

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE 9 JUNE 1998

NOTE: Full copies of the report mentioned below have been sent to all members of the Environment Committee and other members who have requested it.
Any queries on this report to: Joan Blake, Room 222, County Secretary's Department, County Hall, Hertford. (Tel: 01992 555560)

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR PLANNING PROCEDURES

In January 1998 the Environment Committee set up a Task Group to consider the recommendations of the Nolan Committee in so far as they related to consideration of a Code of Best Practice for Planning procedures.

The Task Group set about this by reviewing the County Council's practices and exploring best practice within other County Councils. From this they developed a draft Code of Practice aimed at introducing more transparent procedures for dealing with planning applications.

The Standards Panel were consulted and their comments were incorporated in the final draft.

The Committee on 9 June approved the Code and authorised the Director of Environment to publish it. Copies have been sent to all members of the Council.

The Code applies both to Councillors and officers who become involved in operating the planning system and sets out the way in which planning applications determined by the County Council will be dealt with.

Most of the Code is a formalising of current practices and procedures and is a reflection of the excellent working relationship between members and officers.

Arising from the adoption of the Code, some amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers will become necessary. These are set out in the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be amended as follows:-

(revisions are shown in italics; deletions are shown as strikethrough)

“Environment Committee

To the Director of Environment:-

- a) The functions of the Environment Committee, as county planning authority, as county highway authority and in relation traffic and vehicle regulation, public transport, car parking and road safety and in relation to the physical and economic environment of the County including smallholdings and Green Belt estates, tourism, rights of way and open spaces.
- b) To act as client in waste disposal matters.
- c) Jointly with the Director of Education, the functions of the Community Services Committee, relating to sport and recreation policy for the county as a whole.
- d) To manage the provision of professional construction related services, including the defined activity under the Local Government Act 1988.

Note 1: The following matters are excluded from this delegation:-

- (i) Development Plans
 - approval of draft consultation
 - final approval and certification.
- (ii) Approval of major departures from Development Plans arising from planning applications and proposals.
- (iii) Approval of Annual Structure Plan statement arising from Monitoring Reports on the Structure Plan.
- (iv) Approval of ~~mineral applications requiring Environmental Impact Assessment~~ *county matter (minerals and waste) or County Council applications requiring the submission of an Environmental Statement in accordance with the Town and Country Planning [Assessment of Environmental Effects] Regulations 1988.*
- (v) ~~Waste Disposal – approval of criteria for the assessment of applications for planning permission.~~
- (vi) Transport Supplementary Grant - the annual bid to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions for Transport Supplementary Grant.

- (vii) Transport Policies and Programmes - the addition of a scheme to the active preparation programme.
- (viii) Major Trunk Road and Major Motorway Improvement Schemes - County Council response to public draft line, side road and compulsory purchase orders.
- (ix) Major Capital County Transportation Proposals:-
 - Choosing a preferred route or option following public consultation
 - Authorising the promotion of Compulsory Purchase and Side Road Orders.
- (x) Passenger Transport Services
 - Implementing area-wide reviews of passenger transport services.

Note 2: Powers to deal with planning permission or deemed planning permission will be exercised personally by Officers specifically named by the Environment Committee.”

B A York
Chairman
County Hall
Hertford

3 June 1997