

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

21 JULY 2021

REFERENCE FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE

PLANNING TRAINING

Issue for Decision

To note the training programme agreed by the Planning Committee to enable Members and Substitute Members of that Committee to fulfil their responsibilities under the Council's Constitution and their individual responsibilities to maintain their knowledge and understanding of local and national planning policies and legislation.

AND

To note that:

Unless Members have already undergone Induction training under resolution 2 or are an existing Member as contemplated by resolution 3 of the Planning Committee (as set out below), all Members (including Substitute Members) of Policy and Resources Committee (P&R) must undergo Induction training as outlined in Appendix 1 (as amended) by the end of September 2021 if they are to sit as Members (or Substitute Members) of the Planning Referrals body should P&R be required to sit in that capacity.

If P&R are required to meet prior to Members having completed that training, such training will need to be completed prior to the meeting of the Planning Referrals body. A failure to complete this training will disqualify that Member's participation in the Planning Referrals body until this training has been completed.

Recommendation Made

That the training programme agreed by the Planning Committee and the training required to be undertaken by Members and Substitute Members of the Policy and Resources Committee before the Committee meets to discharge its function as the Planning Referrals body be noted.

Reasons for Recommendation

It is a function of the Policy and Resources Committee to determine planning applications referred to it by the Head of Planning and Development. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, no Member will be able to serve on the Policy and Resources Committee when it is discharging its function as the Planning Referrals body without having agreed to undergo the training required to be undertaken by Members and Substitute Members of the Planning Committee. Such training must be completed before the Policy and Resources Committee meets to discharge its function as the Planning Referrals body and must be refreshed as appropriate.

The Planning Committee has considered the training required to enable Members and Substitute Members of that Committee to fulfil their responsibilities under the Council's Constitution and their individual responsibilities to maintain their knowledge and understanding of local and national planning policies and legislation.

The Committee agreed inter alia:

1. That the planning training programme, attached as Appendix 1, be approved subject to the scope of the session on Ecology being widened to cover Biodiversity; the scope of the session on Section 38(6) and the Development Plan being widened to cover the weight to be given to emerging Local Plan policies; and an additional training session with Sustainability as the topic.
2. That new Planning Committee Members, new Substitute Members and those Planning Committee Members and Substitute Members returning to the Committee after a break must complete the Induction training and Enforcement training as outlined in Appendix 1 (as amended) by the end of September 2021, failing which such Member shall be disqualified from participation in the Planning Committee until this training has been completed.
3. That all other Planning Committee Members and Substitute Members must complete training covering Enforcement and the duty under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 together with refresher training on the Development Plan as outlined in Appendix 1 (as amended) by the end of January 2022, failing which such Member shall be disqualified from participation in Planning Committee until this training has been completed.
4. That planning training sessions be delivered virtually.

5. That a reference be sent to the Policy and Resources Committee (P&R) notifying them of the training programme in Appendix 1 (as amended) and advising them that unless Members have already undergone Induction training under resolution 2 above or are an existing Member as contemplated by resolution 3 above, all Members (including Substitute Members) of P&R must undergo Induction training as outlined in Appendix 1 (as amended) by the end of September 2021 if they are to sit as Members (or Substitute Members) of the Planning Referrals body should P&R be required to sit in that capacity. If P&R are required to meet prior to Members having completed that training, such training will need to be completed prior to the meeting of the Planning Referrals body. A failure to complete this training will disqualify that Member's participation in the Planning Referrals body until this training has been completed.

Alternatives Considered and Why Not Recommended

None. This reference is for information only.

Background Documents

None

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Planning Training Programme 2021/22