

TO: PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE

DATE: 18 OCTOBER 2017

BY: PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

PURPOSE: FOR DECISION

TITLE: THE SURREY CODE OF BEST PRACTICE IN PLANNING PROCEDURES

SUMMARY REPORT

Surrey County Council has adopted a Code of Best Practice in Planning Procedures, which forms part of the Council's Constitution. The Code has recently been updated to reflect best practice and is attached as annex A. The Code will include a new process for Members wishing to cancel delegated authority and a change to the order of speakers.

ISSUES

1. New paragraphs numbered 2.14 to 2.18 have been added to set out a new procedure for dealing with removal of officer delegated authority on any applications. This will help to ensure that requests for officer delegations to be delegated to Planning & Regulatory Committee are done so with reasonable and relevant planning grounds. It will also enable Member queries or concerns to be dealt with in the most appropriate manner in the requirement to speak with officers and Chairman of Planning & Regulatory Committee before seeking to remove officer delegation on an application.
2. It is also proposed to bring forward Local Member speakers and take them with public speaking rather than as part of the debate, see paragraph 7. This reduces the risk of bias and increase fairness as it allows the applicant to respond to any new issues addressed as there is not the requirement for Local Members to write in their objections or otherwise in order for them to speak at Planning & Regulatory Committee.
3. If the order of speakers is accepted then there will be the issue of whether or not to afford the application further time to address the Local Members issues raised. This is addressed with proposed changes to Standing Orders attached as Annex B.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to approve:

1. the introduction of a 'Removal of Delegated Authority' scheme as set out in paragraphs 2.14 to 2.18 in Annex A,
2. the change to the order of speakers to include Local Member speakers after public speakers rather than as part of the debate as set out in section 7 and the necessary changes to Standing Orders as outlined in Annex B, and

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3. the updated Surrey Code of Best Practice in Planning Procedures and COMMEND to County Council for inclusion in the Constitution, subject to the agreement of changes recommended above.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Planning Officers Society, Practice Guidance Note 1 – Public Speaking in Planning Committees

The Surrey Code of Best Practice in Planning Procedures
