

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

MONDAY 10 DECEMBER 2018

PROPOSED TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND STRATEGIC HOUSING

(Contact: Phil Shaw Tel: (01993) 861687)

1. PURPOSE

To advise Members of proposed planning training for Town and Parish Councils.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1. Members may be aware that all town and Parish Clerks were contacted earlier in the year regarding training that Officers were proposing to undertake to seek to assist them in understanding and getting the most from the Planning system. It was intended that the training would have covered an update on the Local Plan, planning enforcement, CIL, making effective responses to planning applications and securing community benefits from development. There was however a very poor response from Local Councils to the offer of training and as such it was decided not to undertake the training at that point but to await the adoption of the Local Plan, such that there was a greater degree of clarity.

3.2. The adopted Local Plan brings with it a greater degree of certainty as to the forms of development that will be allowed and where development can be resisted. It does however encompass greater than historical levels of development – and this in turn offers opportunities for communities to benefit from such schemes by way of either bespoke legal agreements (Section 106 agreements) or, when introduced, the local element of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Clearly in order to make the best use of these potential funding streams the local Councils need to be properly aware and prepared such that when applications are received they are enabled to make best advantage of the process to secure local benefits. Officers consider therefore that a training session would benefit Town and Parish Councils and are proposing that such sessions be offered again in the New Year.

4. ASSESSMENT

4.1. Now that the Local Plan is adopted we are in a position to plan for this training which does present an ideal opportunity to discuss CIL with communities in addition to S106 contribution requests which will remain the mechanism for securing financial contributions from development which comes forward in advance of CIL being adopted. It will also enable the proposed application of the new policies to be explained along with the perennial issue of when it is and is not possible to take enforcement action against retrospective developments.

4.2. However in order to ensure that there is a better response than last time the training was offered Officers are placing this report before Members such that when they are in attendance at local Council meetings and the matter is discussed they are in a position to

seek to persuade the Councils that such training would be in the interests of the Town and Parish and as such a better take up could be secured than was hitherto the case.

5. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

Members could decide not to agree to the proposed training

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising directly from this report

7. RISKS

None identified.

Giles Hughes
Head of Planning and Strategic Housing

(Author: Phil Shaw, Tel: (01993) 861687; EMail: phil.shaw@westoxon.gov.uk)
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Background Papers:
None