

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to Planning Committee

**Date**                    **25 March 2015**

**Report of:**            **Director of Planning and Development**

**Subject:**              **Protocol relating to Members of the Planning Committee asking questions of deputees**

#### **SUMMARY**

Following changes to the Planning Committee Deputation Scheme approved by Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> February, the following report recommends how questions asked of deputees should be handled at Planning Committee meetings.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the protocol attached at Annex A to this report be approved for use by the Planning Committee with immediate effect.

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. At their meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> January, Members were invited to consider and comment on a number of proposed changes to the work of the Planning Committee Members. Members of the Planning Committee supported the proposed changes which were subsequently approved by Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> February.
2. One of the changes approved relates to the questioning of deputees by the Planning Committee. Under the previously approved deputation scheme, Members had not been able to ask questions of deputees at the Planning Committee meeting when considering planning applications. The change to the deputation scheme approved by Council now allows the Planning Committee to ask questions of speakers where this is considered necessary to assist with the Committee's decision making.
3. To provide clarity to both Members and deputees as to when questions could be asked and how this will be done, it is considered that a protocol would be of assistance.

## **RECOMMEND**

4. That the attached protocol is adopted by the Planning Committee for use at Planning Committee meetings; and
5. That the protocol takes effect immediately.

### **Background Papers:**

Officers' report to the Planning Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015; report to the Audit and Governance Committee on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2015; report to Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Lee Smith. (01329 824427)

**Protocol relating to Members of the Planning Committee asking questions of deputees**

Members should put all questions relating to the item they are considering to Officers in the first instance.

Where Officers are not able to answer Members questions in full, the Committee may decide to seek clarity by asking questions of one of the deputees.

The questions put to deputees should solely seek to clarify matters of fact relating to the planning proposal before the Committee.

Deputees should not be asked to explain why they are objecting to or supporting a particular proposal, nor should they be asked to explain the opinions they have expressed.

The Chairman will make the final decision on whether a particular question should be put to a deputees or not.

Any questions to deputees will be asked solely by the Chairman.