

## Council 16 December 2019

Item 8 refers

Recommendation (2) from the Constitutional Review meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019

### REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION – DELEGATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS AND PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the impact of the September 2018 amendments to the Council's Constitution in respect of the current Scheme of Delegation relating to planning functions and public speaking at Planning Committee.

The main operational changes were the inclusion of a councillor call-in procedure, and increased trigger from 10 to 25 dwellings by which the size of major application decision is delegated to an officer. The changes have coincided with a noticeable reduction in the length of planning committee agendas and meeting duration.

The analysis showed the average number of items at planning committee has dropped from 8 to 6, with the average number of speakers having dropped from 22 to 14 and the maximum number of speakers on any one item at a planning committee has dropped from 10 to 5. The peak has dropped from 46 (or 17 discounting Magna Park) to 8 under the new system.

Based on the analysis the revised Scheme of Delegation and public speaking from September 2018 has made the decision making process less cumbersome and more efficient. There is no evidence that public engagement, quality of decision or customer service has been adversely affected.

The Committee considered the proposal to further amend the existing Scheme of Delegation relating to substitution of house types for proposals of more than 25 units. These applications are currently reported to planning committee but are often non contentious attracting little if any representation for or against. Across large scale development over several years it is common for houses types to be substituted. House type substitutions are commonly relatively superficial in overall planning types, for example altering minor details of external appearance and marginal changes to layout and footprint.

The proposed amendment will allow for consideration of these without taking valuable committee time nor potentially causing unnecessary delay.

The Committee noted that in the past year two applications had been received for proposals of more than 25 units.

**RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the proposed amendment to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, Part 3, Section B, 3.2 of the Constitution, as set out in Appendix A to the minutes, be approved and adopted.**

**The report and associated Appendix A to the Constitutional Review meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019 are attached.**