

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE: 9 MARCH 2005

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO PLANNING APPLICATION DELEGATION REMITTS

Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose further alterations to the scheme of delegation regarding planning applications.

2. BACKGROUND OF REPORT

2.1 The Development Services Committee have regularly reviewed the scheme of delegation in an effort to streamline decision-making and improve performance targets. The last review in October 2003 has significantly reduced the percentage of reports going to Committee. However this has been matched by an increase in the overall number of applications received (54% in 4 years) and thus the committee workload remains relatively high.

	2002	2003	2004
No of applications received	999	1135	1281
% to committee	18.9%	16%	11.3%
No of applications to Committee	189	182	145

2.2 A review of other schemes of delegations which are amongst the top performing Councils (Clackmannan, East Renfrewshire and East Lothian) has shown that a "list system" is deployed. In essence this system means that members on the Local Planning Committee having seen a short report and recommendation can decide if the application should go to the Committee or be delegated. This system does not affect those applications that are already delegated to the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards. It specifically gives members the opportunity not to consider matters which on the basis of current arrangements would fall to be determined by the Local Planning Committee. Experience of other Councils has shown that through time this reduces the number of reports determined by Committee.

2.3 Various changes in current administrative and management practice would be required to support such a system and a weekly list of applications and recommendations would require to be circulated to members. This would identify applications which would normally be determined by the local

planning committee, but should be delegated to the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards.

2.4 As the Adopted Local Plan is firmly established in the Statutory Planning framework it is also suggested that applications which are contrary to the Local Plan and are recommended for refusal should be delegated to the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards. As per the normal arrangements this would not detract from members right to request that such an application shown as “delegated” on the weekly list of applications received be determined by Committee.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Detailed working arrangements would require to be agreed with the Head of Legal and Administration and a full explanation of the new system would be required for all members.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 It is recommended that Committee agrees in principle for officers to investigate the operation of a list system and to report back to a future committee for approval of a system.

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Executive Director of Development and Property Services

25 February 2005 (AN/SA)
(FV-AN)