



COUNCIL, 27 NOVEMBER 2013

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Governance Committee at its meeting on 13 November was invited to consider amendments to the constitution consequent upon the intention to reduce the number of straightforward, non-contentious planning applications which were considered by the Regulatory Services Committee, because they had been submitted by the Council as applicant, or for Council related developments. Delegated authority – as in non-Council applications – would provide a speedier and more cost-effective means of processing those applications. It was considered that the current process was excessive and unnecessarily bureaucratic

An additional delegation is proposed because applications for such small scale development which also meet the two additional criteria of according with planning policy and not being objected to by third parties, e.g. neighbours, are invariably acceptable, but are currently required to go through the full committee process which involves additional work and expense for the Council and delays the development. While it is important that Council owned applications are dealt with fairly and openly, hence the current requirement for consideration by committee, the nature and circumstances of the applications covered by this proposal are of such limited nature that it is considered that the current process is excessive and unnecessary bureaucratic. The governance and probability issues are sufficiently safeguarded by the fact that a single objection will require the application to be considered by committee and it is open to any councillor to refer such an application to committee.

Currently, Part 3.6.6 of the Council's Constitution directly/indirectly enables the determination of the following categories of Council development using delegated powers (additional comments in italics):

- (xii) Erect extensions, conservatories, alterations, disabled ramps and similar household type development in respect of Council submitted planning applications which, were they not Council properties, would be determined under staff delegated powers.
- (xiii) Extensions less than 1000sqm, outbuildings and freestanding shelters and awnings and boundary treatment including walls and fencing proposals in respect of school related applications unless objections have been received or the school is within the Green Belt (*i.e. including Council properties*)

- (xiv) To decide all proposals under the advertisement regulations and applications for external building alterations including shop-fronts and canopies in respect of LBH submitted applications which, were they not Havering properties, would be determined under staff delegation powers.

It is proposed to add the following category:

- (xv) To decide any application by the Council, or concerning Council land/premises, involving buildings or structures/changes of use of no greater than 1000m² floor space, where the proposal accords with development plan and/ or national planning policies and no third party objections have been received.

The Governance Committee accordingly recommends to Council that the section of the Constitution 3.6.6 be extended to include the following category:

- (xv) To decide any application by the Council, or concerning Council land/premises, involving buildings or structures/changes of use of no greater than 1000m² floor space, where the proposal accords with development plan and/ or national planning policies and no third party objections have been received.