

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING)  
WORKING GROUP STUDY**

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	Development Management Process Working Group.
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel.
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	Councillors M G Baker, P Godley, M F Newman and J S Watt. Appointed by the Panel on 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2009.
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	TBC
<b>Interests Declared</b>	None received.
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Councillor M G Baker
<b>Officer Support</b>	Roy Reeves, Head of Democratic and Central Services Jessica Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To investigate the process for the determination of planning applications and make recommendations where appropriate.
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	Anecdotal evidence from Members of public concern over the pre-decision planning process.
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	The review will concentrate on the process leading to the determination of planning applications, not the decision making process itself or the merits of decisions. The intention will be to look at the practices and procedures from first enquiry by potential applicants to the preparation of an officer's final report and recommendations, involving pre-application advice, public consultation, plans and amendments, duration of the process and other related matters.
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	Link to Corporate Plan – To improve our systems and practices.

<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Examination of available data; Interviews; Surveys.
<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	TBC
<b>Existing Documentation</b>	To be determined.
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	Evidence to be obtained by the Democratic Services team, together with information from the Planning Division. Possible survey of sample of applicants. Consultation with Town and Parish Councils. Customer feedback & ombudsman investigations (if any). Comparison of processes with other authorities.

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	<p>Website Comparisons. Performance against Government Indicators. Availability of best practice advice and guidance. Cost effectiveness of process.</p>
<b>Reference Sites</b>	Comparable local authorities.
<b>Investigations</b>	To be undertaken by officers supporting the Working Group.
<b>Witnesses</b>	<p>Planning officers. Chairman of Development Management Panel.</p>
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	Likely to be unnecessary.
<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	<p>Meetings held on Thursday August 6<sup>th</sup> 2009, Thursday September 10<sup>th</sup> 2009, Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October, Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October and Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November.</p> <p>Future meetings are scheduled for Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December and Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December.</p>
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to provide support and to conduct research.
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	None known at this stage.
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	<p>Start – July 2009 Completion of study expected December 2009.</p>

