

Council Report



24 November 2021

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE / PANEL – CHANGE OF NAME

Name of Cabinet member	Councillor Pete Marland Leader of the Council
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Exempt / confidential / not for publication	No
Council Plan reference	Not in Council Plan
Wards affected	All

Executive summary

This report proposes a change to the name of Development Control Committee and Development Control Panel, to Planning Committee and Planning Panel respectively, in order to:

- better reflect the terminology used by other local authorities and the Local Government Association (LGA); and
- make the terminology more easily understood by residents and other stakeholders.

The proposed changes have no impact on the Committee's membership, terms of reference, or schemes of delegation.

1. Decision/s to be made

- 1.1 That the Development Control Committee and Development Control Sub Committee (Development Control Panel), be renamed Planning Committee and Planning Panel respectively, from the 2022/23 Council year.
- 1.2 That the Director of Law and Governance be delegated authority to make the required consequential amendments to the constitution to reflect these changes.

2. Why is the decision needed?

- 2.1 The terms of reference of the Development Control Committee are set out in Chapter 2 of the Constitution. They outline a wide range of functions, but the committee's principal role relates to the determination of planning applications. However, Development Control is no longer a term used commonly by local authorities. For example, the LGA Planning Advisory Service (PAS) refers to Development Management in providing guidance for this aspect of a Local Planning Authority's function. This reflects changes to the planning system from the early 2000s where there was a shift in emphasis away from the regulatory function of just controlling development through determining planning applications, to a more pro-active process of working with applicants and managing development.
- 2.2 Many other local authorities (in addition to PAS), have adopted the use of Planning Committee, as opposed to Development Control Committee. Whilst better reflecting existing practice, this change to the title of the committee also has the benefits of being clearer for residents. In comparison to Development Control, Planning is a term that is more widely used and understood.
- 2.3 In considering a change to the name of the committee, the views of each group leader and the chair of DCC were sought. No objections were raised to the proposed change.

3. Implications of the decision

Financial	N	Human rights, equalities, diversity	N
Legal	N	Policies or Council Plan	N
Communication	N	Procurement	N
Energy Efficiency	N	Workforce	N

a) Financial implications

There are very small indirect administrative costs incurred by the Council in making these change and amending associated documents etc.

b) Legal implications

There are no legal implications arising.

4. Alternatives

4.1 There are two main alternatives to the recommended change:

- Retain the existing name of the Committee. This is generally understood by stakeholders that regularly engage with the planning process. However, as outlined above, it does not reflect current terminology used within the broader profession and would not be as clear for those people who engage with the planning system infrequently or for the first time.

- Rename the committee as ‘Development Management Committee’ and ‘Development Management Panel’. As outlined above, this would reflect the terminology used in PAS guidance. However, it is not a term that is commonly used by members of the public and would also not be clear for those people who engage with the planning system infrequently or for the first time.

5. Timetable for implementation

- 5.1 If the change of name is agreed, then some consequential changes will need to be made to the Council’s constitution, website, report templates etc. Some light touch communications will be required to advise Parish / Town Councils and other stakeholders of the change.
- 5.2 It is anticipated that this work would be undertaken during the remainder of the Council year, with agendas prepared from the commencement of the 2022/23 Council year onwards reflecting the change.

List of Annexes and background papers: None.