

East Yorkshire Planners User Group

Minutes of Meeting held at County Hall, Beverley on 12th July 2019 at 3pm.

Present: Stephen Hunt, Stephen Cook (ERYC) Killian Gallagher, Gemma Owston and Nik Wilson (Agents)

1 Apologies: Jo Wright

2 Matters arising from previous minutes: The Council's interactive planning constraints map and the interactive Local Plan Policies Map have been well received by agents.

3 Policy Update: The Council is currently assessing land bids as part of the Local Plan review. The Council intends to publish a draft for consultation in Spring 2020. An Inspector has been appointed to the Allertorpe Neighbourhood Plan. The Woodmansey Neighbourhood Plan is in draft form. Tom Bannister (Planning Policy Manager) has been appointed to replace Jon Palmer in the forward planning team.

4 Personnel Changes: The Council is currently recruiting for several positions in development management. Details are on the Council's website.

5 Validations Update: Due to a higher than average level of demand, validations are now taking c. 8 days from submission of the application. In addition to this slow down, there is a perception amongst agents that validation officers are becoming ever more fastidious in their approach. If any agents have an issue with consistency of approach, time delays etc., please contact the validation officer in the first instance and then Sarah Darley (validation team leader) if felt necessary.

6 Planning Committee: An agent suggested that committee site visits be opt out rather than opt in. The Council's response is that all three Committees are currently opt in. This is due to logistics difficulties. Members are encouraged to visit application sites independently. Officers also try to make use of photos during the debate to assist Members in their consideration of applications. The screens and projector in the meeting rooms have recently been replaced and now present a much better image.

The approach of officers at Committee was also queried whereby it was felt that officers need to try harder to convey messages to the committee/ be firmer with the committee. It was explained by the Council that officers make a subjective assessment as to how and when to interject during debates.

An agent suggested that the ERYC adopt an approach at planning committees whereby committee members are allowed to question speakers. This approach is used in neighbouring authorities. It is the Council's position that their current system is working well and they are not considering a change in approach at this time.

7 Consistency of Decision Making: a local agent raised a query about consistency of approach to decision making. ERYC's position is that it does its best to ensure consistency and that this issue is taken seriously by Officers. Appeal decisions are always reviewed. Agents concerned about consistency on a specific case should raise the matter with the relevant team leader or area manager.

8. Date of Next Meeting: Friday October 18 2019: 3 pm at County Hall, Beverley.

Agents wishing to place agenda items please contact Killian Gallagher on killian@gallagherplanning.co.uk or call Killian on 07392415369.