

Report of:	Meeting	Date	Item No.
Cllr Ron Greenhough Chairman of the Planning Committee	Council	30 July 2015	11

### Planning Committee: Periodic Report

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To enable myself as Chairman of Planning Committee to inform the Council of the current position on issues being dealt with by the Planning Committee.

#### 2. Applications determined by the Planning Committee

- 2.1 The scheme of delegation set out in the council's Constitution allows for the Head of Planning Services to determine all planning applications. However, that delegation is conditioned by paragraph 1. It allows for any Member to call a planning application to Committee for determination. To do so, the member must make the request within ten working days of the date of distribution of the weekly list of planning applications, upon which the planning application in question appeared.
- 2.2 Whilst most planning applications are decided under the delegated powers, applications of most strategic or local significance or which are or most likely to be controversial are brought to the Planning Committee for a decision. At present about 96% of all applications are decided under delegated powers.
- 2.3 Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015 a total of 1222 planning applications of all types were received and 1149 applications determined. Since 1st July 2014 the Planning committee have determined 44 planning applications representing 4% of all applications.
- 2.4 Of the 44 applications determined by the Planning Committee, 24 were granted planning permission and 20 were refused. 12 (27%) were decided contrary to the recommendation of the Head of Planning Services. Of these, seven were granted planning permission contrary to the recommendation and five were refused contrary to recommendation. Appeals against two of these refusals were submitted and one has been allowed (12 affordable dwellings on land at School Lane, Forton). A decision on the other (outline for up to 100 dwellings, land off Carr Head Lane, Poulton) is still awaited.

#### 3. Appeals

- 3.1 Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015 - 23 appeals were submitted which, out of a total of 1149 decisions, represents only 2%. Within the same period 22 appeals have been decided of which only 6 have been allowed (27%) with one

split decision (part allowed – part dismissed). In this respect the percentage of appeals allowed is outside the current Service Plan target of 20%, however, given the very low number of appeals in total, this is not considered to be significant as one decision either way would change the percentage significantly.

#### **4. Other matters for information**

##### **Scheme of delegation**

- 4.1** The Council's scheme of delegation, as set out in the constitution, was amended on 16 April 2015. With regard to the arrangements for requesting applications to be determined by the Planning Committee it was changed to clarify the position in respect of what type of application can be 'called in'. It was amended to state that "this exception shall only apply to applications for Planning Permission or Advertisement Consent ....." This change was made because the council as local planning authority, has to determine many different types of application, many of which are subject to statutory time targets, which if not met, allow the development to proceed by default. It would not be possible to deal with these applications within these target timescales if they were required to be determined by the Planning Committee.
- 4.2** The other main amendment was that the exception was also extended to resubmitted applications that were previously withdrawn (as well as those refused). This change was made as a result of an increasing tendency for applicants to withdraw applications that were proposed to be refused under delegated powers, only for those applications to be resubmitted soon afterwards and be subject to a request to be 'called in' for determination by the Planning Committee. It should be noted in this respect that no fee is payable for a resubmitted application despite the fact that the same resources have to be used to determine it as would have been used for the original application. For the financial year 2014 -15, for example, it was estimated that applications resubmitted benefiting from this "free go" would have had to pay a total of over £35,000 in application fees had a fee been payable.

##### **National Planning Practice Guidance**

- 4.3** Members will recall being previously informed of the publication of new national planning policy – The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012. The NPPF has been accompanied by other limited specific guidance e.g. Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework also published in March 2012 dealing with Flood Risk and Minerals Policy. This (and other) supplemental guidance has now been replaced by a new on-line National Planning Policy Guidance published on 6 March 2014 which now covers a much wider range of planning issues and policies set out in the NPPF. This should provide greater clarity in interpreting the NPPF which has, and will continue to assist the decision making process.
- 5.** In accordance with Procedure Rule 11.3, any Member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rules 11.5.

#### **LIST OF APPENDICES**

None

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