

## **DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: DECISION MAKING PROTOCOL**

The Development Committee usually sits once a month. The meeting is open to the general public and there are opportunities for members of the public to speak to the Committee prior to the debate.

### **Decision Making Protocol**

This protocol sets out our normal practice for decision making on planning applications at Development Committee. It covers those circumstances where the officer recommendation for approval or refusal is to be deferred, altered or overturned. The protocol is based on the desirability of clarity and consistency in decision making and of minimising financial and reputational risk, and requires decisions to be based on material planning considerations. Any conditions imposed on a planning permission must meet the six tests set out in paragraph 206 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This protocol recognises and accepts that, on occasions, it may be advisable or necessary to defer determination of an application or for a recommendation to be amended and consequently for conditions or refusal reasons to be added, deleted or altered in any one of the circumstances below.

- Where an application is to be deferred, to facilitate further information or negotiation or at an applicant's request.
- Where a recommendation is to be altered as the result of consultation or negotiation:
  - The presenting Officer will clearly state the condition and its reason or the refusal reason to be added/deleted/altered, together with the material planning basis for that change.
  - In making any proposal to accept the Officer recommendation, a Member will clearly state whether the amended recommendation is proposed as stated, or whether the original recommendation in the agenda papers is proposed.
- Where a Member wishes to alter a recommendation:
  - In making a proposal, the Member will clearly state the condition and its reason or the refusal reason to be added/deleted/altered, together with the material planning considerations/reasons for that change.
  - In the interest of clarity and accuracy and for the minutes, the lead officer will restate the amendment before the final vote is taken.
  - Members can instruct the Head of Planning to draw up the detailed wording of the decision and reasons so as to reflect Members' decision.
- Where the Development Committee wishes to overturn a recommendation and the decision is considered to be significant in terms of overall impact,

harm to the planning policy framework, having sought advice from the Head of Planning and the Head of Legal/Planning Legal Manager (or Officers attending Committee on their behalf)

- A final decision on the application will be deferred to allow associated risks to be clarified and conditions/refusal reasons to be properly drafted.
- An additional officer report will be prepared and presented to the next meeting of the Development Committee detailing the likely policy, financial and reputational etc risks resultant from overturning a recommendation, and also setting out the likely conditions (with reasons) or refusal reasons. This report should follow the Council's standard risk assessment practice and content.
- In making a decision to overturn a recommendation, Members will be asked to clearly state the material planning reason(s) why an alternative decision is being made, and which will be minuted for clarity.
- In all other cases, where the Development Committee wishes to overturn a recommendation:
  - Members will clearly state the material planning reason(s) why an alternative decision is being made, and which will be minuted for clarity.
  - In making a proposal, the Member will clearly state the condition and its reason or the refusal reason to be added/deleted/altered, together with the material planning basis for that change.
  - Members can instruct the Head of Planning to draw up the detailed wording of the decision and reasons so as to reflect Members' decision

### **Member Training**

In order to ensure robust decision-making all Members of Development Control Committee are required to attend annual Development Control training.