

Central
Bedfordshire
Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands,
Shefford SG17 5TQ



CONSTITUTION ADVISORY GROUP

DATE: 1 st June 2010
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TITLE	Call-in of planning applications by Members to Development Management Committee
REPORT OF	Andrew Davie Head of Development Management (North)

PURPOSE	To amend 4.3.95.1 of the Constitution to require planning reasons to be given to justify the referral of planning applications to Development Management Committee.
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ORIGIN OF PROPOSAL	Following a meeting of Cllr Shadbolt and Cllr Nicols and officers it was agreed to propose that the Constitution be amended to give greater clarity for the reasons behind referral of planning applications to Development Management Committee.
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RECOMMENDATION:

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| <p>(1) That 4.3.95.1 of the Central Bedfordshire Constitution is amended to include planning reasons in support of requests for Development Management Committee to consider a planning application.</p> |
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Suggested revision:

A ward member of the Council requests in writing, on an agreed pro-forma and supported by planning reasons, within 3 weeks of the application being registered, for it to be referred to a meeting of the Development Management Committee. The Member making a call-in is required to speak about the reasons for the call-in at the Committee where the application may be considered¹.

¹ A Member may withdraw a request by notifying the Assistant Director Development Management no later than six clear working days before the date of the Committee meeting.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. At a meeting on 1st March 2010 attended by Cllr Shadbolt, Cllr Nicols, Assistant Director of Development Management and Heads of Service it was agreed to propose an amendment to the Central Bedfordshire Constitution to require Ward Member requests for planning applications to be considered by Development Management Committee to be supported by planning reasons.
2. It was considered that it is good practice for the planning concerns that are applicable to each application be set out at the time a referral request is made and has two clear benefits. Firstly, it provides transparency to applicants and the public for the reasons why a specific application is to be considered by the Committee. Secondly, it provides the Members of the Committee with a clear steer from the Ward Member as to the planning issues which are relevant to the consideration of the application. It is important that planning reasons are provided to ensure that the Committee are considering applications where genuine planning issues are present for consideration. The Committee cannot attribute weight to non planning considerations and the consideration of these applications places an unnecessary burden on a busy and lengthy Committee that already has a high workload.
3. It is common practice for planning reasons to be given and acceptance of this amendment would not put Central Bedfordshire out of line with common practice in adjoining authorities.

Contact Officer Details:

Andrew Davie

Key Background Papers: