

TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETING

26th FEBRUARY 2019

PAPERLESS PLANNING APPLICATIONS BRIEFING NOTE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tavistock Town Council has been advised that with effect from 1st April 2019 it will no longer receive paper copies of Planning Applications, apart from major Applications. Responses to the Planning Applications will also be made online.
- 1.2 This Briefing Note is to inform the Development Management & Licensing Committee (DM&L Committee) how Planning Applications received after that date will be considered, and the actions individual members of the Committee will need to undertake themselves.

2. CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1 Paper copies of Planning Applications are currently laid out in the Council Chamber for a few days prior to each Meeting of the Development Management & Licensing Committee, with Members being encouraged to call in and view the Applications before the Meeting;
- 2.2 Members are advised of the details of the Planning Applications being considered at each Meeting when the Agenda is issued, so they also have the ability to view the Applications online on the Planning Portal on West Devon Borough Council's website <http://apps.westdevon.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/>, again prior to the Meeting

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 After 1st April 2019 Planning Applications will be viewed by having the **key** documents of each Application projected on to a screen in the Council Chamber;

3.2 In order that the Committee Meetings run as effectively and efficiently as possible;

3.2.1 As it won't be possible to see the detail of all the documents as clearly as when in paper form, nor project all documents relating to each Application, each member of the Committee will need to view all Applications online (link above), prior to the Committee Meeting;

3.2.2 If any member does not have access to a computer to do this they will need to visit the library in Tavistock and use the community computer facilities or make alternative arrangements

4. RESOURCE ISSUES

4.1 Officers at West Devon Borough Council acknowledge that their current website offers limited functionality to download planning documents in a user-friendly way i.e. by using zip folders.

4.2 This means for Tavistock Town Council, where 12+ Applications are often considered at a Meeting, that all documents relating to each Application will have to be downloaded and saved individually, thereby significantly adding to the time required to prepare the documents for projection during DM&L Meetings.

5. COST IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There shouldn't be any significant equipment cost implications as Tavistock Town Council already owns equipment which would allow for the projection of Planning Applications, however there may be some costs involved with moving the equipment from the Rundle Room and re-installing it in the Council Chamber. We don't however anticipate this being a major cost. It is recognised that additional Officer time will be spent in downloading and collating Applications.

6. CONTEXT

6.1 Tavistock Town Council's Strategic Plan 2017-2021 states;

Community (C) - The Town Council seeks to always be at the heart of the community and its activities. It will work closely with the many local voluntary, business, community groups and third/public sector partners within Tavistock that are key to vibrant and successful community life:

C1 Working together – the Council will work with the Borough and County Councils and other representative bodies, partners and public authorities to promote a vibrant and healthy community life and wellbeing

Environment (En) – Tavistock has a strong identity and character due to its rich natural and built heritage. The Town Council will work to ensure this heritage is protected and enhanced for present and future generations, including especially those buildings and areas of land for which it is custodian:

En6 New development – the Council will seek to inform and shape new development in the town to ensure sustainable and managed growth supported by appropriate infrastructure

6.2 In view of the above, which demonstrates the Council's responsibility with this regard, all members of the Development Management & Licensing Committee need to attend the Committee Meetings having reached an informed view on each Application, prior to the Meeting.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 That all current and future members of the Development Management & Licensing Committee commit to spending sufficient time reviewing Applications online, prior to all Committee Meetings, in order that Tavistock Town Council's view on each Planning Application it receives for consideration is an informed one.

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