

Residents' & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee - Major Review 2015/16 - Mechanisms for Reviewing Major Developments in the Borough and Identifying Lessons to be Learned for the Planning Process

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REASON FOR ITEM

This is the first witness session of the Committee's review into Mechanisms for Reviewing Major Developments in the Borough and Identifying Lessons to be Learned for the Planning Process.

OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE

The Committee is asked to receive the evidence of the witnesses and ask questions to help with the Committee's review.

INFORMATION

1. If Members recall, at the meeting of the Committee held on 29 July 2015, discussion took place on the second topic for the Committee's major review for 2015/16. It was agreed that a review take place on the mechanism A scoping report was agreed which is attached as **Appendix A** to this report.
2. The review is intended to consider whether there are any simple post development processes that could be introduced to analysis the successes or failures of major developments in the Borough and secondly how decision makers could try to learn lessons from any post development review processes introduced.
3. For this first meeting, **James Rodger, Head of Planning and Enforcement** will attend the meeting to present the background to the review topic.
4. At this meeting, Members will be provided with information on the current review mechanisms used by the Council. Members will need to understand clearly the aims of the planning process in Hillingdon and identify how well these are met by the existing mechanisms.
5. For Members information, the Local Plan provides a mechanism where officer and public feedback regarding development is given, however, much of the feedback on planning issues of importance stems from views on development already undertaken. The Local Plan is developed over many years and therefore does not represent a targeted qualitative review of whether the Borough's planning decisions are resulting in high quality development.

6. The Planning Department undertakes occasional customer feedback exercises targeted at applicants and agents. This tends to result in customers focussing on whether they liked the service given by a particular officer or the merits or otherwise of phone calls going through a customer contact centre. The feedback given, however, does not tend to provide meaningful responses on the quality of developments arising from the planning process.
7. There are also individual site specific feedback from residents or Resident Associations on development which are being built. This is almost entirely focussed on potential breaches of planning control, rather than constructive feedback on schemes once built.
8. Previously, the Council has undertaken annual mini-bus tours for Planning Committee members. However, these no longer take place but when they did occur they were structured only in so far that officers selected a range of sites and secured access to the sites. The developments were not reviewed by Councillors following a prescribed framework or process.

APPENDIX

Scoping Report for the review