

Complaints about Waverley's services upheld by the LGSCO in 2019/20

| Details of complaint | Outcome | Lessons learned/action taken |
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| <p>The Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • failed to take account of neighbour representations. • should have referred the application to committee. • should have insisted on a full application rather than accepting and deciding an application to vary the planning conditions on an earlier approval. • failed to assess the accuracy of the application plans. • Granted access over its own land by approving the application; and • Relied on the continued existence of a tall hedge to protect amenity but the hedge was later removed. <p>These failures affected the complainant's amenity and reduced the value of her house.</p> | <p>There was some fault in the wording of a policy, which the Council agreed to rectify, but this fault did not make a difference to the outcome of the Council's planning decision.</p> | <p>The Council's scheme of delegation should make clear the circumstances in which an application should be referred to committee. The wording of the scheme should be revised to make clear that the delegation scheme would not be triggered if five or more objection (or support) letters were received from the same household. To be addressed in the next review of the scheme of delegation.</p> |

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| <p>The Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exceeded the statutory timescales for reaching a decision and should have refunded the complainant's application fee; • a member of the planning committee carried out an undocumented site visit and met with objectors before voting against the development; • the complainant could not appeal the Council's refusal to grant planning permission as he would have to pay CIL if his appeal was successful. He would not have had to pay this if the Council had made its decision sooner. • Allowed members of the public to post inflammatory information about the complainant when making comments on his planning application; • Delayed in responding to his complaints. | <p>There was no fault in the Council refusing to refund the complainant's application fee when it took too long to consider the application.</p> <p>The Council apologised for the delays in responding to the complainant and offered to pay the complainant £250 in recognition of the time and trouble cause by the delays.</p> | <p>Greater care needs to be taken in reviewing objections posted on the Council's website to ensure that these could not be regarded to be inflammatory.</p> <p>Officers reminded of the need to provide regular updates to planning applicants on the progress of their applications.</p> |