



**REPORT of
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

to
PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE
16 NOVEMBER 2017

**COUNCILLOR ENGAGEMENT IN PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS AND
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN DISCUSSIONS (DEVELOPER MEETINGS)**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To consider and agree revisions to the above Protocol.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Councillor Engagement in Pre-Application Discussions and Local Development Plan Discussions (Developer meetings) be amended as set out in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 below and also in the general terms as shown in **APPENDIX 2** to this report.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The current Protocol, which sits alongside related constitutional documentation and is at **APPENDIX 1** to this report, was agreed by the Committee in August 2013.
- 3.2 At a recent meeting of the Planning Committee Chairmen, the need for two revisions was identified. The first is to ensure that in the initial arrangements for the setting up of the discussion meeting, the availability of the Ward Member(s) is taken into account. The second is to remove any terminology that might be confused with the definition of strategic development used for the determination of certain planning applications at extraordinary meetings of the Council.
- 3.3 It is therefore proposed that paragraph 2.2.1 be revised to read as follows:

Step 2 Assessment and arrangement

Development management:

Officers will assess the pre- application proposals against the criteria for **strategically important major development as described in section 5 of this Protocol**. Should the proposals be considered to be fitting with this criteria then the case officer will approach the developer with a view to arranging a pre-application with Members. Officers shall seek / **pursue** two dates (**convenient to the Ward Member(s)**) with the developer at which a meeting with Councillors can be held (Development Management performance criteria require a first written response to developers to be returned no later than 21 days from the receipt of an enquiry). **Subject to these dates**

being convenient to the Ward Member (s), Councillors shall be notified via an all Member e mail at no fewer than five days before any meeting date. The Development Control Management Forum shall be set for whichever the greatest number of Councillors is available to attend the forum*.

- 3.4 So far as the description of the categories of development covered by this Protocol is concerned it is thought that 'strategically important major development' is correct and the above revision includes a cross-reference to section 5 where these categories are set out. Section 5 can then be headed up 'STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA' with the line at 5.1 below being deleted.
- 3.5 In looking further at this Protocol, it appears there is scope for further revision. When the Protocol was introduced it was designed to cover both potential Development Management and Local Development Plan submissions. Given the recent finalisation and adoption of the Local Development Plan it is considered that these provisions in the Protocol are no longer required, and that the Protocol itself can be renamed. APPENDIX 2 to this report shows the entirety of the proposed revisions as tracked changes.

4. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

- 4.1 The review and updating of the corporate governance arrangements of the Council underpins the decision making processes of the Council, is in part a matter of compliance with the law and is also linked to high level outcomes associated with the corporate goal of delivering good quality, cost effective and valued services in a transparent way. It is important that all elements of the Council's Constitution and supporting documentation are kept up to date and able to be clearly understood by Members, Officers and also the public.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – It is right and proper that the Council is able openly to explain, through well-presented and user-friendly constitutional documentation, the way in which it is set up and operates, and how it conducts its business. It is important that the Council's procedures are seen as open and transparent.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – None identified.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – None identified.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None identified.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None identified.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Stuart Jennings, Corporate Governance Project Officer, (Tel: 01621 875745).