

Minutes of a meeting of the **Planning Committee** held at the **New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate** on **Wednesday, 22 November 2023** at **7.30 pm**.

Present: Councillors S. Parnall (Chair); M. S. Blacker (Vice-Chair), P. Chandler, Z. Cooper, P. Harp, K. Fairhurst, J. Hudson, S. A. Kulka, K. Sachdeva, C. Stevens, J. Thorne, D. Torra, M. Tary and J. C. S. Essex (Substitute)

Attended remotely: Councillor Bray

Visiting Members present: S. T. Walsh

53 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2023 be signed as an accurate record.

54 Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mckenna with Councillor Essex substituting.

55 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

56 Addendum to the agenda

RESOLVED to note the addendum to the agenda.

57 23/01653/F - 2 and 4 Fairfield Avenue, Horley

The Committee considered an application for the demolition of No. 2 Fairfield Avenue and the erection of one No detached four-bedroom dwelling and a pair of semi-detached two storey, three-bedroom family dwellings with associated parking and landscaping.

Cllr Walsh spoke as a Visiting Member. Conditions making sure that the development was honed were welcomed. It was asked if the development was out of keeping with the building line and if other properties in the area were similarly car dominated. The Planning Officer commented that the properties were on a bend in the road and only minimally in front of the building line. Other properties in the area were also noted as car dominated.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions as per the recommendation.



58 23/02199/HHOLD - 42 Dovers Green Road, Reigate

The Committee considered an application to remove the existing rear conservatory UPVC frame and glazing and build-up the existing walls to create a new single storey rear extension with flat roof, parapet wall and lantern.

Councillor Walsh spoke as a Visiting Member with regard to fire. It was asked if the applicant should be made aware about the fire hazard of having a door from a garage into a habitable room. The Head of Planning responded that it would need to be considered by building control and was for the enforcement rather than the planning regime.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions as per the recommendation and the addendum.

59 Development Management Quarter 2 2023-24 Performance

The Head of Planning introduced the second quarter performance report.

The following were highlighted:

- There had been a gradual decline in the number of applications received since the height a few years ago with the remaining needing to be determined declining.
- 83% of major and 93% of non-major applications were determined within the required period.
- The number of days for an application to be determined was a local target which tended to be missed. This was often due to additional information being required.
- Twenty-two appeals were received overall. This included two major appeals with one allowed and one dismissed which was now being challenged with the Secretary of State. This has been quashed and would be redetermined by the Planning Inspectorate. Of the 15 non-major appeals, 11 were dismissed. The authority was meeting its statutory appeals targets.
- Enforcement cases were slightly lower than they were historically with a decline in those outstanding.
- The time period for registrations to be completed in Quarter 2 was slightly longer than it had been previously, which reflected this being a holiday period.
- Two posts were being recruited: a Tree Officer and a Planning Technician. It was noted that the Tree Officer role was quite specialist.
- An increase in fees was announced on 14 November to be implemented from 6 December 2023: respectively 35% and 25% for major and minor applications. There had been no indication of a change in performance measures linked to the increase in fees. These changes also included an annual indexation but this would take effect from 1 April 2024. The 12 month “free” period after the rejection of a Planning Application or to amend an application would be removed from December 2024.
- A Planning Guarantee would mean that the planning fee would be refunded when undetermined within 16 weeks, revised down from 24 weeks.

In response to Member questions, it was clarified:

- That the main changes in the Autumn statement were different from those detailed in the report. Planning authorities would be able to allow the full fee when major commercial applications were determined within the requisite time. Segregation of

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houses into two flats without requiring planning regulation. Both would be subject to consultation.

- Planning application fees were set nationally and had not changed since 2016 hence the larger increase. Pre-application fees were locally set and were anticipated to increase by 7%.
- A relatively large number of applications would be over the new Planning Guarantee of 16 weeks (approximately 10%). A vast majority would be subject to an extension of time agreed with the applicants meaning that they would not be subject to the Planning Guarantee. Where it has not been possible to agree an extension of time, it would be for the Planning Authority to determine the application. However, this would be likely to result in refusal because technical information remained missing.

The Committee requested that a briefing be provided on the Building Control and Enforcement Process including recent changes.

60 Any other urgent business

There was none.

The meeting finished at 8.17 pm