

**Head of Financial Services**

**Head of Business Improvement**

**To:** City Executive Board  
**Date:** 13 March 2019  
**Report of:** Acting Head of Planning Services  
**Title of Report:** Redesignation of Forums and Neighbourhood Areas for Summertown and St. Margaret's and Wolvercote

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To redesignate the Forums and Neighbourhood Areas for Summertown and St. Margaret's and Wolvercote
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Executive Board Member:</b>	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Lead Member for Planning
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	None.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Strong and Active Communities; Meeting Housing Needs; A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy; A Clean and Green Oxford
<b>Recommendations:</b> That the City Executive Board resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Approve</b> the redesignation of Summertown and St. Margaret's Forum in respect of the original designated neighbourhood area to which it related; and</li> <li>2. <b>Approve</b> the redesignation of Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum in respect of the original designated neighbourhood area to which it related.</li> </ol>	

<b>Appendices</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b> Maps of the designated neighbourhood areas that the forum re-designation applications relate to
<b>Appendix 2</b> Application received for the re-designation of the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum
<b>Appendix 3</b> Application received for the re-designation of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum
<b>Appendix 4</b> Risk Register

## **Introduction and background**

1. The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to enable communities to get directly involved in planning for their areas. Neighbourhood planning allows interested communities to come together through a Neighbourhood Forum to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. Once a Neighbourhood Plan is adopted or 'made' it will become part of the statutory development plan, and therefore an important consideration when making decisions on planning applications. Neighbourhood Forums however do only last for five years and at the end of this period need to be formally redesignated.
2. The Neighbourhood Areas for Summertown and St. Margaret's together with Wolvercote were approved by City Executive Board (CEB) on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2013. The designation of the two separate neighbourhood forums for Summertown and St. Margaret's and for Wolvercote were then subsequently approved by CEB on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014. Section 61F(8) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the 1990 Act) provides that a designation of a neighbourhood forum ceases to have effect five years after the date it was designated, which was therefore the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 for both Forums.
3. City Executive Board is asked to consider the re-designation of these two neighbourhood forums which have been in existence over the last five years and which have both reached an advanced stage in the preparation of their own Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Forum applications must link to a designated neighbourhood area. The neighbourhood areas the forum applications relate to are Summertown and St. Margaret's (following both ward boundaries) and Wolvercote (following the ward boundary), which are identical to those originally designated, Appendix 1.
4. Planning Regulations set out the requirements for the designation of a neighbourhood forum and their re-designation is required to go through the same process. The neighbourhood forum applications received (see Appendix 2) should be judged against these criteria. The proposed neighbourhood forums have been subject to public consultation on the City Council's website and in 'hard' copy form at locations within the respective neighbourhood areas.

## **Compliance with planning regulations**

5. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 specify the criteria that must be met and included in neighbourhood forum applications. An application must include the following, as required by the Regulations:
  - a name of the proposed neighbourhood forum;
  - a name and contact details of one key member of the proposed forum
  - the name of the neighbourhood area to which the application relates and a map of the area;
  - a statement which explains how the proposed neighbourhood forum meets the conditions contained in section 61F(5) of the 1990 Act
6. The Regulations state that a local planning authority may designate an organisation or body as a neighbourhood forum if the authority are satisfied that it meets the following conditions:

- It is established for the express purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of an area that consists of or includes the neighbourhood area concerned (whether or not it is also established for the express purpose of promoting the carrying on of trades, professions or other businesses in such as area).
  - Its membership is open to:
    - individuals who live in the neighbourhood area concerned;
    - individuals who work there (whether for businesses carried on there or otherwise); and
    - individuals who are elected members of a county council, district council or London Borough any of whose area falls within the neighbourhood area concerned.
  - Its membership includes a minimum of 21 individuals each of whom:
    - lives in the neighbourhood area concerned;
    - works there (whether for a business carried on there or otherwise); or
    - is an elected member of a county council, district council or London Borough Council any of whose area falls within the neighbourhood area concerned
  - it has a written constitution
7. The applications received are attached in Appendices 2 and 3. Maps are provided that show the designated neighbourhood areas the forum applications relate to (Appendix 1). Information is provided for each application and within the existing constitution for the respective neighbourhood forums to show that the conditions outlined above are met. Each is established for the purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area; has an open membership; includes more than 21 members (ward councillors having all been involved) and has a written constitution that endorses all these requirements.

### **Consultation responses**

8. The City Council has a statutory requirement to publicise for 6 weeks any qualifying applications we receive to redesignate a neighbourhood forum. The public consultation period took place from 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
9. The receipt of the forum applications was publicised with the intention of raising awareness within and around the relevant areas. This was undertaken by publicising the application on the City Council's website; providing hard copies of the documents at the same locations within the respective neighbourhood areas where the Plan had been publicised. In addition Statutory Consultees and other local neighbourhood groups were consulted by email.
10. Officers will update members on the comments received at the CEB meeting.

### **Environmental Impact**

11. This stage of the neighbourhood planning process only involves the re-designation of a forum.

12. A combined Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Statement were submitted as part of the supporting evidence for Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### **Legal Issues**

13. Officers consider that the information provided by the neighbourhood groups is adequate to show that the statutory requirements for the redesignation of neighbourhood forums are met.

### **Financial Implications**

14. The City Council is obliged to offer a certain degree of help to groups as they produce their plans. As well as this, the City Council must consult on draft plans, organise an examination and run the Referendum. Given the advanced stage of their respective plans these requirements have been partly met and will continue as necessary through to Referendum and Adoption. These requirements will be met from the current resources of the Planning Policy Team, supplemented by grants from central government to district councils for each neighbourhood plan.
15. It should be noted that from adoption of a neighbourhood plan the neighbourhood portion of the CIL receipts generated locally that can be retained and spent locally increases from 15 to 25%.

### **Level of risk**

16. The Risk Register is attached at Appendix 4. There are no abnormal risks

### **Equalities Impact**

17. Consideration has been given to the public sector equality duty imposed by s149 of the Equalities Act 2010. Having paid due regard to the need to meet the objectives of that duty the view is taken that the duty is met.

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**Background Papers:** None