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## **Development Management Panel**

**Report of the meetings held on 25th February,  
18th March and 15th April 2013**

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### **Matters for Information**

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#### **19. SUMMARY OF ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY FOR 2012**

An update on the extent and variety of enforcement activity undertaken by the Enforcement Team in the Planning Division during 2012 has been presented to the Panel. Progress achieved in respect of objectives identified for the service in 2012 and proposed priorities for 2013 also have been reported.

Importance continues to be placed on making an initial visit shortly after a complaint has been made and 95% of these visits were undertaken within 10 working days during 2012, an increase of 3% over 2011. This practice ensures that cases are able to be dealt with in a manner proportionate to their harm and in a consistent and expedient way.

In terms of the priorities for 2013, the Panel has endorsed the following two key objectives for the Enforcement Service. These remain un-changed from 2012:-

- ◆ to focus on quality and outcomes where unacceptable breaches are identified; and
- ◆ to maximise the efficiency of the Enforcement Service.

The Panel also has been made aware of advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to enforcement. This states that effective enforcement is important as a means of maintaining public confidence in the planning system. As the Framework advises planning authorities to consider the publication of a local enforcement plan appropriate to their area, this will also form one of the objectives for 2013.

The Panel continues to emphasise that all Councillors, both Parish and District have a part to play in monitoring potential planning breaches and enforcement issues within their wards and for bringing any matters to the attention of the Enforcement Team when it is necessary to do so.

## **20. REVIEW OF “LOCAL LIST” APPLICATION VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS**

Having regard to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 3) Order 2012, the Panel has endorsed a process for undertaking a review of the information necessary to validate a planning application. The Order also requires local criteria to be re-published every two years. In accordance with Government guidance, the review process will comprise consultation with the local community including applicants, agents, statutory consultees and Town and Parish Councils.

The existing requirements will be used as a basis for the consultation but already the Panel has recognised that it will require to be updated to delete reference to Planning Policy Guidance Notes, Planning Policy Statements and Regional Strategies and alternatively reflect current development plan policies and specifically the National Planning Policy Framework.

Specifically, it is proposed that the new check list also will need to reflect policies relating to town centres, transport, open space, flood risk and heritage issues. It also would be the intention to rationalise the number of separate check lists so they become easier to manage. The outcome of the consultation will be reported to the Panel at its July meeting.

## **21. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS**

Over three meetings, the Panel has determined twenty two development applications of which fifteen were approved and five refused. One application was deferred for further information and another delegated to the Head of Planning & Housing Strategy to determine on the receipt of new proposals to overcome design concerns. Most of these applications related mainly to minor development involving individual or small groups of dwellings. Amongst these was one where the Panel granted consent for an extension to a Scout Hall in Bedford Street, St. Neots which will enable the local Scout Group to create additional space for learning facilities and encourage its use by other community groups.

D B Dew  
Chairman