

REPORT BY THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOL - COMMUNICATION ON MAJOR APPLICATIONS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to introduce a new internal protocol document for the handling of major development proposals within the County. The newly created protocol (Appendix 1) is designed to give Officers and Members a consistent approach to communication during that process and has been drawn up in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee.

2. BACKGROUND.

- 2.1 The Local Planning Authority handle around 1000 planning applications per year. The nature and type of these applications will vary with some categorised as **householder** (house extensions, fences etc.), **minor** (up to 10 dwellings, certain commercial development, changes of use) and **major** (10 dwellings or more, over 1000 sq.m of commercial floorspace etc.).
- 2.2 Many of these applications are dealt with by Officers under the terms of our adopted Planning Scheme of Delegation, meaning they are not reported to our Planning Committee. These tend to be the majority of householder and minor applications, although some of these may be reported to Planning Committee dependent on the level of objection and potential Member call-in. Most **major** planning applications, given their impacts and potential controversy, will be reported to Planning Committee. Often these major applications will be complex and drawn out and it is vitally important that Members closest to the proposed development are kept abreast of the application process and any issues therein.
- 2.3 For those reasons it was decided to develop a simple protocol document which clearly sets out the relevant stages of a major development proposal, from pre-planning application consultation through to determination of the planning application. In setting out these stages the document attempts to outline the relevant roles of Officers and Members from a procedural and communication perspective.
- 2.4 The protocol emphasises that, in Wales, there is now a statutory pre-application process for major development proposals which places the onus on a developer to engage with local Members prior to submitting a formal planning application. The protocol includes a “quick-guide” table to make it easier for Members to understand

what they should be doing at key stages in the major development process.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members agree the internal protocol document for use on major development proposals with immediate effect. In addition to agree for an annual review of the document in liaison with the Chair of Planning Committee.

EMLYN JONES

HEAD OF PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION