

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE E-PLANNING AGENDA IN THE DEVELOPMENT QUALITY SERVICES (AN103-2007)

Members will be aware that the Planning and Transportation Department is committed to developing and implementing electronic file management and communications across the full range of its services.

As part of this commitment the Development Quality Service is continuing to build on progress made in recent years eg the efficient use of the internet to publicise its role and services; the on-line facilities for two way communication with our consultees and the general public; the development of interactive advice services; the Weekly List and the application search engine and on-line Register (Public Access) among others.

New on-line and back office activities will be phased in over a period of time and the support of Members is now sought in respect of the following modest service improvements as part of this process:

1. Circulation of Objection Letters

At present, Members receive paper copies of objection letters/letters of representation and support in respect of planning applications in their Wards. The Convener of the DQ Committee already receives his copies by e-mail.

It is recommended that with immediate effect all Members receive their copies solely by e-mail, ensuring a speedier and more efficient process.

2. Weekly List of New Planning Applications

This list is currently available on the Planning and Transportation Department's Webpage and is used extensively by the public and local organisations, however, Members still receive a printed version.

It is recommended that with immediate effect Members will no longer receive the paper based list.

3. Planning Appeal Decisions

Currently, paper copies are available to a range of recipients, including the Ward Councillor as soon as possible on receipt from SEIRU. In due course a Director's report is progressed for Committee summarising the outcome of the appeal. At that stage a paper copy of the decision letter is placed in the Members' Lounges.

It is recommended that with immediate effect paper copies of the decision letters are not circulated but emailed instead. Copies of the decision letter are already, as a matter of routine, electronically filed with the application documents on-line with access gained through the on-line Public Access facility.

It is therefore also recommended to discontinue the practice of placing paper copies of the letters in the Members' Lounges.

It is recommended that Members support the above proposals.