8. Member Procedures (e) Guidance for Planning

Introduction: The Need for Guidance

This Guidance has been written to inform all parties of Teignbridge District Council's standards in its operation of the town and country planning system within the district.

The Guidance applies to all Teignbridge District Councillors and staff involved in operating the planning system within Teignbridge. It is not restricted to the Council's planning officers and members of the Planning Committee, but applies also to meetings of the full Council when taking planning decisions.

The successful operation of the planning system in Teignbridge District depends upon the Council always acting in a way which is clearly seen to be fair and impartial. This relies upon a shared understanding of the respective roles of Councillors and officers, and upon trust between them. The following quotation from the Local Government Association serves to illustrate the point:

"The role of an elected member on a planning committee involves balancing representing the needs and interests of individual constituents and the community, with the need to maintain an ethic of impartial decision-making on what can be highly controversial proposals. It is this dual role which, can give rise to great tensions". (Source: Probity in Planning, Local Government Association, 2002).

The Local Government Association has advised local planning authorities, such as Teignbridge District Council, to set out clearly their practices and procedures on handling planning matters in a local \underline{c} -ode of \underline{c} -onduct.

Councillors and staff should read this <u>Code Guidance</u> thoroughly and to put it into practice consistently. Failure to do so without good reason could be taken into account in investigating allegations of breach<u>es</u> of the <u>Ceode</u> of <u>Ceonduct</u> adopted following the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000 or maladministration.

This Guidance does not form part of the Code of Conduct but is complementary to it.

It is intended to review the Guidance regularly to keep it up-to-date and relevant. If there are any points which are unclear or which need review, please contact the Council's Solicitor (the Council's Monitoring Officer) or the Deputy Monitoring Officer as soon as possible. They will be pleased to help you.

Composition of the Planning Committee

The Planning Committee should be composed of thirteen Members.

1. GENERAL ROLE AND CONDUCT OF COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

- 1.1 Councillors and officers have different, but complementary, roles. Both serve the public but Councillors are responsible to the electorate, while officers are responsible to the Council as a whole. A successful relationship between
- Councillors and officers can only be based upon mutual trust and understanding of each other's position. This relationship, and the trust which underpins it, must never be abused or compromised.
- 1.2 Legislation emphasises the overriding requirement that the public are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct and probity by all persons holding public office. There are a number of statutory provisions and codes setting standards which must be followed if the public perception of the integrity of public service, particularly town and country planning, is to be maintained and improved.
- 1.3 While this Guidance deals primarily with planning applications, its principles apply with equal vigour to consideration of Structure Plans, Local Plans, Development Briefs, enforcement cases and all other planning matters. An overriding principle is that when local authorities are dealing with planning matters, they should only take into account material planning considerations.
- 1.4 Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 established a plan-led system whereby all planning applications are determined by primary reference to the Development Plan. Thus, if the Development Plan is material to the application, then the statutory requirement is that the application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations (which includes the National Planning Policy Framework) indicate otherwise.
- 1.5 Officers involved in the processing and determination of planning matters must also act in accordance with the Council's Procedure Rules, The Officer Code of Conduct and (for officers who are Chartered Town Planners) with the relevant sections of the Royal Town Planning Institute's Code of Professional Conduct.
- 1.6 This Guidance supplements the provisions referred to above and provides further specific advice and guidance for Councillors and officers involved in planning matters. A key principle is that Councillors should represent their constituents as a body and vote in the interests of the District as a whole. Councillors should take account of all views expressed, they should not be biased towards any person, company, group or locality.
- 1.7 A further key principle is that local opposition or support for a proposal is not in itself a ground for refusing or granting planning permission, unless that

opposition or support is based upon valid planning reasons which can be substantiated.

- 1.8 Councillors and officers should not accept gifts, nor should they accept hospitality. However, if a degree of hospitality is truly unavoidable, (e.g. receipt of tea, coffee or other light refreshments) <u>Councillors and officers should exercise their discretion cautiously. gG</u>ifts with a value of over £50 have to be declared to the Monitoring Officer under the <u>local</u> Code of Conduct.
- 1.9 Officers must always act impartially and seek permission from the appropriate senior officer for any private work or interest which they wish to take up.
- 1.10 Training events will be provided for Councillors to assist them to carry out their planning roles.

2. DECLARATION AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

Councillors

2.1 The rules concerning the declaration of interests is contained in the Code of Conduct. Councillors will need to make themselves familiar with the Code and understand the distinction between personal interests which must be declared but which do not lead to the councillor having to withdraw and prejudicial interests which require withdrawal.

Officers

- 2.2 Where Council Officers have a pecuniary, or non-pecuniary interest, in a planning application or other planning matter, they should declare their interest in writing to the Service Manager Development Management immediately. This written record will then be retained on the relevant file.
- 2.3 An officer declaring such as interest should subsequently play no part in processing an application, or considering the planning matter, nor in any decision making on it.
- 2.4 In determining whether an interest should be declared, officers should use the same tests as Councillors. Examples of interest which should be declared are relatives or friends submitting applications; belonging to a church, club or other social group who has submitted an application; or living in proximity to a site which is at issue.

3. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS, OFFICERS AND THE COUNCIL

3.1 Serving Councillors and officers should never act as agents for individuals (including a company, group or body) pursuing a planning matter. This includes not only pursuing development proposals, but also works under related legislation such as works to protected trees. If Councillors or officers submit their own proposals to the Council, they should take no part in processing the

application, nor take part in the decision making. The Council's Monitoring Officer should be informed of all such proposals as soon as they are submitted.

- 3.2 Proposals submitted by Councillors and officers should be reported to the Planning Committee as written agenda items and not dealt with by officers under delegated powers.
- 3.3 Proposals for the Council's own development (or development involving the Council and another party) should be treated strictly on planning merits and without regard to any financial or other gain that may accrue to the Council if the development is permitted. It is important that the Council is seen to be treating all such applications on an equal footing with all other applications, as well as actually doing so.

4. LOBBYING OF AND BY COUNCILLORS, AND ATTENDANCE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS BY OFFICERS AND COUNCILLORS

- 4.1 When Councillors undertake their constituency roles, it is inevitable that they will be subject to lobbying by interested parties and the public on planning matters and specific planning applications. When Councillors are lobbied, they need to exercise great care to maintain the Council's, and their own integrity, and to uphold the public perception of the town and country planning process.
- 4.2 Councillors who find themselves being lobbied (either in person, over the telephone, or by post, fax or e-mail) should take active steps to explain that, whilst they can listen to what is said, it would prejudice their impartiality if they expressed a conclusive point of view or any fixed intention to vote one way or another.
- 4.3 Councillors involved in the determination of planning matters should listen to all points of view about planning proposals and are advised to refer persons who require planning or procedural advice to planning officers. Councillors should not indicate conclusive support or opposition to a proposal, or declare their voting intention before the meeting at which a decision is to be taken. Nor should Councillors advise other parties that permission will be granted or refused for a particular development or that land will, or will not, be allocated for development in a Local Plan. To do so without all relevant information and views, would be unfair, prejudicial and may amount to maladministration.
- 4.4 Taking account of the need to make decisions impartially, Councillors must weigh up all the material considerations reported at each Committee meeting. They should not be biased towards any person, company, group or locality.
- 4.5 If planning applications are referred by a Planning Committee to Council (or meetings of different organisations attended by Councillors), each consideration will require the Councillor to weigh up, afresh, all the reported material factors before reaching a decision at that particular meeting.
- 4.6 By law, the District Council has to seek comments from the Town/Parish Councils on planning applications and other planning matters so that their

comments can be taken into account when the District Council makes planning decisions. Some District Councillors are also Town/Parish Councillors and they take part in Town/Parish Council debates about planning applications and other planning matters. Merely taking part in Town/Parish Council debates on planning matters does not automatically debar District Councillors from decision-taking at the District Council. However, with few exceptions Town/Parish Councils do not have professional planning advice or complete information on the application and other planning matters when they make their recommendations to the District Council. Therefore, District Councillors who are also Town/Parish Councillors should be careful not to state that they have reached a conclusive decision when they consider planning issues at their Town/Parish Council meeting. Nor should they declare to the Town/Parish Council what their future voting intention will be when the matter is considered at the District Council.

- 4.7 While Councillors involved in making decisions on planning applications will begin to form a view as more information and options become available, a decision can only be taken at the Planning Committee, and Council when all available information is to hand and has been considered.
- 4.8 Any relevant papers (including letters, photographs, drawings, petitions etc) passed only to Councillors by applicants or objectors prior to a committee meeting should be notified to officers and reported to the Committee.
- 4.9 Individual Councillors should reach their own conclusions on an application or other planning matter rather than follow the lead of another <u>C</u>eouncillor. In this regard, any political group meetings prior to Committee meetings should not be used to decide how Councillors should vote. Decisions can only be taken after full consideration of the officers' report and information and discussion at the Committee <u>meeting</u>.
- 4.10 A Planning Committee member who represents a ward affected by an application is in a difficult position if it is a controversial application around which a lot of lobbying takes place. If the councillor responds to lobbying by deciding to go public in support of a particular outcome or even campaign actively for it it will be very difficult for that councillor to argue convincingly when the Committee comes to take its decision that they have carefully weighed the evidence and arguments presented at Committee. A Councillor should avoid organising support for or against a planning application if they intend to participate in its determination at Committee. However, it should be possible for a e<u>C</u>ouncillor to say that they will make the views of the public known at the committee whilst themselves waiting until the Committee and hearing all the evidence before making a final decision upon how to vote.
- 4.11 Councillors should not lobby other Councillors on proposals in a way that could lead to their failing to make an impartial judgement on the planning merits of these cases when making decisions at Council Committees. Nor should Councillors put undue pressure on officers for a particular recommendation nor

do anything which compromises, or is likely to compromise the impartiality of officers.

- 4.12 Officers who are wholly or partly involved in the processing or determination of planning matters should not attend public meetings in connection with preapplication development proposals or submitted planning applications unless their attendance has been agreed by their Director. To do so could lead to allegations of prejudice or bias to a particular point of view. If put in such a position, officers should avoid prejudicing the Committee's decision.
- 4.13 When attending public meetings, Councillors should take great care to maintain their impartial role, listen to all the points of view expressed by the speakers and public and not state a conclusive decision on any pre-application proposals and submitted planning applications.
- 4.14 If Councillors consider that they have been exposed to undue or excessive lobbying or approaches, these should be reported to the Monitoring Officer.

5. DISCUSSIONS WITH APPLICANTS

- 5.1 It is generally recognised that discussions between potential applicants or applicants and the Council prior to the submission of an application can be of considerable benefit to both parties. <u>However these should be undertaken as part of the pre application process for which a fee is payable</u>. Discussions can take place for a variety of reasons, for example to establish whether an application can be improved in design, or to overcome planning objections or to meet relevant neighbour concerns. Such discussions will normally take place at <u>the District Council offices or via video conferencing</u>.
- 5.2 Councillors involved in any discussions should maintain an independent position and avoid committing themselves to either supporting or opposing the application at <u>C</u>eommittee. <u>I</u>if Councillors feel that they are being put under pressure to support or oppose an application they should suggest to the applicant/objector that they put their views to the planning officer. Planning officers should always make clear at the outset of discussions that they cannot bind the Council to make a particular decision, and that any views expressed are their provisional professional opinions only.
- 5.3 Advice given by planning officers will aim to be consistent and based upon the Development Plan (Structure and Local Plan) and other material considerations (which includes the National Planning Policy Framework). Senior officers will make every effort to ensure that there are no significant differences of interpretation of planning policies between planning officers.
- 5.4 Planning officers will ensure that their advice, and reports, in the sense that they should not favour any particular applicant or objector are impartial. This is because a consequent report must not be seen as advocacy for a particular point of view. A written note should be made of pre-application discussions and important telephone conversations. The involvement of Councillors in such

discussions will be noted by officers as a written file record. A follow-up letter should be sent, particularly when material has been left with the Council by the applicant or agent for comment.

5.5 Councillors who also serve on Town & Parish Councils should make clear their separate roles in each Council regarding Teignbridge District planning policies. The councillor and other interested parties should be clear at all times when the Councillors are acting as a Town or Parish Councillor, and when they are acting in their role as a District Councillor.

6. REPORTS BY OFFICERS TO COMMITTEES

- 6.1 Many planning applications are determined by the Service Manager Development Management. These are the smaller and less controversial applications.
- 6.2 Where decisions on applications fall to be made by the Planning Committee or Council, they will be the subject of full written reports, except where the applications are to be determined by the Committee simply because the application is from a District Council Member, a member of staff, the District Council, the County Council or falls within the Dartmoor National Park.
- 6.3 Reports on planning matters aim to be accurate and will contain a description of the development proposed in the application (including dimensions and areas). They will refer to the provisions of the Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and all other material planning considerations including a full description of the site, any relevant planning history, and the substance of objections and other views received.
- 6.4 All reports requiring a decision will have a written recommendation. Oral reporting (other than to update an existing report) will only be used on rare occasions and carefully minuted when this does occur. All reports will contain a technical appraisal which clearly justifies the stated recommendation. All reasons for refusal and conditions to be attached to permissions must be clear and unambiguous.
- 6.5 Any additional information which is material to a planning decision, and which is received after publication of agendas, will be reported to the meeting.

7. PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING COMMITTEES

- 7.1 Members of the public who wish to speak at a Planning Committee in support of or against a planning application may do so. Only planning related matters can be considered (e.g. access, road safety, design, effect on appearance of area etc.) Comments on non-planning related matters cannot be considered (e.g. loss of property value, loss of view, land ownership issues etc.)
- 7.2 Subject to the exception in the paragraph below, Members can only speak at a Planning Committee (in support of or against a planning application) if they are the Ward member for that particular application and/or they are a member of

the Planning Committee. If a Ward member who is also a member of the Planning Committee does speak, they must not then take part in the voting for that planning application. The Ward member is permitted to speak in order to represent the views of their constituents - not the personal views of the Ward member as those view may not be consistent with the role of a Committee Member. By not participating in the voting, the Ward member preserves all appearance of impartiality and can freely voice the views of their constituents.

- 7.3 The exception to the requirement that in order to speak at a Planning Committee a Ward member must be both the Ward member for the planning application being determined and a member of the Planning Committee is where a Ward member who is neither the Ward member for the application nor a member of the Planning Committee, is the Ward member for an adjoining ward. In such circumstances, the Ward member for the adjoining ward will be permitted to speak provided they have received representations in writing from one or more constituents of that adjoining ward concerning the application. The Ward member will then be permitted to speak at the Planning Committee in order to represent the views of the constituents of the adjoining ward who have made written representations to the Ward member of the adjoining ward.
- 7.4 Member may not address the Planning Committee in any other circumstances unless they do so as either an objector or supporter.

8 THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS AND DECISIONS CONTRARY TO OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- <u>87.1</u> The law requires that, where the Development Plan is relevant, planning decisions should be made in accordance with it unless other material considerations <u>(including the National Planning Policy Framework)</u> indicate otherwise (Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).
- 78.2 The relevant Development Plan, and other material considerations (including the National Planning Policy Framework), will be identified in officers' reports. Material considerations will vary from case to case. In arriving at a decision, it is a matter of judgement for the Planning Committee (or Council) as to the weight to be attached to the various material considerations.
- 78.3 In discussing, and determining a planning application or other planning matter, Councillors should confine themselves to the planning merits of the case. The reasons for making a final decision should be clear, convincing and supported by material considerations and the planning merits.
- 78.4 Members should consider the advice of the officers but ultimately they are free to vote as they choose. If Councillors wish to determine an application contrary to officer advice, or to impose additional conditions to a permission, an officer should explain the implications of such actiona decision prior to the vote. The Councillors' grounds reasons for any contrary determination, or for wishing to

impose additional conditions, must be clearly stated at the time the propositions are made and votes taken at the meetingprior to the vote and shall be minuted. The personal circumstances of an applicant will rarely provide such grounds.

- 8.5 The Planning Practice Guidance advises that the most common cause for costs being awarded against Local Planning Authorities is where there are unsubstantiated reasons for refusal. Vague, generalised or inaccurate assertions about a proposals' impact, which are unsupported by an objective analysis, are more likely to result in a costs award. The Chair will, if necessary, adjourn the meeting for a few minutes to allow Officers to advise of any other relevant planning issues to assist the Councillors with their reasons for a contrary determination. Alternatively,- the senior planning officer supporting the Chair at the Planning Committee meeting may formally ask the Planning Committee to defer the vote until the next Planning Committee meeting in order to take advice and compile the planning reasons for any contrary determination if this cannot be done adequately at the time the propositions are made and this should advice will be formally minuted. -
- 78.65 The Planning Practice Guidance makes clear that local opposition or support for a proposal is not, in itself, a ground for refusing or granting planning permission unless it is founded upon valid material planning reasons. The Council will be at risk of costs for unsubstantiated reasons for refusal that rely almost exclusively on local opposition for their justification. —
- 8.76 If a resolution is passed which is contrary to a recommendation of the Service Business Manager – Development Management (whether for approval or refusal) a Minute of the Committee's reasons will be made and a copy placed on the application file.
- 8.87 In the event that a Member of the Planning Committee moves a motion to grant an application contrary to Officer's recommendation, the Councillor moving the motion MUST provide i) Full conditions and relevant informatives; ii) Full statement of reasons for approval (as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015; iii) Relevant Development Plan policies and proposals. If the Councillor moving the motion does not meet these requirements, the motion shall not be deemed to have been properly made and cannot be seconded.
- 8.98. In the event a Member of the Planning Committee moves a motion to *refuse* an application contract to Officer's recommendation, the Councillor moving the motion MUST provide: i) Full statement of reasons for refusal which must include a statement as to demonstrable harm caused ii) Relevant Local Plan policies which the application is in conflict with. If the Councillor moving the motion does not meet these requirements, the motion shall not be deemed to have been properly made and cannot be seconded.
- 78.1076 If the report of the <u>Service Business</u> Manager Development Management recommends approval of a departure from the Development Plan,

the full justification for this recommended departure should be included in the report.

- 78.1187 Senior planning officers (and legal officers as necessary) should attend meetings of the Planning Committee to ensure that procedures are properly followed and planning issues properly addressed.
- 78.1298 It is important that Councillors who determine planning applications do so only after having considered all the material planning considerations. They must take all relevant matters into account and they must disregard irrelevant considerations. It is important that they are seen to do this. For this reason, it is important that Councillors only participate in the debate and vote on a planning application if they have been present throughout the whole of the officers' presentation and the subsequent committee debate. Councillors who arrive at a meeting part-way through consideration of an application or who are absent from the meeting for any part of that consideration may not be aware of all the relevant considerations. In any event, their participation can be seen to be unfair it could amount to maladministration as well as giving rise to a legal challenge that the decision-making process was flawed.

98. SITE VISITS BY COUNCILLORS

Site Inspection TeamWho can attend

9.1 Each site visit shall be attended by the Site Inspection Team chosen for that particular site visit and for specific planning purposes. The Site Inspection Team shall comprise of only three Members of the Planning Committee chosen by the Committee *ad hoc* on a roll-call basis. The Site Inspection Team will be accompanied by the planning officer.

The need for committee site visits

- 8.19.2 It is important for the District Council's Planning Committee to have a clear rationale for undertaking organised site visits in connection with planning applications and that any visits are conducted properly and consistently.
- 8.29.3 The purpose of a site visit is for <u>the Coommittee Councillors</u> to gain <u>knowledge</u> <u>a better understanding of specific –issues arising from</u> the development proposal, the application site and its surroundings.
- <u>9.3</u> -A decision by a Planning Committee to carry out a site inspection should normally only be taken where the impact of the proposed development is difficult to assess from the <u>report</u>, –plans and/<u>or</u> any supporting information submitted by the applicant, or additional material provided by officers.
- 8.39.4 Site visits cause delay and additional costs, and should only be carried out where <u>the Committee Councillors</u> believe a site visit is necessary <u>and the purpose is clear and substantial</u>.
- <u>9.5</u> Councillors can ask the Business Manager Development Management for additional illustrative material to be presented in excess of the Officer's report Version 8 – July 2022October 2010 (Updated June 2011)

at least three working days before the Planning Committee meeting or during the site visit clearly specifying what additional material is needed and why.

9.65 Site visits should only occur when a Councillor has submitted a written request prior to the Planning Committee at which the relevant application is to be considered and explained why a site visit is considered to be necessary. A record of these reasons should be kept. If a request for a site visit is proposed at the Planning Committee meeting (without a prior written request), the Councillor proposing the site visit must clearly state the explicit reason why this was not apparent prior to the meeting, explain why it is now deemed to be necessary and in such a case, the deferment of the application pending the site visit must be agreed by a majority of the Planning Committee. A written record of theese reasons givens should be provided by the proposing Councillor to the Committee administrator immediately following the meeting.

Procedure on Site

- 8.49.765 <u>Every site visit should be attended by only three Members of the</u> Planning Committee. These will be chosen *ad hoc* on a roll-call basis. The three Members of the Planning Committee will be accompanied by the planning officer and normally the Parish or Town Councillor. <u>Aany consultee whose</u> attendance has been specifically requested by the Planning Committee (e.g. the County Highway Authority or an Environmental Health Officer) may also attend to assist their understanding of the proposals.
- 8.5 A detailed explanation of the proposals, and a summary of the officers' report and recommendations, will be made by the planning officer. <u>The threeSite</u> <u>Inspection Team Councillors</u> will then be given the opportunity to ask questions <u>of the Planning Officer</u> and to view the site and surroundings from all relevant vantage points.
- 8.5 Site visits will normally involve District, Parish or Town Councillors and officers only, except for any consultee whose attendance has been specifically requested by the Planning Committee (e.g. the County Highway Authority or an Environmental Health Officer) to assist their understanding of the proposals.
- <u>9.8768.56</u> Applicants/agents, or objectors and members of the public are excluded from will not be invited to attend site visits. Chair of Parish Meetings may attend site visits provided they have signed up to the Code of Conduct for Members issued under the Local Government Act 2000. Councillors should keep together during site visits and not allow themselves to be addressed separately by applicants or objectors.

<u>9.9878.67</u> No decisions are made at site visits although recommendations may be made to the Committee. The <u>C</u>committee administrator will prepare a written note of the key planning issues and information obtained from the site visit, to be reported to the subsequent meeting of the Planning Committee. <u>A Member of the site inspection team should be elected to report back to the Planning Committee with their findings (as agreed) when the application is next being considered</u>

The recommendation will remain confidential until the committee report is prepared.

- <u>9.10988.78</u> Where a site meeting is attended by a Parish or Town Councillor they will be invited to advise on the views of the Parish or Town Council rather than their views as an individual.
- <u>9.11098.89</u> The Service Manager Development Management and the Service Lead — Legal and Democratic Services will ensure that all correspondence in relation to site visits clearly identifies the purpose of a site inspection together with the format and conduct of the inspection, so that applicants/agents and interested parties are aware of it.

Informal Site Visits

- <u>9.12108.190</u> There are advantages in Councillors making their own individual site visits to gain knowledge of the development proposal, the application site and its surroundings. In doing so, Councillors should observe sites from public vantage points <u>only</u> (highways, rights of way or public open space) and should not enter onto private land without permission.
- <u>9.13218.101</u> Whilst on individual site visits, Councillors should <u>not as far as possible</u> <u>avoid</u> engageing in discussion with <u>any person regarding the site visit or</u> <u>application. applicants, objectors or other interested parties.</u>

This can lead to accusations of partiality if the views of one party only are heard.

<u>9.14328.112</u> Where application sites are not visible without entering onto private land – for example, rear extensions or country houses in larger plots – officers will make an additional effort to provide appropriate visual information at Committee.

910. REVIEW OF PLANNING DECISIONS

- 910.1 Arrangements will be made for Councillors to visit a sample of implemented planning permissions annually, so that a regular review of the quality of planning decisions can be undertaken. This will include examples from a broad range of categories such as major and minor development, permitted departures, upheld appeals etc.
- 9<u>10</u>.2 The outcome of this review will be reported to the Planning Committee and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and may lead to identification of possible amendments to existing policies or practice.

101. COMPLAINTS AND RECORD KEEPING

101.1 The Council has a complaints procedure, which can be used by any party to the planning process (applicants, objectors or others) to complain about the way in which a matter has been handled (the complaints procedure is not intended to reopen the planning decision). Copies of a leaflet on the complaints procedure are available on request. and on the councils website.

- 101.2 In order to ensure that planning procedures are undertaken properly and that any complaints can be fully investigated, record keeping will be complete and accurate. Every planning application file will contain an accurate account of events throughout its life, particularly the outcomes of meetings, significant telephone conversations and any declarations of interest by Councillors.
- 101.3 The same principles of good record keeping will be observed in relation to all enforcement and Development Plan matters. Monitoring of record keeping will be undertaken regularly by the senior planning staff.
- 101.4 Where a planning application is dealt with under the delegated procedure a complete record will be kept of the planning considerations taken into account in determining the application for 5 years after the decision.

142. CONTRAVENTION OF THIS GUIDANCE

- 14<u>2</u>.1 Where there is any <u>breach of this ProtocolGuidance</u> by a Councillor the matter should be referred to the Monitoring Officer who <u>may take such action as they</u> <u>considered appropriate</u> will report the matter to the Standards Committee.
- 142.2 Where any breach of this <u>Code ProtocolGuidance</u> constitutes misconduct by an officer, then it is to be dealt with in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedure.