

ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

Report to	Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee
Meeting date	16 September 2021
Report author	Andy Crick
Agenda item	10

PLANNING PANEL

1. **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To appoint a planning panel of three members to consider planning applications, as established in the governance review.
- 1.2 To consider the scheme for the operation of the Planning Panel
- 1.3 The Committee is asked to agree a detailed scheme to regulate this procedure which will include deadlines ahead of meetings for the call-in mechanism to be exercised.

2. **Summary**

- 2.1 The establishment of a Planning Panel was agreed in the Governance Review and is due to meet on 20 September 2021.

3. **Action required**

- 3.1 Agree the membership of the Planning Panel
- 3.2 Consider the scheme for the operation of the Planning Panel as set out below.

4. **Link to strategic plan and objectives**

- 4.1 This relates to the governance review in the Forward Plan
- 4.2 It corresponds to key objective 2: 'to develop a resilient, sustainable town which will provide a home for residents now and in the future'.

5. **Background**

- 5.1 Under the scheme of delegation planning matters are the responsibility of the town infrastructure committee. The planning panel will reduce committee time for more strategic matters and will enable the Town Council to comment on applications in an efficient, effective and focused manner.

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6. **Key information and options**

It is recommended that:

6.1 The committee appoint a panel of three members which would meet every three weeks to consider planning applications. The three members proposed are:

Cllr Jim Halliday
Cllr Pat Lonergan
Cllr Lorraine Oates

6.2 The panel be delegated authority to consider and comment on any plans within the parish which have been registered on the Planning Authority website and which any member of the Town Council has requested the panel to consider by way of a “call-in” mechanism.

6.3 Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to offer no objection to any application which had not been called-in by members.

6.4 The panel will be a sub-committee with delegated powers; the committee may if it prefers call it a sub-committee.

6.5 The quorum is two and substitution applies.

6.6 All members will be encouraged to subscribe to planning alerts from the District Council Planning Authority. In addition, a list of planning alerts will be sent out weekly and placed on SharePoint. Should a member wish a specific application to be considered by the panel then they will need to inform the committee clerk via democratic@abingdon.gov.uk in accordance with the timetable below. If an application is not called in no response will be sent to the Planning Authority.

6.7 A suggested timetable is provided below based on the Planning Panel scheduled for 20 September 2021.

- A list of planning applications received will be sent out on Monday 13 September 2021. It is intended that in future a list is sent out weekly.
- Members are asked to review these and to contact the Committee Clerk to highlight any applications to be considered by noon on Wednesday 15 September 2021.
- The panel agenda will be published later on Wednesday 15 September.
- The panel will take place on Monday 20 September.
- Any responses will be sent to the Planning Authority as soon as possible after the meeting.

7. **Climate change/green implications**

7.1 None.

8. **Financial/budget implications**

8.1 None.

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9. **HR implications**

9.1 The operation of the planning panel will require the committee clerk to prepare reports for Councillors, to arrange and support the work of the Planning Panel and to report decisions to the Planning Authority.

9.2 It has been estimated that the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee cost approximately £11,000 a year in staffing support. It is hoped that a more focused planning response will allow officer time to be reduced significantly.

10. **Supporting papers and appendices**

10.1 None