

RE-DESIGNATION OF MARPLE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Report of the Corporate Director (Place) and Deputy Chief Executive

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Marple Neighbourhood Forum (MNF) was designated on 1st December 2016, following the establishment of the Area on 30th June 2016. Since then the Forum has been progressing the development of a Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) for the area.
- 1.2 The MNP is to be subject to a public consultation later this Autumn, although there is an impending matter in relation to the re-designation of the Forum.

2. RE-DESIGNATION OF FORUM

- 2.1 The designation of the forum was for a period of 5 years, as required by the regulations. Consequently the current designation will expire on 1st December 2021 and the MNF has therefore submitted information to support its re-designation. There is nothing in the regulations relating to Neighbourhood Plans which specifically relates to a re-designation of an existing forum, however legal advice is that the same process should be followed as for the original designation.
- 2.2 Where there is no designated neighbourhood forum then there is no legal means by which the neighbourhood plan can be advanced or by which existing members of the forum would be able to act in relation to it. Therefore it is necessary to ensure that a forum is in place so that these matters can be addressed in the local area.
- 2.3 The Council is required to consult on the application and this consultation commenced on Wednesday 18th August with a view to undertaking the statutory six-week consultation before the Council meeting on 18th November 2021. During that period the application will go through the necessary meetings in order that a decision on the forum designation can be made at Council.
- 2.4 There is no significant change to the MNF application from its original application. The only changes relate to the members of the MNF. There is no requirement for the Forum to re-apply for the Area to be re-designated, which remains as established in June 2016.
- 2.5 As a result it is not anticipated that the application should raise any significant issues.
- 2.6 A report will be prepared for the next meeting of the Marple Area Committee on 20th October 2021 after consultation to re-authorise the re-designation taking into account submissions received during the consultation.

- 2.7 Although not directly related to the re-designation application, the MNF has advised the Council that it is likely to be publicising a draft Neighbourhood Plan to the Council for consultation. It is anticipated at this stage that the consultation will take place in Autumn 2021 and is likely to conclude before the end of the calendar year. At the appropriate time further information will be provided to officers and members in respect of the content of the plan and the process for consultation. Whilst the re-designation of the MNF and consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan are separate matters, this information is being provided now by way of background, but also to highlight that in order for the forum to operate as a legal entity it will need to be re-designated after the current designation expires on 1st December.

3. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 This application is for a renewal of the existing forum designation and so there are no new or additional financial issues or risks arising.

4. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 As this report as set out above, legal advice is that the same process should be followed as for the original designation of the forum. As such it is considered there are no new or additional legal issues arising.

5. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 5.1 This application is for a renewal of the existing forum designation and so there are no new or additional human resources impact issues arising.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1 The re-designation of the MNF does not require Equalities Impact Assessment due to it being a technical application process with no risk of significant effects on the Protected Characteristics groups as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Officers are satisfied that the requirements of the Regulations in relation to membership of the forum are met.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.1 The re-designation of the MNF does not require Strategic Environmental Assessment due to it being a technical application process with no risk of significant effects on the environment.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 This application for the re-designation of Marple Neighbourhood Forum is essentially a technical exercise required by the regulations and Members are asked to note its submission.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Steve Johnson
on Tel: 0161-474-3509 or by email on steven.johnson@stockport.gov.uk