

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2021

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE HELD IN REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2021 AT 14:00

Present

Councillor G Thomas – Chairperson

JPD Blundell	N Clarke	DK Edwards	A Hussain
DRW Lewis	JC Radcliffe	RME Stirman	MC Voisey
KJ Watts	RE Young		

Apologies for Absence

RJ Collins, SK Dendy, RM Granville, MJ Kearn, JC Spanswick and CA Webster

Officers:

Gareth Denning	Policy Team Leader
Mark Galvin	Interim Democratic Services Manager
Brett Holdsworth	Strategic Planning Officer
Rod Jones	Senior Lawyer
Louis Pannell	Senior Strategic Planning Policy Officer
Jonathan Parsons	Group Manager Development
Adam Provoost	Senior Development Planning Officer
Andrew Rees	Democratic Services Officer – Committees

531. COUNCILLOR P J WHITE

The Chairperson referred with sadness to the recent death of Councillor PJ White, the Committee's condolences would be given to Councillor White's family. The Chairperson asked all those present to observe a two minutes' silence and for a period of quiet reflection.

All present observed a two minutes' silence as a mark of respect.

532. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

533. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Development Control Committee of 30 September 2021 be approved as a true and accurate record.

534. PUBLIC SPEAKERS

There were no public speakers.

535. AMENDMENT SHEET

RESOLVED: That the Chairperson accepted the Development Control Committee Amendment Sheet as an urgent item, in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules, in order to allow for the Committee to consider necessary modifications to the Committee report,

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so as to take account of late representations and revisions that are required to be accommodated.

536. **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE GUIDANCE**

**RESOLVED:** That the summary of Development Control Committee Guidance as detailed in the report of the Corporate Director - Communities be noted.

537. **P/20/953/FUL - BRODAWEL CAMPING AND TOURING PARK, MOOR LANE, PORTHCAWL, CF36 3EJ**

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of the application be deferred pending a request for further information from the applicant, the application will be reported to a future meeting.

538. **AMENDMENTS TO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE PROTOCOLS**

The Group Manager Planning and Development Services (“the Group Manager”) reported on proposed changes to the procedures relating to the Development Control Committee which had been the subject of discussion at the workshop held on 29 September 2021. He informed the Committee that the current Planning Code of Practice was adopted by the Development Control Committee in April 2017, which included arrangements for the site inspection protocol, public speaking and the current scheme of delegation.

He reported on a proposal to retain the number of objectors required before reporting a householder/minor application to committee at more than 2 i.e. 3 or more objectors, but to increase the required number of objectors on any other form of application to more than 4 i.e. 5 or more. It was also proposed to treat repeated objections from different members of the same family as one neighbour objection. He stated that petitions will be considered on the strength/value/merits of the objections raised and the weight of objection to a particular scheme, especially in the social media age.

The Group Manager also reported on a proposal to increase the speaking time for public speaking for objectors / Members / Town or Community Councillors / applicants / agents from the existing 3 minutes to 5 minutes. He outlined a proposal to allow two objectors to speak for 2½ minutes each in case they had different points to raise. If two objectors were to agree to split the 5-minute speaking time between them applicants / agents would still have the same time overall (5 minutes) in which to respond to the objectors’ comments. In addition, the Workshop had considered that it should be possible if a member of Committee wished to do so to ask technical / fact finding questions of the agent/applicant. The agent/applicant would then be able to clarify points raised by Committee but this process would not be an opportunity to make further representations to committee. Any such questions could only be put to the agent/applicant with the agreement of the Chair of Committee (“the Chair”). In the same way, Members would also be able to question objectors, with the agreement of the Chair, on any points arising from their address to committee to clarify any points of a technical/fact finding nature.

The Group Manager stated that at the Workshop it was agreed that where an application was deferred after public speaking had taken place, public speakers should not be heard on the second occasion the application came before Committee unless the deferral resulted in a new consultation process or a requirement for an amended scheme. However, at the discretion of the Chair in consultation with the Group Manager and the Development and Building Control Manager public speakers might be allowed to address Committee on an item deferred from an earlier meeting.

The Group Manager reported on the current process for late representations, whereby representations received by 4pm on the day before Committee are reported on the Amendment Sheet circulated to the Committee prior to the start of the meeting. He stated that Members under the Code of Practice should not attempt to introduce documentation at the Committee meeting where the Planning Officer has not had an opportunity to consider the contents, to ensure Members receive properly considered and correct advice. He informed the Committee that late representations would not be accepted beyond the close of play on the Tuesday before the committee meeting. It was acknowledged that later representations may include valid material planning points that should be considered and included within the amendment sheet and in order to avoid unnecessary delays through deferrals where the planning officer is able to give Members considered advice on those representations they can be put to Members at the discretion of the Group Manager. Members should not give any significant weight to late submissions put directly to them instead of the Local Planning Authority, where they contain nothing new or assert a point without any clear evidence. He stated that any representations sent directly to members of the Committee the evening or morning before the scheduled meeting should be passed on to Officers to add to the file.

The Group Manager reported on the basis for the calling of site visits, which are fact-finding exercises and which are called where there is a material planning objection. He stated that a request for a site visit must be made by the local ward member following consultation on the proposed development, in writing or electronically within 21 days of notification of the application, clearly indicating the material planning reasons for the visit. The Chair will be the arbiter where it may not be possible to arrange a site visit in terms of necessity, safety and expediency. He informed the Committee that officers will continue to undertake site visits where safe to do so. He stated that it was the view at the recent workshop that there was no longer a need for Panel site visits. Site visits would take place from 9.30am on the day before the Committee. Given current restrictions, it would be extremely difficult for full site visits to be undertaken and officers would be better placed to advise on the resumption of physical full committee site visits and any individual risk assessments. He stated that anyone participating in a full site visit must do an individual risk assessment and, if they score highly, the mitigation will be that they remain at home. He reminded the Committee of the decision it made on 17 September 2020 to temporarily suspend full site visits in lieu of virtual site visits, or expanded Panels, deemed by the Chair to be essential. Site visits should be conducted under the amended protocol which should be extended until the resumption of physical site visits is allowed.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the proposed changes to the Code of Practice, Scheme of Delegation, the Site Inspection Protocol and Public Speaking Arrangements at Committee be agreed.
2. That the necessary changes to the scheme of delegation are made.
3. That the protocol and changes be reviewed periodically.
4. That the temporary changes for site visits stay in place for a period not exceeding 12 months from the date of decision or when Covid 19 restrictions are fully lifted, whichever is the soonest.

539. **2021 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT (AMR) FOR THE BRIDGEND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) 2006 - 2021**

The Principal Strategic Planning Policy Officer reported on the findings of the 2021 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), in that notably, housing delivery was failing to keep pace with the housing requirement and new, deliverable housing allocations are urgently needed to relieve growing housing supply pressure. He stated that it was imperative that the Local Planning Authority continued to progress with the statutory review of the LDP, to prevent ad-hoc development coming forward outside the development plan system.

He reported that the 2021 AMR must be submitted to the Welsh Government prior to 31 October 2021 and that its aim is to assess the extent to which the LDP Strategy and Policies are being achieved. He stated that the AMR has two primary roles; firstly to consider whether the policies identified in the monitoring process are being implemented successfully; and secondly to consider the Plan as a whole against all of the information gathered to determine whether a complete or partial review of the Plan was necessary.

He reported that the key findings of the AMR are an annual shortfall in housing delivery, where completions were 300 dwellings per annum below that anticipated. There was a 2,920 dwelling shortfall in housing delivery in respect of the cumulative average annual housing requirement, whilst, 111 affordable housing units were delivered and 1.46 hectares of vacant land developed in the year. He outlined the vacancy rates of commercial properties in Bridgend, Porthcawl and Maesteg town centres. He informed the Committee that a draft Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment was approved by Cabinet on 15 December 2020, and since its approval, a remaining need for 6 pitches had been identified. He stated that any unmet need for sites would be met through the Replacement LDP.

He also reported that the LDP Review Report (2018) had already recognised an urgent need to address the shortfall in the housing land supply through the identification of additional housing sites. The shortfall in housing delivery was now even more acute and was failing to keep pace with the housing requirement. He stated that it was fundamental to include sufficient, deliverable sites within the Replacement LDP to relieve growing housing supply pressure, otherwise, the gap between housing delivery and the housing requirement will continue to widen and extra housing sites will be needed to ensure the County Borough's housing requirements can be delivered. He informed the Committee that failure to act could also result in 'planning by appeal' and ad-hoc development coming forward out of accord with the Plan's strategy.

He concluded that the findings of the AMR provide an important opportunity for the Council to assess the effectiveness of the adopted LDP and to determine whether it needs to be reviewed. He stated that the Local Planning Authority is progressing with the statutory review of the LDP which will address the shortfall in the housing delivery and facilitate the identification/allocation of additional housing land. He informed the Committee that over 1,200 responses had been received to the draft LDP and these were being reviewed by officers. He stated that further investment into the local economy was required and the Replacement LDP will stimulate take up of new employment land, mixed-use sites and regeneration opportunities (including sites in the Council's ownership). This would bring forward new schemes, masterplans and development briefs to enable development. He stated that there was a pressing need to progress the Replacement LDP towards adoption to ensure the County Borough's housing requirements can be delivered and to prevent the gap between housing delivery and the housing requirement from widening further.

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**RESOLVED:** That the Committee noted the content of the Annual Monitoring Report.

540. **TRAINING LOG**

**RESOLVED:** That the report of the Corporate Director Communities on the updated Training Log be noted.

541. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

The meeting closed at 14:30