

Cheltenham Borough Council

Planning Committee – 19th September, 2013

Report of Director Built Environment

Review of Planning Code of Conduct

Executive summary This report seeks nominations for 3 members of the Planning Committee to sit on a working group that has been established by the Standards Committee to review the Planning Code of Conduct

Recommendation I recommend that committee:-

1) Nominates three of its members to sit on the working group established by the Standards Committee to review the Planning Code of Conduct; and

2) Agrees that any changes to the Planning Code of Conduct proposed by the working group be reported back to Planning Committee in advance of consideration by the Standards Committee.

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of its work programme the Standards Committee agreed to commence a review of the Planning Code of Conduct.
- 1.2 At a meeting of the Standards Committee on 18th July, 2013, it was resolved to establish a “task and finish” working group of members and officers to review the Planning Code of Conduct and prepare a revised Code for consideration by the Standards Committee.
- 1.3 It was agreed that the composition of the working group should be 3 Standards Committee Members, 3 Planning Committee Members and 3 officers (2 Planning and 1 One Legal).

2. Planning Code of Conduct

- 2.1 The Planning Code of Conduct, which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report, was adopted by Council on the 9th October, 2006. Its purpose is to provide detailed guidance for members involved in the planning process and it is intended that it works alongside the requirements of the Cheltenham Borough Council ‘Code of Members’ Conduct’.
- 2.2 Although the general tenor and thrust of the advice contained in the Planning Code of Conduct remains relevant and should continue to be observed whilst the Code is being reviewed, there have been two significant changes to the Standards/Code of Conduct regime since the introduction of the Code in 2006.

3. Proposed methodology and timescale for review

3.1 In order for an effective review to be undertaken which takes into account both planning and conduct requirements, the Standards Committee has agreed that a “task and finish” working group of members and officers be set up to review the Planning Code of Conduct and recommend changes for the approval of the Standards Committee. As part of this process, the working group will review recent best practice and any guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and other public and professional bodies.

3.2 The agreed terms of reference for the group are as follows: -

“To review the Planning Code of Conduct and prepare a revised Code for consideration by the Standards Committee. The review will include consideration of any recent best practice and guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government and other relevant professional and public bodies. The review will include consultation as appropriate with Members and Officers.”

3.3 The review, which will commence shortly, will include both formal and informal consultation with members and officers and is likely to take approximately 3 to 4 months to complete.

4. Reason for the recommendation

4.1 To ensure that the Planning Code of Conduct is up to date and fit for purpose.

Report author	Sarah Farooqi, Principal Solicitor, One Legal Contact officer: Mike Redman, Director Built Environment
----------------------	---