

MINUTE

of

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 16 May 2018.

Present:

Councillor Annette Ireland (Chair)
Councillor Betty Cunningham (Vice Chair)
Councillor Angela Convery

Provost Jim Fletcher
Councillor Stewart Miller
Councillor Jim Swift

Councillor Ireland in the Chair

Attending:

Shona Fraser, Operations Manager; Sean McDaid, Principal Planner; Development Management; Graham Shankland, Principal Business Intelligence Officer, Julie Nicol, Principal Strategy Officer (LDP Lead); and Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Apology:

Councillor Jim McLean.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

433. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING APPEALS AND APPEAL DECISIONS

434. The committee considered and noted a report by the Director of Environment, advising of the intimation by the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DEPA) of the outcome of one appeal which the Reporter dismissed.

REVISED POLICY FOR ONLINE PLANNING INFORMATION

435. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the committee of 8 October 2014 (Page 1194, Item 1246 refers), when the committee agreed not to display online the personal data and representations of parties making comment on planning applications, the committee considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval to revise the policy regarding the placing of representations to planning applications online.

Whilst noting the background and having noted that recently the Council's Development Management service had received numerous requests to make representations available online, the report highlighted the changes that were about to take place regarding data protection with the introduction of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation effective from 25 May 2018.

The report outlined the measures the Council would have to take to ensure that no sensitive personal data was published online and indicated that as a result of the additional it would be necessary to increase the number of staff to cater for the increased workload. Details of the two new posts that would be created were outlined in the report. The additional costs of these posts would be met from income derived from planning applications without impacting on the overall Environment Department's budget.

The Operations Manager outlined the procedure that would be followed should the committee agree to make representations available online and clarified the situation regarding a request to have a representation removed. She also explained that the development management IT system would require to be modified

In response to a question by Provost Fletcher and Councillor Cunningham as to how much the proposal would cost the Council to implement, the Operations Manager indicated that it was proposed to introduce a new IT system within the Environment department at a cost of approximately £8,000 and their would also be the costs associated with creating the additional posts. However, these would be offset against the income accrued by the development management service from planning application fees without impacting on the department's budget.

Councillor Miller was heard in support of the proposal in the course of which he sought clarification whether it would be possible to keep representations online for a period of 6 months after the application had been decided rather than removing them as indicated in the report.

In reply, the Principal Business Intelligence Officer explained that representations were automatically removed by the IT system once an application had been decided and that he did not think it would be possible for them to remain on the system.

The committee agreed to instruct the Director of Environment to make representations to planning applications available online in accordance with the procedures set out in the report, subject to:-

- (a) all sensitive personal data being redacted in accordance with Legal Services advice on the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR);
- (b) the requirements for the new arrangements being put into place with effect from the autumn of 2018; and
- (c) it being noted that the folder containing representations received in respect of applications to be considered at a meeting of the committee would no longer be made available in the Members' Lounge.

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

436. The committee considered a report by the Director of Environment, advising of the Council's Planning Performance Framework and the Scottish Government's feedback report. A copy of the feedback report was appended to the report.

Whilst noting that every planning authority in Scotland was required to produce annually a 'Planning Performance Framework' (PPF) which contained statistical information, and summarised positive actions being undertaken during the year and improvement actions planned for the following year, the report explained that the Scottish Government then undertook an assessment of the framework and provided feedback and 'ratings' on how each council had performed against various markers, details of which were outlined in the report.

The report concluded by highlighting that the Planning Performance Framework (PPF) was a significant document which showed the wide range of customer service that the Council was delivering and the numerous improvement actions being implemented. The Scottish Government continued to promote continuous improvement and modernisation and it was considered that the PPF clearly demonstrated the Council's commitment to, and achievement of these aims.

Whilst congratulating the Council on its performance over the last year, Provost Fletcher highlighted that the information in the report provided clear evidence that the Council was one of the best performing councils in Scotland in the course of which Councillor Swift whilst commenting on the performance marker entitled 'Early collaboration with applicants and consultees' commented that he had received complaints about pre-application advice that was given to applicants where in some incidences, applicants had misunderstood the advice that was given insofar as their application had not been given favourable consideration. He sought clarification whether it would be possible to have such advice recorded.

In response, the Principal Planner explained that all pre-application requests that were submitted in writing received a written response although there were situations when individuals would visit the office seeking verbal advice and on those occasions such advice was not recorded.

The committee noted the terms of the Planning Performance Framework and the Scottish Government's feedback on it.

CHAIR

