

Meeting:	Strategic Planning Committee
Date:	18 th April 2007
Subject:	Revisions to Scheme of Delegations
Key Decision: (Executive-side only)	No
Responsible Officer:	Graham Jones Director of Planning
Portfolio Holder:	Marilyn Ashton Planning, Development and Enterprise
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	(i) BVPI Performance (ii) Current Scheme of Delegation 7 Sept 2004 (iii) Proposed Revised Scheme of Delegation

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee agree to the revised scheme of delegations as set out in Appendix (iii)

REASON: To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's planning service.

SECTION 2 - REPORT

The current scheme of delegation was agreed in September 2004. Since that date the demands on the service have increased and members and officers have had the opportunity to see how the scheme has worked in practice.

Members are aware of the increased pressure on Local Planning Authorities to meet Best Value Indicator Targets. Appendix (i) shows the latest position at the year end for 2006/7. While performance has been generally maintained and in the last year all BVPI targets have been met, this has to be seen against continuing financial pressures, recruitment difficulties and workload increases.

Meeting BVPI targets is critical in 2 respects, qualifying for Planning Delivery Grants and avoiding designation as a 'Standards Authority'. Unfortunately the 'blip' in major performance in the second quarter of 2006/7 has led to the Council once again being designated as a Standards Authority for major developments applications for 2007/8. This requires the Council to report progress regularly to the Government Office where it is closely monitored, with the ultimate risk of intervention.

To assist in maintaining and improving performance against BVPI's and reducing the workload for Committee, the following amendments are proposed:-

1. Deletion of Proviso (7) Appendix (ii)
The requirement for all applications in the Green Belt, MOL, SSSI or Site of Nature Conservation Importance to be determined by Committee is removed. At present all such applications are determined by committee irrespective of their scale or significance. Removing this requirement will mean that applications in the Green Belt etc will be determined on the same basis as any other applications.
2. Amendment to Application Category (9) Appendix (ii)
All applications recommended for refusal will be delegated to officers with certain provisions as per the delegation scheme. Currently major applications recommended for refusal are reported to Committee. This can delay decision-making unnecessarily as members rarely, if ever, overturn recommendations for refusal.
3. Renewal of Permissions Category (15) Appendix (ii)
Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has removed the provision which enabled permissions to be renewed without submitting a fresh application and therefore this category no longer applies

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Chief Finance Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name: Sheela Thakrar.....
		Date: ...4 th April 2007.....
Monitoring Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name: David Galpin
		Date: 4 th April 2007

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact: Graham Jones, Director of Planning
Tel: 020 8420 9317

Background Papers:

IF APPROPRIATE, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES/ NO
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES / NO
3.	Manifesto Pledge Reference Number	