

West Berkshire Council (WBC)

Development Industry Forum

Via Teams

Date: Friday 16 December 2022

Present Eric Owens, Katharine Makant, Bryan Lyttle, Lee Goodall, Bob Dray
Richard Somner, Adrian Abbs, Tony Vickers

Chris Roberts, Daniel Crawford, Ian Blake, James Bull, Joseph
Hickling, Mark Pettit, Matt Richardson Rebecca Fenn-Tripp, Stuart
Atkinson, Tim Burden, Joanna Smith, Sara Dufield,

Apologies Gareth Johns, Peter Tompkins, Clive Hooker, Bruce Reay

Meeting Notes Summary

Apologies as above. Those present were taken from acceptances received.	
Recruitment Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three permanent planning officers and two permanent enforcement officers in the New Year.	
Policy Update from BL.	
Development Management Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-app Service – TB asked about pre-apps as previously resource was an issue. TB advised that clients were happy to pay for a good service. BD referred to PAS Workshop.• RS is seeking to address issues and make sure the team has members support and the right resources in the right place. Although it is not all about resource but flexibility and DIF can play a major part of this. It is hoped to get back to face to face meetings soon.	
Planning Review <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Consultant’s report has been received following the Review.• Service Improvement Plan – recommendations are already being progressed.• BD and LG updated on digitisation and self serve: Validation checklist Pre-apps Customer Charter Planning Performance Agreements (looking to consult on this)• Planning Service structure is also being looked at.• There will be a report to WBC Corporate Board in the New Year.	

Any other business

- Anything from the Forum.
- BD **encouraged feedback on the link he posted.**
- Regulation 19 representations via the online platform – Objective.
- SA had a question & complaint regarding Comms with planning – Bob & Stuart to meet separately.

Nutrient Neutrality (NN)

- Discussed scheme for mitigation in West Berkshire. Thames Water are upgrading their facilities by 2025 – reed beds etc. Planning applications to build before 2025 will have full mitigation on site. 2025-30, capacity from Thames Water (50% reduction). After 2030, the national scheme will be in place so no longer an issue. Pre-app is best way forward – ecological advice. NN SPD to be done as soon as possible in LPR. At moment, only affects c300 houses. **See link from website.**
- South Somerset are retrofitting houses as an interim measure. Sovereign are looking at a significant investment programme. £150 per dwelling. Local Authorities are looking to increase headroom.
- Nationally agriculture is the issue not homes, what is the situation in West Berkshire TV asked? BL advised Lord Benyon WMS – a material change of circumstances and any reserved matters etc are caught and this is upheld by the High Court. Dwellings must be built out exactly as the permission granted. Nationally over 40% of NN is agriculture and expect the picture to be the same in West Berkshire. SPD consultants will be in touch.
- From an Economic Development point of view, we are working with major landowners in WB via Rural Business Forum held in November – there is interest in working together on a local solution to NN – Natural England & DEFRA also involved.

KM thanked all for their attendance.