



1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To obtain Members' approval for the determination of all planning applications within the defined enterprise zone to be delegated to officers

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

To delegate the determination of all planning applications within the defined enterprise zone (as shown on the attached Plan 1) in accordance with the current scheme of delegation.

3. **BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT**

Members will be aware of the outline planning permission reference 11/0360/OUT granted in 2012 for the MIRA Technology Park. At the meeting of the Planning Committee on 15 October delegated authority was given to officers to determine all subsequent reserved matters applications associated with 11/00360/OUT.

The defined boundary of the enterprise zone (EZ) is larger than the area to which the Technology Park masterplan refers.

Under current arrangements there is no delegated arrangement for the determination of applications where they are major applications. The Constitution requires all such applications to be determined by Planning Committee.

A key objective of EZs is to encourage development and economic growth and to provide where necessary a simplified planning regime (SPR) to ensure that once investors are lined up to deliver development, the 'normal' planning system does not pose delays to the delivery of development. To achieve this end, where EZs are designated, DCLG are keen to encourage and support the necessary LPAs to develop their SPR.

The Council's constitution does however pose a significant delay and amount of uncertainty to the delivery of development, but only through the need for applications to be timetabled and determined by Planning Committee.

The MIRA Enterprise Zone and business as a whole is growing and MIRA needs to remain very agile and responsive to demand for space on the site. The forecast investment of circa £300m and 2000 direct and up to 5,000 including indirect jobs being created on site further supports the demand for space and timely delivery of such space. MIRA are also in the process of securing further Government funding for new buildings and infrastructure (as supported by the Borough Council and the LLEP) which require detailed planning permissions to be in place to stand any chance of securing the available funds.

It is therefore proposed to seek delegated authority to determine all planning applications associated within the enterprise zone. It is hoped that this will allow for decisions to be issued in a timelier manner. The overall timescale for decision

making will be controlled by either a Planning Performance Agreement or an extension of time agreement where necessary.

It is still proposed that the Enterprise Zone is to be subject to a Local Development Order (LDO) which will in turn provide an accompanying SPR. The LDO is currently under development and will be reported to Planning Committee in due course.

The extent of consultation will remain unchanged, and the current delegation exemptions as specified in the consultation will still apply.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [KP]

The internal costs associated with considering and processing planning applications for the Enterprise Zone will be reviewed to consider whether they can be reclaimed through the Council's Regional Growth Funding allocation of £19.4million. Costs will be calculated on the basis of the hourly rate of those officers involved. Depending on the level claimed, this will release a saving in the General Fund budget for the amount reimbursed.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [MR]

Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Planning Committee to delegate to officers the power to determine planning applications.

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This document contributes to Strategic Aim 1 of the Corporate Plan

- Creating a vibrant place to work and live.

7. CONSULTATION

None

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Delayed decision resulting in loss of economic investment within the technology park and the Borough as whole	To maintain working relationships with MIRA to ensure the earliest possible delivery of planning decisions.	James Hicks

9. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no arising implications. The principle of development is established and the proposed revised arrangements will only allow for the faster processing of such applications given the presence of an outline planning permission. The exemptions to the delegated procedure remain unaltered.

10. **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning Implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers: MIRA Technology Park 11/00360/OUT
Plan 1 Site Boundary

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