
Meeting: Standards Committee

Date: 26 February 2010

Subject: Revision of Members' Planning Code of Good Practice

Report of: Director of Corporate Resources

Summary: To inform the Committee of proposed amendments to the Members' Planning Code of Good Practice

Contact Officer: Andrew Emerton, Managing Solicitor, Planning, Highways, Transportation and Property

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

Council Priorities:

(How do the recommendations contribute to achieving CBC's policy aims and objectives?)

Financial:

None

Legal:

To ensure that planning decisions are as robust as possible.

Risk Management:

To avoid as far as possible the successful challenge to the validity of planning decisions.

Staffing (including Trade Unions):

None

Equalities / Human Rights:

None

Community Safety:

None

Sustainability:

None

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. That, subject to any comments and amendments the changes to the Members' Planning Code of Good Practice and Code of Practice for the Conduct of Site Inspections as set out in Appendix "A" be endorsed.
2. That Council be recommended to amend and adopt the Members' Planning Code of Good Practice of the Constitution set out in Appendix "A".

Introduction

1. This report informs Members of recommended proposed changes to the Planning Code of Good Practice and the Code for Site Visits. The Local Government Association recently revised its advice on these areas in its publication "Probity in Planning" and officers have revisited the Council's Constitution in so far as it is affected by the advice.
2. Existing local guidance is contained in Part 2 of the Central Bedfordshire Ethical Handbook and was based on the previous codes operated by the three legacy authorities. The intention is to provide clear simple and proportionate guidance for Members dealing with planning issues.

Changes

3. Attached at Appendix "A" to this report are the Codes which detail the suggested amendments in italic text.
4. In summary the changes reflect the LGA advice which adds more flexibility for Members to become involved in pre-application discussions.
5. The proposed changes were considered by Development Management Committee on 20 January which resolved to refer the amended Code to Standards Committee for consideration and adoption by Council.

Conclusion and Next Steps

6. Subject to Standards Committee accepting the proposed changes the Code will be recommended to Council for adoption.

Appendices:

Appendix "A" – Amended Members' Planning Code of Good Practice and Code of Practice for the Conduct of Site Inspections.

Background Papers:

Local Government Association "Probity in Planning".

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands