

INTRODUCTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

To: Development Control Committee

Date: 5 December 2000

Author: Head of Spatial Planning

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

1 To introduce members to the new Committee.

B PROPOSED ACTION

2 The Committee is requested to:

1 NOTE the terms of reference and functions of the Committee.

2 RE-AFFIRM the application of the local code of conduct to the work of this Committee.

3 NOTE the delegated powers and performance measures referred to in the report.

C RESOURCES APPRAISAL

3 This report has no significant resource implications.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4 As this is the first meeting of the new Committee, I felt that members may find it helpful to receive a brief report setting out the work of the Committee. Appendix A sets out the terms of reference and functions of the Committee.

5 As a Committee of the County Council its functions and mode of operation but not its decisions on individual applications may be subject to review by and requests for information from the Environment of Buckinghamshire Select Committee during the interim arrangements. By and large the Committee will be continuing the work of the Development Control Sub-Committee, i.e. carrying out the County Council development control functions under the relevant Town and Country Planning Acts. This involves determining County Matter and County Council planning applications and any associated enforcement work. County Matters include proposals for mineral working, waste management facilities, aggregate depots, cement and brickworks, and proposals conflicting with the restoration and aftercare conditions relating to mineral working (e.g. certain

Motorway Service Areas on the M25). County Council applications can involve school, new road or Social Services applications etc.

- 6 As the Committee's decisions relate to the development of land, which can have significant financial and environmental implications for applicants and local residents, decisions need to be taken with the utmost probity. To this end, a local code of conduct for elected members and officers involved in the consideration of planning matters was adopted by the County Council in July 1998. This is attached as Appendix B. References to the Development Control Sub-Committee should now be taken to refer to this Committee. It is important that as a member of this Committee that you read and reaffirm this code.
- 7 The work of the Committee is controlled by statute and training/updates on new legislation are provided for members as necessary .An example is the way in which the recent Human Rights Act can impinge on planning decision making, and a training session on this has been arranged to follow this meeting. Also, if members have any detailed concerns about the work of the Committee, this can also be raised in this session.
- 8 In order to avoid unnecessary delay in service delivery and to assist the Committee in achieving its performance targets a wide range of powers is delegated to officers. As a basic principle delegated decisions are not made where these would conflict with either the views of elected members or the development plan. Appendix C sets out most of the powers delegated to officers. However this list is not exhaustive and will need revising and updating over the coming months.
- 9 The performance of the County Council's Development Control system are key measures in the County Council's Local Performance Plan. Notable targets for 2001/02 are to determine at least 25% of County matter applications (excluding ones with environmental impact assessments) within 8 weeks and 55% of County Council applications to within 8 weeks, and an average time taken to determine County Matter applications of no more than 15 weeks. An extract of the proposed performance data for the Minerals and Development Control Service Plan for 2001/2 is contained in Appendix D.
- 10 In addition to determining planning applications, the previous Sub-Committee considered reports which:
 - reviewed the progress of enforcement actions;
 - monitored the compliance with conditions attached to County Council developments;
 - noted the outcome of education liaison meetings;
 - monitored the progress on determining planning applications, and
 - listed applications determined by officers under delegated powers.
- 11 Interim arrangements are in hand to deal with consultations on planning applications, some of which were previously dealt with by the Development Control Sub-Committee. These will for the time being involve either the Chairman or Vice Chairman of this Committee and the relevant cabinet member .

- 12 If I receive any further information on the powers, responsibilities or procedures of the Committee, I will inform members at the meeting.

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes of County Council 16 July 1998

Report to Policy and Resources Committee 2 November 2000

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