

With reference to the powers delegated to me as Leader of the Council, I hereby authorise the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to determine all planning applications submitted in respect of land within the administrative area of Telford & Wrekin Council. I am aware of the practice whereby certain applications have to be determined by Planning Committee rather than by Council officers but, in the current circumstances, I now confirm that the requirements for applications to be referred to Planning Committee for determination as set out in the Planning Committee resolution on 24th July 2013, including the “call-in procedure” are suspended indefinitely and delegations as set out in the attached note will be adopted until further notice

*Cllr Shaun Davies
Leader of Telford & Wrekin Council
26 March 2020*

With reference to the Chief Officer powers delegated to me within the Telford & Wrekin Council Constitution, I hereby authorise the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to determine all planning applications submitted in respect of land within the administrative area of Telford & Wrekin Council. I am aware of the practice whereby certain applications have to be determined by Planning Committee rather than by Council officers but, in the current circumstances, I now confirm that the requirements for applications to be referred to Planning Committee for determination as set out in the Planning Committee resolution on 24th July 2013, including the “call-in procedure” are suspended indefinitely and delegations as set out in the attached note will be adopted until further notice.

*Angie Astley
Executive Director – Housing, Communities & Customer Services
28 March 2020*

With reference to the emergency Chief Officer powers delegated to me within the Telford & Wrekin Council Constitution, I hereby confirm the appointment of Cllr Chris Turley as Vice Chair of the Planning Committee. I am aware that the Monitoring Officer (and Deputy MO in his absence), has the power to add/remove members on any Committee but this does not extend to appointments of the Vice Chair which is usually undertaken by the Committee. Cllr Jackie Loveridge, who was Vice Chair, has had an extended leave of absence approved and is not able to act as Vice Chair at the current time. As a result of the government requirement for social distancing, it is not possible to convene a Planning Committee to confirm the appointment of a Vice Chair. Following confirmation from central government that social distancing is no longer required or, upon the remote meeting of a Planning Committee (whichever is earlier), the appointment of Vice Chair will be included within the business to be concluded at that meeting.

*Angie Astley
Executive Director – Housing, Communities & Customer Services
28 March 2020*

Planning

A Cabinet decision taken on 24 July 2013 provided a framework setting out the arrangements for officer/Committee determination of planning applications.

There is concern that the current coronavirus situation will delay decision-making and, therefore, it is proposed that the Leader makes a decision to delegate **all** decisions to officers. However, it is recommended that, in the event a decision is needed in the circumstances set out below, officers canvass views from Members, by remote means asking them to confirm if they support the officer recommendation:-

- A proposal that involves the Council as either applicant or landowner (or has a financial interest) and the proposal is a “major application” ie. residential developments of 10 or more units/over 0.5ha **or** non-residential creation of 1,000sqm gross floor area/development over 1ha excluding reserved matters applications;
- If submitted by or on behalf of an Assistant Director or above or an Elected Member;
- If a departure from policy and officers are recommending approval;
- The number and nature of representations from the public against officer recommendation is, in the opinion of the SDM: Development Management and/or Area Planning Officer, sufficient to require that the application should be determined by Board

It is suggested that each Member indicates, at the end of their response, whether or not they support the recommendation. The officer decision will then follow the majority result and, in the event of even responses, the Chair will, essentially, use a “casting” vote.

In the event that there is legislation passed which allows for remote meetings, then this can be reviewed.

With regards to applications that are called in during the period, there is concern that, due to the quantity of applications that are/can be called-in, it will prove labour intensive at a time when resources are expected to be stretched if officers were then required to canvass views of all Committee members.

In normal circumstances, any officer decision requires a planning officer to prepare a report for consideration by a more senior officer who then approves/rejects the recommendations and makes a formal decision.

Temporarily, until Covid-19 is contained, it is proposed that the following process is followed:-

- Planning application received
- At some point through the planning process, a request to call-in is received and considered in usual way
- Planning officer prepares a report with recommendations
- Area Planning Officer considers report and signs to indicate agreement to recommendations

- SDM consults with Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee to seek views on application
- SDM gives final consideration and does a final sign off to confirm agreement, or otherwise, to recommendations
- Decision notice issued