
REPORT TO:	DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 7
DATE OF MEETING:	20 APRIL 2004	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	ANDREA McCASKIE (Ext. 5831)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	ENVIRONMENTAL & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - REVIEW OF POLICY AND DECISION MAKING (IMPLICATIONS)	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: DC01

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Committee in making recommendations to Council on proposed changes to the Constitution:
- receives this report
 - considers the recommendations made in Section 5 of this report

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the implications for this Committee of a review of policy and decision making by the Environmental and Development Services Committee

3.0 Detail

Background to the Review

- 3.1 The Local Government Act 2000 required all Councils to revise their political management arrangements to make decision making more open, efficient and accountable. In July 2001, the Council adopted a new structure based on a 'streamlined' committee system, for a trial period.
- 3.2 The Overview Committee was made responsible for reviewing the 'interim' arrangements, prior to formal adoption. This work was informed by an independent assessment conducted by the District Auditor.

- 3.3 The Committee reported back to Council in May 2002. At that meeting, Council confirmed the new arrangements and agreed an Action Plan for addressing issues raised during the review, including decision making by policy committees.
- 3.4 In September, the Overview Committee invited the Environmental and Development Services Committee to take part in a 'pilot' project designed to:
- review the extent to which decision making might be 'streamlined' further
 - develop proposals to enable the Committee to perform a more strategic, policy orientated role

The Working Panel

- 3.5 A small Working Panel was established to manage the project. This comprised the Chair of the Environmental and Development Services Committee, the Vice Chair and Cllr Bladen.
- 3.6 After the first meeting (18 September), it was agreed to invite the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee to join the Panel in view of potential areas of common interest. Further meetings of the enlarged Panel were held on 12 November, 9 December and 6 January.
- 3.7 A report detailing the Panel's conclusions and recommendations was considered by the Environmental and Development Services Committee on 15 April.

Responsibility for functions

- 3.8 The Working Panel noted that historic building and conservation grants are an area of common interest between this committee and the Environmental and Development Services Committee.
- 3.9 At the present time, the Development Control Committee is responsible for administering the Swadlincote Heritage Economic Regeneration (HERS) Scheme and other Historic Building and Conservation Area Grants.
- 3.10 The Panel considered that the determination of these grants is essentially a 'policy' matter, rather than a 'quasi judicial' process as applies to the determination of planning applications. Accordingly, Members concluded that responsibility for this function should be transferred to the Environmental and Development Services Committee.

Other proposals

- 3.11 The Working Panel also briefly considered other proposals for streamlining and strengthening the way in which this Committee makes decisions. These considerations covered, for example, street naming and numbering and the administration of Enforcement Notices and Untidy Site Notices.
- 3.12 These will be the subject of a further report in due course

Implementing the changes

- 3.13 If Members are minded to accept recommendation 5 (a) below, it will be necessary to refer the decision to Council as this will require changes to the Constitution (which can only be made by Council).

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that

- (a) responsibility for the administering of the Swadlincote Heritage Economic Regeneration (HERS) Scheme and the Historic Building and Conservation Area Grants be transferred to the Environmental and Development Services Committee
- (b) a report outlining further proposals for streamlining and strengthening decision making (by the Committee) be submitted in due course

6.0 Background Papers

South Derbyshire District Council Constitution

