

Motion submitted by Councillor Matthew Summers regarding Planning

Planning is one of this council's biggest, most important responsibilities and one of the most emotive topics for the communities that we serve. Currently however, there is no third party right of appeal, only an applicant can appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against a refusal of permission. There are therefore no opportunities for the community to appeal a grant of planning permission (or a refusal) other than judicial review which is costly and constrained only to the reasonableness or legality of the decision. It is clear that there is room for manoeuvrability within local procedures which would provide an opportunity to show our communities that we take their feelings seriously.

Council therefore moves to instruct officers to produce a report detailing the options and associated changes to the constitution, policies and procedures for council to consider creating a mechanism for local reviews to take place and the potential impacts on decision making and resources. By carrying this motion, council is not approving any changes at this stage, but officers should focus on:

1. A mechanism for the ratification of significant planning committee decisions and the level at which that should be set e.g. applications for over 25 dwellings.
2. An opportunity for members to call in a Planning Committee decision for review and the circumstances in which that would be possible.