
**Economic & City Development Overview &
Scrutiny Committee**

20th June 2012

Report of the Assistant Director Governance & ICT

Proposed Scrutiny Topic – E-Planning Facilities

Summary

1. This report presents Members with a recently submitted scrutiny topic on E-Planning Facilities (**Annex A refers**). The topic was submitted by Councillor Wiseman, who will be at today's meeting to speak to her proposals as to why this should be reviewed.

Background

2. At a scrutiny work planning event held on 2nd May 2012 Members of the Council met to discuss and put forward ideas for potential scrutiny topics for the forthcoming municipal year. Amongst those put forward was an idea for a topic around E-Planning Facilities.
3. At the end of the event Members were asked to expand upon the topics put forward by formally submitting them in more detail to the Scrutiny Team. Councillor Wiseman has now done this and Annex A refers.
4. The Head of Development Control has also prepared a short briefing note (**Annex B refers**) to assist Members in coming to a decision as to whether to progress this topic to review. Officers will also be in attendance at the meeting to answer any questions that Members may have.

Consultation

5. Consultation has taken place at the scrutiny work planning event. All Members of the Council and senior officers were invited to attend this event and had the opportunity to put forward ideas and/or comment upon other ideas put forward.

6. If Members do choose to progress this topic to review then consultation will take place with all appropriate parties. However, consultation has already taken place between CYC and the Parish Councils in relation to this matter. The results of the consultation are yet to be analysed but all information would be made available for Members of any Task Group to look at as part of any review that took place. At a glance, the results of the consultation do raise various concerns about viewing documentation on-line and Members would need to receive these concerns in evidence as part of any review alongside officers' responses to them.

Options

7. Members have the option to progress the topic to review, or if they prefer, to not take any further action regarding the topic submitted.

Analysis

8. Members are recommended to take all information received to date into consideration when choosing whether to progress this topic to review. If they do choose to go ahead then it is recommended that, to allow flexibility of working, a small Task Group of 3 Members is formed to undertake the bulk of the review work. Any Task Group would be required to report back on their work to formal meetings of the Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
9. On initial assessment, the proposed topic looks to be very focused around a single problem being experienced. This could easily lend itself to a short 'one hit' innovative approach to undertaking a scrutiny review. With this in mind, if Members do choose to progress this to review, officers would recommend a short 2 hour planning session to scope and timetable the review (this would look at the when, who and how of the review). This would be followed by a one day or half day 'event' when the actual review was undertaken.
10. One proposed structure for a single day review could be to spend the first third of the day receiving evidence from consultees, the second third analysing the evidence received and the final third formulating the recommendations and outcomes arising.
11. The findings would then need to be collated and presented to the full Committee for their approval before being forwarded to Cabinet or the appropriate Committee for their consideration.

Council Plan

12. E-Planning Facilities are, amongst others, used by Members of the Public and Parish Councils. The Building Strong Communities priority in the Council Plan has a commitment to Community Engagement stating that *'we will introduce new ways for residents to interact with the council using new technologies and improving communications'*

Implications

13. There are no known financial, legal or HR implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. However, should Members choose to progress this topic to review implications may arise. These will be addressed as part of the review and detailed in future reports.

Risk Management

14. There are no known risks associated with the recommendations in this report. However, if the transition to e-consultation were to proceed without the implementation of the measures currently being undertaken to address uploading issues, then the Council may be open to challenge if the consultation process were deemed to be 'unfair' due to incomplete documentation being available on the CYC e-planning portal.
15. Failure to implement e-working would create significant administrative difficulties and the retention of ongoing costs once the Council relocates to West Offices.

Recommendations

16. Members are recommended to progress this topic to review and to undertake a 'short' scrutiny review into this matter.

Reason: to investigate the issues raised in the attached topic registration form.

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**Report
Approved**

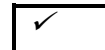


Date 11.06.2012

Specialist Implications Officer(s) None

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Annex A Topic Registration Form

Annex B Briefing Note on the Submitted Topic