



**TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
SERVICE REDUCTIONS**

**Local Committee for Mole Valley
21 June 2006**

KEY ISSUE

To give an update on the service reductions that have resulted from the impact of the Policy and Productivity Review (PPR) and Business Delivery Review (BDR) on Transportation Development Control.

SUMMARY

The Policy and Productivity Review in 2004/2005 was established to improve services and give better value for money for the people of Surrey. The Business Delivery Review in 2005/2006 was established to make substantial savings for the County Council and to make improvements to future council service provision.

Prior to both reviews Transportation Development Control's staff establishment was 34fte (35 posts). Under the PPR, Transportation Development Control lost 7 posts and under the BDR lost an additional 5 posts. This net reduction of 12 posts has had a corresponding impact on service provision. Transportation Development Control is now no longer able to offer the level of service that was undertaken prior to 2005.

Members are asked to note the impacts on service delivery that have resulted from the PPR and the BDR.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to:

(i) To note the impacts of the Policy and Productivity Review and the Business Delivery Review on the level of service that Transportation Development Control is now able to deliver.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Transportation Development Control is responsible for advising the 11 District Planning Authorities and the County Minerals and Waste Planning Authority about the transportation implications of applications for planning permission. The Division is also responsible for giving pre-planning advice to prospective developers, for securing transportation improvements by means of S.278 Agreements under the Highways Act 1980 and S.106 Agreements under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and for adopting new highways under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980.

2.0 POLICY AND PRODUCTIVITY REVIEW

- 2.1 As a result of the Policy and Productivity Review in 2004/2005, Transportation Development Control lost 7 posts reducing its staff establishment from 35 posts to 28 posts, resulting in the restructuring of the Division and a reduction in the level of service that could be delivered to the District Planning Authorities. A decision was taken that in order to continue to deliver the core business of the Division, other areas of work would have to cease or be reduced.
- 2.2 It was agreed, regrettably, that the Division would no longer be able to attend planning committee in those districts where there had been regular committee attendance. This primarily affected Guildford, Reigate & Banstead, Surrey Heath, Tandridge, Mole Valley and Woking. It was suggested officers could attend Call Over meetings/Chairmen's briefings provided that they fell within the working day and that, exceptionally, the Transportation Development Control Manager would consider invitations for officers to attend committee in respect of significant development proposals with major transportation implications. Officers have attended and will continue to attend committee on this basis.
- 2.3 It was further agreed that officers would cease to give advice as a matter of course on certain types of application and standing advice was produced and issued to the District Planning Authorities to enable them to deal with these applications. The types of application were:
- development on a private road or street if the proposal does not adversely affect a publicly maintained highway;
 - residential extensions or minor commercial extensions;
 - advertisement consent consultations;
 - gates onto 30 mph D class urban roads;
 - minor changes of use in town and village centres; and
 - telecom masts on D class roads with a speed limit of 40 mph or less.

Officers are, of course, prepared to give further advice if there are specific concerns about particular cases. The Transportation Development Control Division will provide training to planning officers on how to apply the standing advice if and when requested.

3.0 BUSINESS DELIVERY REVIEW

- 3.1 The Business Delivery Review resulted in the loss of 3 further posts and the transfer of an additional 2 posts to the Safer Smarter Travel Unit. This reduced its staff establishment further to 23 posts. Transportation Development Control now has a total of 12 posts fewer than the same time 15 months ago, an overall reduction of 34 percent in staff level.
- 3.2 As a result of this further reduction in staff level due to BDR, the current level of service cannot be retained at its current level. Transportation Development Control must seek further reduction in service and new ways of working. TDC will concentrate its resources on high priorities and will continue to deliver on those but lower priority areas will be reduced or cease. This will include the continuation of no routine attendance at committee, stopped as a result of the previous review, although the exceptional attendance will continue.
- 3.3 The system of standing advice and thresholds has worked well over the last twelve months (since the PPR cuts were introduced), and it is considered that there may be scope for greater use of standing advice without any loss of effectiveness.

4.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 The Portfolio Holder, David Munro, and the Head of Service, Roger Hargreaves, have both been consulted on the content of this report.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.0 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to note the reduction in Transportation Development Control's level of service and the reasons for this.

Report by: Caroline Smith
East Team Manager, Transportation Development Control

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Caroline Smith

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 020 8541 9975

BACKGROUND PAPERS: