

North East Derbyshire District Council

Council

19 May 2014

Review of the Chair of Planning Committee's Special Responsibility Allowance

Report No ADGMO/11/14/MK of the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To advise on the review of the Chair of Planning Committee's Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA).
- To determine whether the Chair of Planning Committee's SRA should be amended and decide what the future SRA should be.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 Council on 6 January 2014 resolved the following with effect from the Annual Council Meeting on 19 May 2014:
- a) The size of Planning Committee be reduced from 33 members to 18 members;
 - b) The Planning Committee utilise substitute members with any such substitutions being notified in writing to the Governance Team no later than 12noon on the day of Committee.
 - c) Planning Committee comprise solely of non-executive members (members who are not members of the Cabinet).
 - d) An Independent Remuneration Panel be convened as soon as reasonably practicable to decide an appropriate Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Chair of Planning Committee, it being noted that the cost of any such SRA will be offset by a reduction in the number of Cabinet members from nine to eight.
 - e) All members and substitute members be advised to undergo training as part of the new arrangements.
- 1.2 Following on from that decision, Council agreed the composition and terms of reference for the Independent Remuneration Panel which was to undertake the review of the Chair of Planning Committee's SRA and make recommendations to Council.

1.3 The Panel met on 28 April 2014 and resolved to recommend to this meeting that the SRA for the Chair of Planning Committee be £7,612. The Panel's report and associated appendices are attached as Appendix 1.

1.4 As required by legislation, the recommendation was advertised in the 7th May 2014 edition of the Derbyshire Times. A copy of this report was made available for public inspection via the Council offices and NEDDC website. It is now for Council to determine whether or not to amend the Members' Allowance Scheme, setting a different SRA for the Chair of Planning Committee, and decide what the level of that SRA should be. Once a decision has been made a notice will be required to be placed in the Derbyshire Times setting out Council's final decision.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 These are contained within the Panel's report. See pages 8-9.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

3.1 The Leader of the Council, existing Chair of Planning Committee and the Panel have been consulted on this report.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 These are contained within the Panel's report. See pages 8-9.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

These are contained within the Panel's report. See pages 8-9.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

The rules regarding members' allowances and independent remuneration panels are set out in the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

None.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Council is asked to amend the existing Members' Allowance Scheme as follows, to have effect from 20 May 2014:

- That the special responsibility allowance for the Chair of Planning Committee be £7,612.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	None.
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	None.

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Independent Remuneration Panel’s Report and Appendices
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
None.	
Report Author	Contact Number
M Kane	7753

**REPORT OF THE NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

**A REVIEW OF THE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE FOR THE
CHAIR OF PLANNING COMMITTEE**

May 2014

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Introduction

The face of local authority planning is changing.

Nationally it is a key tenet of the Government's economic improvement plan while locally it is contributing to the Council's own growth agenda, enabling it to become self-sustainable during a period of unprecedented grant reductions. Running parallel to the day-to-day determination of planning applications is the wider strategic policy element which is being formulated through the Council's emerging Local Plan that sits alongside a complex and ever-changing national policy framework.

The Council has responded to these changes and challenges by recalibrating its Planning Committee from May 2014. The new Committee will be smaller, more strategic and more able to take decisions in the best interests of the District as a whole. It will comprise entirely of non-executive members, in line with advice received from a recent LGA Peer Review.

In anticipation for the switch, a couple of issues were discovered that have necessitated this review of the Committee Chair's special responsibility allowance (or SRA). Principally, it was argued that the work of Chair was more demanding, not only when set against the Council's other committee chairs but also when compared with the planning chairs of other councils in the surrounding area.

Having considered the evidence, which is set out in this report, the Panel were left in no doubt that a review could be justified and have accordingly recommended an alternative amount for the Council's consideration prior to the new chair taking up the role. This report sets out its considerations and finding.

We commend it to the Council.

John Swain
Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel

May 2014

The Panel

The Panel comprised:

Mr John Swain, former Head Teacher and former member of Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council Ethical Standards Committee (Chair of the Panel)

Mrs Susan Ambler, Head of Financial Accounting and Control at the University of Derby

Mr George Cowcher, Chief Executive of the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce

Mr Dave Radford, Manager of Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Volunteer Centre

The Panel was supported by Council officers Sarah Sternberg and Matthew Kane.

Councillor Harold Laws attended the Panel as an expert witness.

Terms of Reference

The Council's current Members' Allowance Scheme was made under The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 on 5 March 2013.

The Scheme may be amended by the Council following consideration of recommendations made by an Independent Remuneration Panel. This Panel was established by Council on 3 March 2014 when its brief was to:

"Undertake a short and urgent review of the Chair of Planning Committee's Special Responsibility Allowance."

Methodology

The Panel met on 28 April 2014 where it considered three key pieces of information including a report from the Governance Manager, verbal representations from the current Chair of Planning Committee and comparison information from nine other councils.

The councils the Council has compared itself against included the Derbyshire districts of Amber Valley, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Erewash and South Derbyshire together with the Nottinghamshire districts of Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Rushcliffe.

A copy of the report to the Panel and comparison data is attached as an Appendix.

Conclusions

The Panel last considered the SRA for the Chair of Planning Committee as part of its comprehensive review of the Members' Allowances Scheme which was approved in March 2013. At that time responsibility for chairing the Committee formed part of the Cabinet Portfolio for Planning along with several other duties including providing political leadership and direction on the development of the Local Plan and other planning policy.

The changes agreed to the Committee's size and composition in January 2014 will see the Planning Portfolio removed from Cabinet, the Local Plan and planning policy element transferred to another portfolio and responsibility for chairing Committee resting with a non-executive member chosen at the Annual Council Meeting.

The Scheme agreed in March 2013 did, as it happens, foresee a time when the Chair of Planning Committee might not be an executive member. One of the recommendations stated:

"That if, in future, the Planning Committee is not chaired by a Cabinet Member then a special responsibility allowance of £3,768 be payable to the Chair of Planning Committee."

This amount of £3,768 (now £3,806 due to a 1% indexing increase) was the same level of SRA allocated to the other committee chairs on the Council. What the Panel did not appreciate when it made the Scheme, however, were the very unique demands placed on the Chair of Planning Committee which make it a special role distinct from that of other committee chairs.

These demands were outlined in the report to us and elaborated on by Councillor Laws at our meeting. They include:

- The Chair of Planning Committee is required to chair at least 12 meetings per year, double the number of meetings of the other NEDDC committee chairs.
- The Chair of Planning Committee is also required to undertake a range of other work associated with the role, including attending site visit meetings and liaising regularly with the Planning Manager and other officers over what items will form the basis of the Committee agenda.
- There is extensive public involvement in Planning Committee which is not present in other committee meetings. Public participation is of course an important part of the planning process and democracy generally but nevertheless requires a tight rein to be kept on proceedings to avoid meetings becoming unruly.
- The inherent sensitive nature of planning means that complaints from councillors and the public are inevitable. These complaints are usually directed at the Chair of the Committee who then must arrange for them to be investigated and addressed.
- Should decisions of the Committee be challenged through the Planning Inspectorate, Local Government Ombudsman or Judicial Review then the Chair of Planning Committee may be required to attend hearings to account for why the Committee acted in the way that it did.

When compared against the SRAs paid by other authorities, the SRA for North East Derbyshire is the fourth lowest allowance in the comparator group. This alone could justify an increase. However, when one considers the number of applications North East Derbyshire is discharging when compared with other councils that case becomes more compelling. For example, South Derbyshire's SRA is more than double the level of North East Derbyshire's yet it discharged over 20 fewer applications in 2013/14.

With the case for an increase in SRA established, the Panel's debate focussed on what the appropriate level should be. There were two proposals, that the amount be £7,972 - the current SRA for a Cabinet Portfolio Holder - or a slightly lower amount of £7,612.

In the end the recommended amount of £7,612 was based on several factors. It is double the amount of the other committee chairs reflecting that there was twice the number of committee meetings to handle. At the same time, the amount is slightly lower than a Cabinet member's SRA because responsibility for the Local Plan and planning policy element no longer runs with the position. Finally, the Panel felt it was important for there to be a distinction between the SRA for a Cabinet member and that of a Chair of Planning Committee to avoid any confusion or blurring of the lines during the new era.

Our recommendation will not result in any additional expenditure on members allowances and will in fact result in a saving, arising from the new SRA coming out £360 less than that for a Cabinet member post.

Recommendations

The Panel has made the following recommendations for the payment of allowances with effect from 20 May 2014:-

1. That the special responsibility allowance for the Chair of Planning Committee be £7,612.

North East Derbyshire District Council**Independent Remuneration Panel****28 April 2014****Review of the Chair of Planning Committee's Special Responsibility Allowance****Report of the Deputy Monitoring Officer**

This report is private

Purpose of the Report

- To review the existing special responsibility allowance (SRA) for the Chair of Planning Committee
- To decide whether to recommend an alternative SRA to Council.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 The existing Members Allowance Scheme was approved by Council in March 2013 following recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel. At that time, the Chair of Planning Committee was a member of Cabinet and, because the Scheme limited members to receiving only one SRA, he received a Cabinet SRA of £7,972 in addition to his basic allowance of £5,060. However, the Scheme provided that if, in future, the Planning Committee was not chaired by a Cabinet Member then an SRA of £3,806 would be payable to the Chair of Planning Committee.
- 1.2 On 6 January 2014, the Council agreed to reduce the size of the Planning Committee from 33 to 18 members with effect from the beginning of the 2014/15 Municipal Year and to stipulate that only non-executive members (i.e. those not on Cabinet) could sit on the new Committee. The new Chair would therefore be entitled to an SRA of £3,806 in addition to his basic allowance. A copy of the report which went to Council, and was approved unanimously, is attached to this report for information at **Appendix A**.
- 1.3 Work on the report highlighted some issues relating to the Chair of Planning Committee's SRA which Council has requested that the Panel investigate. Namely, the Chair's current SRA appears to be set at the same level as the SRAs for the Chairs of Scrutiny and Standards Committees. The problem with this is that the work of the Planning Committee's Chair is arguably more demanding than other committee chairs since he is required to consult regularly with the Planning Manager over what items go forward to Committee, ordinarily chairs double the number of meetings of a Scrutiny or Standards Chair (12 in total per year) and is required to attend the same number of site visits. In addition, the Chair of Planning Committee is required through his role to attend and participate in regular meetings of the Peak District National Park Authority although it should be noted that he is paid separately for doing this.

- 1.4 Meetings of Planning Committee are usually very formal and, because of their nature and subject matter, contentious. There is always a level of public involvement in Committee as applicants, objectors and other interested parties can come along and speak on the applications being considered. The Chair is responsible for ensuring not only that business is conducted in a fair, open and transparent way but that a tight rein is kept on proceedings to avoid them becoming unruly.
- 1.5 Decisions taken by Planning Committee are under much scrutiny and may be challenged by the Planning Inspectorate for England and Wales (PINS), through Judicial Review or via the Local Government Ombudsman. Where the Committee has made a decision against an officer recommendation that is challenged through any of these methods the Chair of Planning Committee may be required to attend a hearing and give reasons as to why the Committee acted in such a way.
- 1.6 Planning is now becoming a key priority, both nationally and locally. It is seen by Government as a central plank of their economic growth plan and legislation is subject to constant change with neighbourhood planning, the National Planning Policy Framework and community rights all adding to an ever expanding and complex picture. The Council, in common with all local authorities, is required to develop a Local Plan which will guide future development in the District and the Committee's role will be to implement that Plan by passing applications that conform with its policies without undue delay.
- 1.7 As Council grant funding is cut year-on-year, planning also provides key income channels, i.e. New Homes Bonus and Business Rates, through which local authorities can become self-sustaining organisations. If these are the incentives for encouraging councils to deal expediently with planning applications then authorities who regularly see refused applications overturned at appeal may find themselves put in 'special measures'. This means that future applicants on major developments can bypass the local planning system altogether and go directly to PINS.
- 1.8 Because of the changing local and national circumstances outlined above, it is felt that the SRA for the Chair of Planning Committee is in need of review. Current statistical comparisons would appear to suggest that the SRAs for the chairmanships of other committees and the Vice Chair of Planning Committee are commensurate with existing workloads and with what other councils pay so there is no plan to review these at this time.
- 1.9 **Appendix B** to this report provides comparison data from nine other local authorities including the Derbyshire districts of Amber Valley, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Erewash and South Derbyshire together with the Nottinghamshire districts of Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Rushcliffe to establish a baseline for the Council's SRA. The Derbyshire districts of Derbyshire Dales and High Peak were not used as they are vast rural districts quite unlike to North East Derbyshire.
- 1.10 The current Chair of Planning Committee, Councillor Harold Laws, has been invited into the Panel meeting to give his views on the demands of the position, based on his previous experience. Councillor Laws has been Chair of the Committee since May 2011 and may stand again for the position in May 2014 but this yet to be confirmed.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 To enable the Panel to consider the request from Council to review the SRA for the Chair of Planning Committee. The Panel's recommendations will be advertised in compliance with the law and then presented to Council when it meets on 19 May 2014.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 The Leader of the Council has been consulted on the proposal and has indicated that it is his intention to reduce his membership of Cabinet from nine to eight by removing the Planning Portfolio, which includes the role of chairing Planning Committee. Therefore, any allowance given to new Chair of Planning Committee will be off-set by the saving arising from a Cabinet SRA of £7,972.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 The Panel may decide that the SRA should remain at its current level. However for the reasons set out above it is felt that a review is necessary.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

See paragraph 2.1. Although the Council can backdate allowances to the beginning of April, there would be no need in this case as the new Chair of Planning Committee will be appointed at the same time as the SRA is decided.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

The rules regarding members' allowances and independent remuneration panels are set out in the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

None.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Panel is requested to consider the report and verbal representations it receives and then decide whether or not to recommend an alternative SRA for the Council's Chair of Planning Committee.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	None.
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	None.

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
A B	Report to Council, 6 January 2014 Comparison Data
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
None.	
Report Author	Contact Number
M Kane	7753

NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

6 JANUARY 2014

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

<u>Strategic Priority:</u> High Performing Council
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1 Recommendations

1.1 That, with effect from the Annual Council Meeting in May 2014:

- a) The size of Planning Committee be reduced from 33 members to 18 members;
- b) The Planning Committee utilises substitute members with any such substitutions being notified in writing to the Governance Team no later than 12noon on the day of Committee.
- c) Planning Committee comprise solely of non-executive members (members who are not members of the Cabinet).
- d) An Independent Remuneration Panel be convened as soon as reasonably practicable to decide an appropriate Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair of Planning Committee, it being noted that the cost of any such SRA will be offset by a reduction in the number of Cabinet members from nine to eight.
- e) All members and substitute members be advised to undergo training as part of the new arrangements.

1.2 That the changes outlined in 1.1 (a-e) above be incorporated into the Constitution as part of its next review.

2 Issues for Consideration

2.1 The Council's Planning Committee has for some time comprised 33 members. Its main role is the consideration and determination of planning applications. It also handles a number of ancillary matters.

2.2 The rationale behind having 33 members is that it enables Planning Committee to be entirely representative of North East Derbyshire's diverse communities allowing members to bring a ward perspective to planning matters, providing information on local issues that may not be known to the rest of the Committee.

- 2.3 However, successive reviews have highlighted the Committee's size which is considered to be large when compared with other district council planning committees. The argument follows that a large committee is not conducive to effective and efficient local government and that too much focus on local issues, rather than the needs of the District as a whole, can make it susceptible to parochialism.
- 2.4 Of the 33 members on the Committee, five are members of the Cabinet. Despite guidance issued following the introduction of executive decision making in 2000, there is nothing to bar a member of the Cabinet from being a member of and taking a full part in Planning Committee. This position is emphasised in the recently issued Probity in Planning guidance published by the Planning Advisory Service and Local Government Association.
- 2.5 Nevertheless, with the Council having identified economic growth - and, by implication, new development - as its number one corporate priority it may be perceived that a Cabinet member's need to champion this priority as part of their portfolio could be in conflict with their constituents' desire to carefully manage development in ward communities.
- 2.6 The Council's recent Peer Review, undertaken by the Local Government Association, specifically identified the size of Planning Committee and the inclusion of Cabinet Portfolio Members as a potential barrier to growth and the long term transformation of the Council:

"The Planning Committee at NEDDC is not as efficient and effective as it could be, despite the recommendations of a planning peer review undertaken in March 2011. The committee is large with 33 members representing every Parish and this could create difficulties if planning becomes an obstacle to moving forward on the growth agenda. Executive members sit on the Planning Committee and the Portfolio Holder also has the role of Chair - neither of which is seen as good practice. Executive members should not chair the planning committee to avoid a conflict of interest for "corporate" projects (the advice regarding this is in the Local Government Act 2000 Guidance to English Local Authorities: ODPM 2000 Para 5.16 onwards). As the growth agenda goes forward planning needs clear separation. Effective planning committees and an agreed Local Development Framework which reflects the growth agenda will have a key part to play in delivering economic growth in both Districts."

- Key Messages for North East Derbyshire, Corporate Peer Challenge, July 2013 (LGA)

- 2.7 The Leadership has responded to the challenges raised by the Peer Team by looking into the possibility of reducing the number of members on Planning Committee.
- 2.8 Comparisons with other district councils show great variances in numbers of members on planning committee. This ranges from North Kesteven DC which comprises the entire Council membership of 43 members to Warwick DC and West

Devon DC which both have just 10 members. Some London boroughs have committees as small as seven members.

- 2.9 The table below provides comparison data from three of the Council's neighbouring local authorities and from four local authorities in the Audit Commission's 'nearest neighbour' comparison group (which are councils across the UK that share broadly the same demographic characteristics as North East Derbyshire).

Authority	Size of committee	Total no. of councillors
Bolsover DC	18	37
Chesterfield BC	17	48
Derbyshire Dales DC	Two committees with 17 members on each	39
Fenland DC	17	39
Newcastle under Lyme BC	15	60
<i>North East Derbyshire DC</i>	33	53
West Lancashire BC	22	54
Wyre Forest DC	16	42

- 2.10 What the information highlights is there is no ideally sized Planning Committee but that something between 15 and 22 is commonplace. Ultimately, there is a balance to be struck between having a committee so large that it becomes difficult to take strategic decisions and one that is so small that finely balanced decisions are continually being decided on the Chairman's casting vote.
- 2.11 Weighing up this information, the Leadership has proposed a reduction of 15 members from the current 33, taking the overall number of members on the 'new' Committee to 18. In reducing the number of members on the Committee, the Leadership are keen to stress that the 'ward member' perspective in planning will be retained in that any member who is not on the Committee can still speak for three minutes on an application affecting their ward.
- 2.12 As part of the new arrangements, each political group will be invited to nominate 'substitute' members who may replace members of Planning Committee in the event of apologies for absence. This substitution arrangement will be subject to notification to the Governance Team by 12noon on the day of Committee. Such arrangements are necessary and will be applied strictly by officers to avoid confusion amongst members, officers and the public over who is eligible to make decisions on any given day.
- 2.13 Notwithstanding the apolitical nature of planning, the Committee is subject to political balance rules under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. If all other committees were to remain equal in terms of current size and composition, the

political make-up of the new Committee would be 10 Labour, six Conservative and two Independent Group.

- 2.14 To negate the conflict of interest which may be experienced by some Cabinet members and to enable them to focus fully on their portfolios it is proposed that the Committee, including the Chair, comprise solely of non-executive members. The Leader has indicated that the Cabinet Portfolio of Planning will disappear under the new arrangements, reducing the size of Cabinet to eight, with the responsibility for Planning Strategy relating to the formulation and delivery of the Local Plan being subsumed into another portfolio.
- 2.15 The existing Members' Allowance Scheme provides that if, in future, the Planning Committee is not chaired by a Cabinet Member then a special responsibility allowance (SRA) of £3,768 be payable to the Chair of Planning Committee. This is equal to the SRA provided for the chairmanship of the Council's other committees including the four scrutiny committees and Standards Committee. This is no SRA for chairing Licensing Committee as, like Planning Committee, the Chair currently assumes this responsibility as part of his Cabinet portfolio.
- 2.16 Discussions with the Leadership have highlighted a need to review the SRA for the future Chair of Planning Committee given that the role involves a significant workload over and above that required for the other committees. Typically, the Chair of Planning Committee will be required to chair 12 meetings, all of which would have some element of public involvement, attend 12 site visit meetings and meet regularly with planning officers to determine which applications come before Committee. He/she may also be required to act as 'spokesperson' on planning matters and represent the Council on key outside bodies such as the Peak District National Park Authority.
- 2.17 It is proposed therefore to convene an Independent Remuneration Panel in early 2014 to review the SRA for the Chair of Planning Committee. Any increase in SRA for this role will be offset by the loss of an SRA arising from a reduction in the number of Cabinet members from nine to eight.
- 2.18 Finally, it is of course necessary given the ever changing nature of planning for all members on the new Committee and substitutes to attend training. Such training would of course be made available to all members on the Council to aid in succession planning and assist in the provision of information to constituents.
- 2.19 Whilst it must be emphasised that there is no such thing as 'mandatory' training clearly the Council would carry a significant governance risk in having members making decisions about planning matters and specifically third party rights without them having undergone appropriate training. Previous judicial review cases have highlighted that the courts consider member training to be an important and relevant factor when Committee decisions are challenged.
- 2.20 Should members agree to recommend the proposals set out in this report they will be taken forward to Council in January 2014. If approved, the changes will take effect from the Annual Council Meeting in May 2014.

- 2.21 This report was considered by Planning Committee on 17 December 2013 who made the recommendations as set out in paragraphs 1.1 – 1.2 of this report to this meeting.

4 Other Supporting Information

- 4.1 None.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 As outlined in paragraph 2.17 above, the proposals outlined in this report should be cost-neutral and result in no additional cost on members' allowances.

6 Other Considerations – eg Legal, Human Resources, Environmental, Crime and Disorder, Design and Community Safety

- 6.1 None, other than those set out in the report.

7 Risk Management and Policy and Performance Issues

- 7.1 None, other than those set out in the report.

8 Reasons for Recommendations

- 8.1 To ensure the Council has effective and efficient arrangements for making decisions on planning applications.

Background Papers

Location

None

Appendix B

Planning Committee Comparison Data

	Approx. population (2011 data)	Committee size	No. of meetings in 2013/14	No. of planning apps considered by committee in 2013/14	Allow public speaking?	Chair's SRA
Amber Valley	122,500	15	14	44	Yes	£2,233
Ashfield	119,500	17	10	36	Yes	£7,194
Bassetlaw	113,000	12	15	57	Yes	£6,629
Bolsover	76,000	18	12	24	Yes	£2,445.36
Chesterfield	103,800	17	16	58	Yes	£4,629
Erewash	112,200	13	13	67	Yes	£3,377
Mansfield	104,600	12	11	33	Yes	£10,321
NE Derbyshire	99,100	33 currently 18 from May	13	87	Yes	£3,806
Rushcliffe	111,200	15	12	61	No	£4,728
South Derbyshire	94,900	13	14	68	Yes	£8,960

Note: 2013/14 covers the period 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014.