Group.

Should the Group make interim reports through less formal routes, bulletins, Chairs Briefings in intervening periods?

The Text included is the minimum information that should be included and must be retained.

**REMEMBER!**

- **WORKING GROUPS / TASK AND FINISH GROUPS DO NOT HAVE DIRECT DECISION MAKING POWER AND SHALL ALL REPORT AT LEAST ANNUALLY TO THEIR PARENT**

- \*6 This section should set out what resources are required. What Officers will the support the Group and how?

Such Groups will have no budget unless the Policy Committee – or a service area has already agreed a budget.

All Groups should have agendas and retain notes

**REMEMBER!**

- **WORKING GROUPS / TASK AND FINISH GROUPS DO NOT NATURALLY HAVE ACCESS TO A BUDGET AND NEED TO REQUEST SUCH THROUGH APPROPRIATE CHANNELS**
- **NOTES SHOULD BE KEPT FROM ALL MEETINGS**