

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 02/12/2014

Title:

JOINT PLANNING COMMITTEE – APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

**[Portfolio Holders: Cllrs Brian Adams and Robert Knowles]
[Wards Affected: All]**

Summary and purpose:

This report seeks approval to introduce substitute members onto the Joint Planning Committee with effect from January 2015.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

The proposed changes can contribute to more effective and decisive decision-making which is relevant to all corporate priorities.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications:

Due to the requirement for all members of the Area Planning and Joint Planning Committees to undertake mandatory training before being able to participate in decision-making meetings, it is important that the substitutes have already received this training.

Introduction

1. In December 2007 the Council reviewed the structure of its Planning Committees and introduced the current arrangements of a Joint Planning Committee and four Area Planning Committees.
2. When the new structure was implemented in January 2008, the membership of the Joint Planning Committee consisted of the combined membership of the four Area Planning Committees, creating a total of 48 members. After a period of operation, and in the interest of improved efficiency in decision-making, the size of the Committee was subsequently reviewed in March 2011 when it was agreed to halve the representation from each Area Planning Committee to create a Joint Planning Committee of 23 members.
3. The Joint Planning Committee historically met on an ad hoc basis, but more recently has been scheduled into the calendar of meetings. However, following an amendment to the Council's constitution in February 2014 requiring planning applications that propose housing schemes with a net increase of more than 25 dwellings to be determined by the Joint Planning

Committee and not the Area Planning Committee, the Joint Planning Committee has now been required to meet much more frequently.

4. Since the beginning of the current Council year, the Joint Planning Committee has met on 6 occasions, with a further 4 dates in the diary before the end of the calendar year. This is having an impact on the attendance levels at meetings, as set out below:-

Date of Meeting	Possible Attendance	Actual Attendance
28 May 2014	23	14
27 August 2014	23	14
22 September 2014	23	14
24 September 2014	23	15
28 October 2014	23	15
12 November 2014	23	17
17 November 2014	23	14

Proposal to Introduce Substitute Members

5. It is proposed that substitute members be introduced onto the Joint Planning Committee to ensure that the Committee is well represented by members from across the Borough when dealing with large-scale planning applications, particularly when a number of apologies have been received. It is envisaged that the arrangements will maintain the political balance and the geographical spread on the Joint Planning Committee.
6. The suggested arrangements to be followed for the appointment of substitutes is set out below:-
 1. all members of the Area Planning Committees who are not already members will be listed as substitutes of the Joint Planning Committee;
 2. upon receipt of any apology from a member of the Joint Planning Committee by 12 noon on the day of the meeting, substitute members will continue to be arranged by the Democratic Services Team;
 3. a substitute will be called from the same Area Planning Committee as the member giving their apology from the Joint Planning Committee; and
 4. the substitute member must be from the same political group as the member giving the apology and in the event that no substitute is available, no substitution will be made for that member.

Recommendation

It is recommended to the Council that substitute members be introduced for the Joint Planning Committee with effect from January 2015, to be arranged as set out in paragraph 6 above.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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