

Meeting:	STANDARDS COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
Date:	4 December 2008 3 December 2008
Subject:	Planning Protocol for Members
Responsible Officer:	Hugh Peart
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Marilyn Ashton
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix A – Example of new format Agenda page

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report responds to the ongoing negotiations to consider whether the Planning Protocol should be altered to reflect a procedural proposal in terms of voting.

The report arises from both Strategic Planning and Standards Committees and follows consideration by the Chairmen of those two Committees in reaching a consensus on a way forward.

Recommendation: That

- (1) it be agreed that Members involved in Planning applications meetings should be reminded of the requirement under paragraph 7 of the Planning Protocol, when considering the refusal or granting of planning applications.

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| (2) an alteration be made to the template of the relevant Committee agenda to reflect this area of the Protocol as indicated on Appendix 1. |
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Section 2 – Report

1. Background

- 1.1 The Strategic Planning Committee have previously considered various proposals in relation to management of the voting process in relation to planning applications and the need to ensure that strong planning reasons are identified, particularly where these seek to negate an officer recommendation.
- 1.2 The importance of such reasons being identified is an essential component of decision making given the requirements of the Planning legislation and the proposed arrangements regarding the impacts of Appeals processes whereby the authority might become liable for costs where these are not clearly stated.
- 1.3 The Standards Committee in considering changes to the Protocol at its meeting on 5 June 2008 felt that the management of Member voting was a procedural matter not falling to be an area that should dealt with as a Protocol issue.
- 1.4 The Strategic Planning Committee had indicated its concern regarding the process of voting and sought further clarification. Following this the Chairmen of both Committees met with relevant officers to consider the implications of the new Act; good planning guidance, the role of the Standards Committee and the content of the Planning Protocol as existing.

2. Future Operation

- 2.1 The Chairmen of both Committees therefore propose that no change be made to the existing Planning Protocol in terms of specifically identifying a voting process. However, they ask that Members are reminded to be aware of the content of the existing Planning Protocol and the need to ensure that where planning applications are considered the reasons for refusal must be based on good planning grounds in terms of any application considered. To this end they propose an amendment is made to the agenda template to serve as a reminder to Members of their responsibilities when considering such issues as attached at Appendix 1.

3. Legal Implications

- 3.1 These are contained in the body of the report.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Any costs relating to this matter will be met from within the provision for committee meetings.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Myfanwy Barrett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chief Financial Officer
Date: 25 November 2008		
Name: Jessica Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of Monitoring Officer
Date: 24 November 2008		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Pauline Ferris, Senior Professional Democratic Services,
tel: 020 8424 1269, e-mail: pauline.ferris@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers

Previous minutes of Standards and Strategic Planning Committees