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| REPORT TO: | Community Scrutiny Committee | AGENDA ITEM: | 4 |
| DATE OF MEETING: | 25 September 2006 | CATEGORY: | DELEGATED |
| REPORT FROM: | Councillor Ron Lane (Chair of Community Scrutiny Committee) | | |
| MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT: | Councillor Ron Lane | DOC: | |
| SUBJECT: | Achieving Targets 2006/09 – Planning | REF: | |
| WARD (S) AFFECTED: | ALL | TERMS OF REFERENCE: | |

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that this Committee endorse the proposals outlined in the report being prepared by the Head of Planning Services, which will be considered by the Environmental & Development Services Committee on the 5th October 2006.
- 1.2 The proposals outlined in the Head of Planning Services report includes the following:
 - Streamlines existing processes
 - Introduces measurable milestones to enhance performance management improves delivery of the service via the web
 - Enables fast-tracking of certain applications
 - Makes best use of Customer First
 - Strengthens the approach to urban design
 - Maximises the use of existing resources
- 1.3 That a post implementation review of the Planning Service is undertaken in April 2008, to ensure that the stated outcomes for the service are being delivered

2.0 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to endorse the proposals outlined in the report being prepared by the Head of Planning Services, which sets out the changes necessary to improve performance with regard to the determination of planning applications in the context of a sustainable departmental structure.

3.0 Setting the Scene

- 3.1 At its meeting on the 13th July 2006, the Environmental & Development Services Committee resolved to ask this Committee to examine the issues around the achievement of the Best Value Performance

Indicator targets for the processing of planning applications. In particular BVPIs 109 a-c (time taken to determine planning applications) which are expected to be in the second quartile by March 2009)

4.0 Consideration by the Community Scrutiny Committee

4.1 This Committee has considered this matter on 4 occasions as summarised in the table below.

| Date / Minute Reference | Detail |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 31 July 06 CYS/4 | To consider the request from Environmental & Development Services Committee |
| 10 Aug 06 | Presentation by Consultants on business re-engineering exercise undertaken |
| 14 Aug 06 | Informal meeting to consider a briefing note prepared by the Head of Planning Services |
| 11 Sep 06 CYS / 13 | Progress report Special meeting arranged to consider the proposals outlined in the Head of Planning Services report. |

5.0 Community Scrutiny Committee's Findings

- 5.1 The Planning Service has undertaken a review of the 2003 Customer Satisfaction survey and has consulted staff regarding user requirements.
- 5.2 The experience of other local authorities has been investigated and similar processes have been undertaken by other exemplar authorities
- 5.3 There has been an exhaustive staff appraisal of the system which Members have been able to challenge
- 5.4 A comparison made with other local authorities has concluded that this Council offers a good service, giving Value For Money in the Best Value Review inspection in 2001
- 5.5 The Planning Service is currently meeting its planned performance targets
- 5.6 This Committee notes that the Planning Service review revealed the need to obtain the skills of a qualified urban designer to support our attainment of BVPI109a-c
- 5.7 This Committee notes that BVPI205 (Quality of Planning Service checklist) is also a priority indicator where top quartile will not be achieved without the proposals in the Head of Planning Services report being met.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 This Committee fully endorses the steps taken by the Head of Planning Services, in order to make the necessary changes to improve performance with regard to the determination of major planning applications in the context of a sustainable departmental structure.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 None directly from this report

