

## Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on 26 February 2016

Electoral Divisions affected: All
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### Interim Report of the Planning Matters Task Group

Appendix 'A' refers

Contact for further information:

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#### Executive Summary

Andrew Mullaney (Head of Planning & Environment) will be in attendance to deliver a verbal update regarding the interim position of the Planning Matters Task Group.

The Task Group's draft recommendations are currently out for consultation with various groups (see heading, 'consultations') and following the completion of this process the finalised report and recommendations will be presented to the Committee for consideration.

The draft recommendations formulated by the Task Group are attached at Appendix 'A'.

#### Recommendation

1. The Committee is asked to note the verbal report provided.
2. To note the draft recommendations formulated by the Task Group at Appendix 'A'.

#### Background and Advice

The Task Group was formed at the request of CC Liz Oades after concerns had been expressed by some district councils regarding the scope, content and timeliness of Lancashire County Council consultation responses particularly regarding education, highways, flood risk management and ecological/archaeological advice. Furthermore, concerns had been raised that the county council's advice was not adequately represented in the consideration of planning applications and the county council's reputation been damaged as a consequence.

## **Membership of the Task Group**

The Task Group's membership was comprised of the following County Councillors:-

- CC Liz Oades (Chair)
- CC Munsif Dad
- CC Bernard Dawson
- CC Michael Devaney
- CC Michael Green
- CC David Howarth
- CC Ron Shewan

## **Scope of the Scrutiny Exercise**

At the commencement of the process the factors that contributed to issues were outlined by members to be;

- Unreliable responses from the county council to district planning committees.
- Information had not been fully brought across to district planning committees, or summarised to the point where necessary information had been left out or misinterpreted.
- The two-way flow of information was not deemed to be properly maintained.
- Details could be missed out by planning officers (in some circumstances).

To address the above, the Task Group sought to investigate the processes and issues relating to the derivation of plans, outcomes of planning applications and to understand responsibilities regarding which organisations had the role of decision maker.

The Task Group aimed to secure a clear working protocol for the submission of a comprehensive response to planning applications that concluded relevant matters based on information/evidence presented in line with local/national policy and guidance.

The primary aim was to improve communication between the county council, district councils in Lancashire and statutory consultees which could have cost saving benefits if planning appeals could be avoided. The work undertaken aimed to improve working relationships, enable better decision making and allow for greater local input.

Specific areas of the county council investigated by the Task Group were:

- Highways Development Control Monitoring
- Finance for Schools (s106 and Education Contributions)
- Flood Risk Management
- Lancashire County Council's infrastructure Planning for Future Housing Need

Once the Task Group's investigation of the above had concluded, the recommendations formulated at each meeting were collated and sent to the consultees (see heading, 'consultees') for comments. Once all responses had been received the finalised report and recommendations would be presented to the Committee for consideration at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting.

The draft recommendations at Appendix 'A' display the product of the Task Group's work and subsequently the proposed solutions to the aforementioned issues.

### **Consultations**

- LCC Highways Officers
- LCC Flood Risk Management Officers
- LCC Education Officers
- Lancashire Development Control Officers Group
- Chairs of District Council Planning Committees (Awaiting full responses)
- Planning portfolio holders (Awaiting full responses)

### **Implications:**

N/A

### **Risk management**

This report has no significant risk implications.

### **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
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N/A.

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A.