

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Planning Development Control Committee
Date: 11th April 2013
Report for: Information
Report of: Chief Planning Officer

Report Title

Proposal to delegate certain applications requiring S.106 agreements to the Chief Planning Officer

Summary

This report reviews the 'pilot' that resulted in certain planning applications which were previously determined by this Committee being determined by the Chief Planning Officer.

Recommendation(s)

That Members note the proposed permanent change to the scheme of delegation

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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Background Papers:
None

1.0 Purpose of the Report

This report advises Members of measures introduced to clear the backlog of undetermined planning applications

2.0 Background

2.1 In February 2012, the Council adopted the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD1) on Developer Contributions. This resulted in a large increase in the number of planning applications subject to legal agreements and subsequently

needing determination by the Planning Development Control Committee, as those applications which require a S106 agreement are in the 'excluded' category, in that they are excluded from the decisions which are delegated to the Chief Planning Officer through the Constitution's scheme of delegation.

- 2.2 The increase in the number of applications requiring consideration by Committee had an adverse impact on performance in achieving the national targets on speed in determining planning applications. It also meant that the number of applications on Committee Agendas increased. Applications which previously would not have warranted consideration at Committee routinely added to the growing Committee agendas.
- 2.3 To better control this process and in the interests of improved service delivery a 'pilot' revision to the scheme of delegation was approved at the December 2012 meeting of this Committee. This added (as delegated matters) those applications requiring a S.106 Agreement, which otherwise would not have needed to go to Committee (i.e. in accordance with policy, few objections, not a major application etc). Any application where a reduction in S.106 contributions is proposed (due to a viability argument) was exempted from this and the application has still needed to go to Committee.
- 2.4 A permanent change to the scheme of delegation is a change to the constitution which would require the approval of Council and be subjected to prior review by Standards and Scrutiny. It is for that reason that there is generally a round up of delegations annually and all the constitutional amendments which are required are considered at the annual council meeting in May.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 It is considered that the pilot revision to the scheme of delegation has been shown to assist in improving service delivery without compromising the Committee's role. It has contributed (as part of a package of service improvement measures) to a significant improvement in performance by increasing the speed in determining applications, enabling more applications to be determined within target. It is now proposed by the Chief Planning Officer that the change should be made permanent by amending the scheme of delegation in May. Members are asked to note this proposed revision and their comments are requested.

Background Information

Relationship to Policy Framework/ Corporate Priorities	A Cleaner, Greener Borough
Financial	None directly from this report
Legal Implications	None directly from this report.
Equality/Diversity Implications	None directly from this report.
Sustainability Implications	None directly from this report.
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	None directly from this report.
Risk Management Implications	None directly from this report.
Health and Safety Implications	None directly from this report.