

Meeting	Joint Standards Committee
Date	1 February 2017
Present	Councillors Runciman (Chair), Cannon, Hayes, Kramm and Mercer - CYC Members Councillors Perrett (Vice-Chair) and Wiseman - Parish Councillors
In attendance	Mr Laverick – Independent Person
Apologies	Ms Davies – Independent Person

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## **19. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. No additional interests were declared.

## **20. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Standards Committee held on 9 November 2016 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the Chair.

## **21. Minutes of Sub-Committees**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Hearings Sub-Committee meeting held on 19 December 2016 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the Chair.

### **Matters Arising – Members’ consideration of planning applications**

The Chair drew Members’ attention to a letter that had been sent by a member of the public to members of the committee. The letter included suggested arrangements that could be put in place when Members were dealing with planning applications to

address some of the issues that had been raised during consideration of a recent complaint.

Members gave consideration to the suggestions and agreed that:

- Consideration should be given to the putting in place of guidance in respect of Planning Site Visits and how these would be conducted. This guidance should be made available on the Council's website and at the site visits<sup>1</sup>.
- The Joint Standards Committee would review the Members' Code of Conduct and consider whether any revisions were required.
- The Chair of a committee should continue to be responsible for notifying public speakers when, in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Scheme, they had reached their three-minute time allocation. Members did, however, recognise that it could be off-putting for speakers to be interrupted to be notified that their time allocation was nearing completion. For this reason Members recommended that the possibility of purchasing a traffic-light timing system be explored<sup>2</sup>.
- That, in the training provided to Members of the Planning Committees, the importance of ensuring that Members avoided acting in a way that gave the perception that they were not giving full consideration to an application be highlighted. Chairs of Planning Committees could also make reference to this at the start of the meetings<sup>3</sup>.

Resolved: That, at the next meeting, feedback be given on the progress made in actioning the suggestions that had been put forward.

Action Required

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| 1. Prepare guidance notes for site visits                                   | AD, MS |
| 2. Explore possibility of purchasing the equipment and the associated costs | DS, JP |
| 3. Incorporate into training provided by Planning Officers                  | MS     |

## 22. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

### **23. Monitoring Report on Complaints Received**

Members considered a report which provided an update on current business as regards complaints.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the committee is aware of current levels of activity.

### **24. Planning Panels**

Members considered a report which updated the Committee on discussions that had taken place with officers who support Planning Panels.

The Monitoring Officer stated that there had been general support for the suggestions put forward by the Committee at their last meeting, although some concerns had been raised regarding the resourcing of some of the recommendations, particularly as the Planning Panels did not have administrative support.

Members noted that training was currently being arranged by the Neighbourhoods and Planning Teams. Members expressed concern that the training for parish councillors and planning panel members would not now be held jointly as had been originally proposed. This issue would be raised at the forthcoming Yorkshire Local Councils Association meeting.

It was noted that officers had agreed that it would be helpful for a simple code of conduct to be drawn up and that the Monitoring Officer had agreed to assist with its preparation. Members agreed that the code of conduct should be covered in the proposed training for Panel Members<sup>1</sup>.

Members noted that City of York Council saw the Planning Panels as serving a useful role in non-parished areas although, unlike Parish Councils, they were not statutory consultees when planning applications were considered. Members agreed on the importance of ensuring that the highest standards of conduct were maintained during the planning application process and suggested that it may therefore be advisable for a more consistent approach to be applied in respect of Planning Panels.

To enable further consideration to be given to this issue, Members requested that the following additional information be provided in respect of the current arrangements that were in place<sup>2</sup>:

- The number of planning panels
- The number of members on each planning panel
- Any arrangements that were in place to report back to the relevant Ward Committee
- Clarification as to whether CYC officers were in attendance at Planning Panel meetings

Referring to the arrangements that were in place for Planning Panels to inform the Planning Department of their views on applications, Members recommended that a standard form be produced which required the inclusion of the following information<sup>3</sup>:

- The planning application
- The date of the Planning Panel meeting at which the application was considered
- A list of the attendees at the Planning Panel meeting
- Any declarations of interest

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That a further report be presented at the next meeting to update the committee on progress in implementing the agreed actions.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee is aware of the outcome of the discussions that are taking place in respect of Planning Panels.

Action Required

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| 1. When available, include in the training sessions delivered by Planning Officers | MS |
| 2. Obtain requested information  | JC |
| 3. Action the committee's recommendation   | MS |

## 25. Review of Work Plan

Members gave consideration to the committee's work plan and were invited to put forward items for inclusion on future agendas.

Resolved: That the work plan be approved subject to the following additions<sup>1</sup>:

- Review of the Member Code of Conduct (meeting of 19 April 2017 or June 2017)
- Update report on Planning Panels (meeting of 19 April 2017)
- Update report on implementation of recommendations in respect of handling of planning applications (meeting of 19 April 2017)

Reason: To ensure that the committee has a planned programme of work in place.

Action Required

1. Prepare requested reports

AD

Councillor Runciman, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.50 pm].