

Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Paul Moon, Chairman of the Planning Committee	Council	2 December 2021

Planning Committee: Periodic Report

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To enable myself as Chairman of Planning Committee to inform the Council of the current position on issues being dealt with by the Planning Committee.

2. Scheme of Delegation

- 2.1 The scheme of delegation set out in the council's Constitution allows for the Head of Planning Services to determine all planning applications. However, that delegation is conditional in that it allows for the ward councillor representing the ward within which the application site lies or a ward councillor representing an adjoining ward to 'call in' the application. For such a request to be mandatory, the member must make the request in writing within ten working days of the date of distribution of the weekly list of planning applications, upon which the planning application in question appeared. Any request submitted outside this ten day period cannot be treated as a mandatory request and in such circumstances the decision as to whether or not the application is delegated or brought to the Planning Committee for a decision would be at the discretion of the Head of Planning Services, taking in to account any reason for the request made by the member. Members should be aware that all such requests are part of the application file and may be made available to be viewed by any member of the public.

3. Applications Determined by the Planning Committee

- 3.1 Whilst most planning applications are decided under the delegated powers, applications of most strategic or local significance or which are or most likely to be controversial are brought to the Planning Committee for a decision as well as those which have been subject to a request in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation. Over the year from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021, 97% of all applications have been decided under delegated powers.
- 3.2 Between 1 October 2020 and 30 September 2021, a total of 1444 applications of all types were received (of which 47 were defined as 'major' developments) and 1347 applications determined. 65 applications

were withdrawn. The Planning Committee have considered 35 planning applications. For the same period last year 1075 applications were submitted, representing an increase of 34% this year which officers have had to deal with with no additional resources.

3.3 Of the 35 applications considered by the Planning Committee, 22 (63%) were subject to a member request under the provisions of the Scheme of Delegation, although it is considered that some of these would have been brought to the Committee in any event due to their strategic nature or by reason of their planning history. Of all applications determined by the Planning Committee, one was granted planning permission contrary to the recommendation of the Head of Planning Services and four were refused contrary to the recommendation of the Head of Planning Services.

4. Applications Determined under Emergency Powers Non-Executive Decisions

4.1 As a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic, the Planning Committee was not able to meet to determine planning applications between May and September 2020 inclusive. During this period those planning applications which had been 'called in' or otherwise were not considered suitable to be determined under delegated powers, were determined by the Chief Executive under the Emergency Powers Non-Executive Decisions. During this period the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Planning Committee, determined eight planning applications of which 6 had been subject to a 'call in'. Seven of the eight applications were determined in accordance with the recommendation of the Head of Planning Services. One was refused contrary to the recommendation of the Head of Planning Services. This application was subsequently subject to an appeal which was dismissed.

5. Appeals

5.1 Between 1 October 2020 and 30 September 2021, a total of 16 appeals were lodged and 16 appeals decided. Only three appeals (19%) related to major applications representing a significant drop from the number lodged prior to the adoption of the Local Plan. Likewise no appeal on a major application has been allowed compared to 40% in the year prior to the adoption of the Local Plan. With regard to all other appeals only one was 'allowed' and one was a split decision (part 'allowed' and part 'dismissed'). There are currently two appeals relating to applications refused by the Planning Committee contrary to the recommendation of the Head of Planning Services which are still undetermined by the Planning Inspectorate. Application ref: 19/00615/OULMAJ - Outline application for the erection of up to 330 dwellings and associated infrastructure, land South of Blackpool Road, Poulton-Le-Fylde (awaiting a hearing), and application ref: 20/00092/OUTMAJ - Outline application for the demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 33 apartments for over 55's, including ancillary accommodation and parking with details of access, appearance, layout and scale included, Craiglands, Hillylaid Road, Thornton Cleveleys.

6. Other Matters for Information

Planning Committees via 'Teams'

- 6.1 Although the Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the operation of the Planning Committee, including the suspension of the Committee for the period May to September 2020, during which time decisions were made under the emergency powers, the Committee was able to operate during much of the pandemic, having online meetings using 'Teams' and adapting the way site visits were carried out. Notwithstanding a few 'teething' issues, this hybrid system, where the Chairman, key officers and a member of the Democratic Services team were in a room and other officers and the members were linked via 'Teams' worked very well and credit is particularly due to the Democratic Services officers for ensuring such meetings went smoothly.

Member Training

- 6.2 Unfortunately during the pandemic opportunities for planning training for members of the Planning Committee (and other councillors) has been limited. Nonetheless, an opportunity was taken in February 2021, resulting from a cancelled Planning Committee meeting, to hold a training session for members of the Planning Committee on the subject of 'Decision Making and Appeals'. Additionally, on occasions, following the end of Planning Committee and whilst all members are still present, short sessions reminding members about key matters relating to decision making e.g. formulating reasons for refusal, predisposition and predetermination etc. have been carried out.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	No financial implications arising from this report.
Legal	No legal implications arising from this report.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
climate change	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
David Thow	01253 887287	david.thow@wyre.gov.uk	05/11/2021

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection

List of appendices

None