

Runnymede Borough Council

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Wednesday 31 March 2004 at 7.30 p.m.

in the Council Chamber

at the Civic Offices, Addlestone



Members of the Committee

Councillors G.B. Woodger (Chairman), Mrs. J. Norman (Vice-Chairman), A. Alderson, Mrs. F.J. Barden, J.B. Dean, J.M. Edwards, J.R. Furey, Mrs. L.M. Gillham, C. Knight, H.W.V. Meares, R. Pate, D.W. Parr, N. Thewlis, A.P. Tollett, and J.R. Whiteley.

A G E N D A

Notes:

- i) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- ii) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Mr. B.A. Fleckney, Administration and Leisure Department, Committee Section, Civic Offices, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel. Direct Line: 01932 425620). (Email: bernard.fleckney@runnymede.gov.uk).**
- iii) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr. B.A. Fleckney on 01932 425620.
- iv) Public speaking on planning applications only is allowed at the Planning Committee. For details please contact Mrs T. Eeles, Administrative Section of the Technical Services Department. (Tel Direct Line: 01932 425174)
- v) In the unlikely event of an alarm sounding, members of the public should leave the building immediately, either using the staircase leading from the public gallery or following other instructions as appropriate.

LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

PART I

Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection

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PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection

- a) Exempt Information
(No reports to be considered under this heading).
- b) Confidential Information
(No reports to be considered under this heading)

1. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

2. MINUTES

To confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 March 2004 (Appendix A) as a correct record. The appendices to these Minutes are not attached but will be contained in the April Council summons/Minute Book.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

If Members have an interest in an item please record the interest on the form circulated with this Agenda and hand it to the Legal Representative or Committee Administrator at the start of the meeting. A supply of the form will also be available from the Committee Administrator at meetings.

Members who have previously declared interests which are recorded in the Minutes to be considered at this meeting need not repeat the declaration when attending the meeting. Members need take no further action unless the item in which they have an interest becomes the subject of debate, in which event the Member must leave the room if the interest is personal and prejudicial.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS (DTS)

A list of the planning applications to be determined by the Committee is attached.

If Members have particular queries or interests in certain applications, the application files will be available for inspection and Officers present from 7.00 p.m. prior to the meeting in the ante room of the Council Chamber. This will be an informal opportunity for Members to see further details of applications and representations and to discuss and clarify issues. Copies of all letters of representation will also be placed on the table in the Chamber prior to the meeting and will be available for inspection by Members.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

the said applications be determined as indicated and any permission granted be subject to the conditions authorised.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

A list of background papers is available at the Technical Services Reception.

6. SERVICE PLAN 2003/04 - QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE (DTS)

(Ref: Minutes of Planning Committee, September 2003, page 670, para. 326)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress with the Planning Service Plan for the third quarter of 2003/04 (April to December) and highlight new targets for 2004/05 which have arisen from the new Leader's Position Statement.**

2. Background Information

2.1 At its meeting in September 2003 this Committee approved its Service Plan in order to serve as a basis for the monitoring and review of the Committee's objectives.

3. Report

3.1 Members will be aware of the plethora of strategic and planning documents reported to Committee from time to time. Very often these documents interlink and overlap.

3.2 In order to provide a more coherent reporting and monitoring process, both at political and management levels, Officers have drawn the various objectives and targets together into a single document for each Committee. The format has been modified from the "Aims and Targets" approach, which Members will recall flowed from the Leader's Position Statement,

to include more detail of timescales, potential barriers and additional resource requirements. The source of each target is, however, clearly identified so as to preserve the place of the original documentation.

- 3.3 The Service Plan attached at Appendix 'B' draws together objectives from the following sources:
- i) The Leader's Position Statement - this is the key political policy statement of the Council. The 2003/04 statement was adopted as Council policy in October 2003. (See also paragraph 3.6).
 - ii) The Best Value Performance Plan - the Council is required to adopt a Best Value Performance Plan annually. The plan must contain its service objectives, various details of its compliance with its Best Value duties, and proposed action to meet performance targets. The current version of the plan was adopted in June 2003 and, amongst other material, draws on the Leader's Position Statement.
 - iii) Best Value Continuous Improvement Plans - each service will have carried out one or more Best Value Reviews and proposals for service improvement will have been incorporated into Improvement Plans approved by Committee. These are included in the Service Plan, save for targets previously reported as complete.
 - iv) Best Value Performance Indicators - a range of Performance Indicators are prescribed by the Secretary of State for the measurement of local authority performance in various areas. The indicators prescribe what is measured; the target performance is set in some cases nationally and in other cases is left to local discretion.
 - v) Other plans and strategies - the above lists the major source material relevant for this Committee, but there may be a need to refer to other documents such as the Community Strategy, Asset Management Plan, the Local Plan (or the Local Development Framework), the Capital Strategy, etc. Where relevant these will be mentioned.
- 3.4 The document draws together the objectives and targets from all these sources. They are grouped in themes rather than by document for ease of assimilation.
- 3.5 Current performance is highlighted throughout the Service Plan.
- 3.6 Also attached, at Appendix 'C', are draft targets which have been drawn from the new Leader's Position Statement 2004/05, together with an additional Best Value Performance Indicator that is to be introduced from 1 April 2004. These will be embedded within the Service Plan so that performance can be monitored and reported during the next year.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

the targets highlighted in Appendix 'C', drawn from the new Leader's Position Statement and new BVPI, be included within the Service Plan for 2004/05.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Leader's Position Statement 2004/05
Letter from ODPM dated 20 February 2004

7. PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING COMMITTEE (DAL/DTS)

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To review the operation of public speaking at Planning Committee.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 Public speaking on planning applications at Planning Committee was introduced in May 2003. A copy of the relevant standing Order and Guidance Note for the Public is at Appendix 'D'.

The key points of the public speaking procedure for planning applications are as follows:

- The right applies where there are at least three written objections;
- An Objector who wishes to speak needs to give notice to the Director of Technical Services after publication of the Agenda but at the latest by noon two working days before the meeting;
- The right to speak is restricted to planning applications and does not apply to other planning matters;
- Only one Objector is allowed to speak against each application; and
- The applicant is given the opportunity to speak where notice has been given that an objector wishes to speak; and
- Three minutes is the maximum length of speech allowed.

It is increasingly common practice for local authorities to allow members of the public to speak at Planning Committee.

3. Report

- 3.1 Since May 2003, 21 meetings of the Planning Committee have been held and public speaking has taken place at 17 of these. Although public speaking has undoubtedly prolonged the meetings of this Committee, the process has been manageable. If the opportunity to speak were to be taken up on every application then the position would need to be reviewed.
- 3.2 The right to speak publicly has been implemented in connection with 56 applications. 38 applicants or their agents, and 41 objectors have spoken.
- 3.3 Of those applications upon which the public speaking has taken place, 16 Officer recommendations were overturned, 11 of which were refused against an Officers recommendation to grant permission. To date, it is fair to say that public speaking has had an impact on the decision making process. Whilst a number of these refusals have been taken to appeal, many of these remain undecided and it is too early to be able to report the decisions upon them.
- 3.4 On those qualifying applications, objectors and applicants are now notified of when they are being reported to Committee. This has increased awareness and appears to have increased public attendance at Planning Committee.
- 3.5 Informal discussions with the Planning Liaison Group (consisting of representatives of the main residents and amenity societies in the Borough) suggest that this facility is welcomed and supported. A degree of flexibility is essential in managing public speaking and the exercise of discretion, on occasion, by the Chairman has worked well.
- 3.6 It is suggested that Standing Order 39.19 be clarified to confirm that public speaking only applies to planning applications and not applications for Certificate of Lawfulness, as these matters are determined on the basis of existence of legal fact and not on planning merits.
- 3.7 With regard to Standing Order 39.21 Members may wish to consider whether there should be a time deadline for applicants to indicate their wish to speak either in response to a public speaker or an Officer recommendation to refuse permission. This would overcome the situation whereby applicants can indicate their wish to speak right up until the start of the meeting making it more difficult to organise speakers in advance.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

subject to any suggestions by Members and clarification of Standing Orders, the effect of public speaking should continue to be monitored and reviewed in twelve months' time.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Statistics of attendance and speakers.

8. APPEAL DECISIONS

The Planning Inspectorate has recently determined the appeals mentioned below. The appeal decisions in respect of a) and b) are available for inspection in the Members Room. The appeal decision in respect of (c) is attached at Appendix 'E'.

	<u>Site Development</u>	<u>Decision</u>
a)	Upper Childown, Accommodation Road, Longcross - planning appeal regarding demolition of existing staff cottage and construction of new cottage to match style of existing house (03/0494).	DISMISSED
b)	Fir Trees, Spring Woods, Virginia Water - planning appeal regarding erection of a single storey rear conservatory (03/0439).	DISMISSED
c)	22 Crown Road, Virginia Water - planning appeal regarding erection of a rear conservatory (03/1007).	ALLOWED

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

Appeal decisions.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS DETERMINED BY DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

A list of planning applications recently determined by the Director of Technical Services under his delegated powers is attached at Appendix 'F'. If Members have any particular matters they wish to raise, prior notice to the Chairman would be of assistance.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

None

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

If the Committee is minded to consider any of the foregoing items in private it is the

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following report under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report in question would be likely to involve disclosure of

exempt information of the description specified in appropriate paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(TO RESOLVE)

PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading).

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading).