

Executive

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Review into Built Environment Conservation Area Policy

7 February 2011

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the report and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review into the Council's Built Environment Conservation Policy.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will attend the meeting to present the report.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To note the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with regard to the Built Environment Conservation Area Policy Scrutiny Review
- (2) To agree the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations regarding Built Environment Conservation Area Policy Scrutiny Review as detailed below:
 - (1) That the Executive recognises the importance of our conservation areas and continues to support the work carried out by the Council to protect their character.
 - (2) That the Executive asks the LDF Advisory Panel to make sure that policies to protect conservation areas are contained within the LDF at the appropriate earliest opportunity.
 - (3) That the Executive approves the informal planning guidance document "*Subdivision of buildings for residential use*" which is shortly to be brought before it for approval following public consultation.
 - (4) That the LDF Panel be requested to keep under review the effectiveness of the document "*Subdivision of buildings for residential use*" and in due course, if this document is found not to be effective in generally achieving its objectives, to consider whether the document should be reviewed and incorporated more formally as a Local Development Document within the Local Development Framework.

- (5) That Executive supports the efforts of the Council as a whole as we work with other organisations (such as the Highway Authority in respect of highway maintenance) to make sure that where public money is spent in conservation areas, this is appropriately directed to ensure that priority is given to ensuring the enhancement of the conservation areas.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 As part of their 2010 work programme the Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered undertaking a full scrutiny review of the work of the planning service within built environment conservation areas insofar as that work related to:
- Identifying, appraising and reviewing conservation areas
 - developing planning policies and guidance to protect conservation areas
 - determining planning applications, Listed Building Consents and Conservation Area Consents
 - enforcing the planning decisions of the Council

Proposals

- 1.2 The Committee agreed to make this topic the subject of a Select Committee style investigation rather than a project based task and finish review.
- 1.3 A detailed briefing pack of documents relating to the above issues was circulated to members of the Committee in advance of their meeting on 26 October 2010. The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development, the Design and Conservation Team Leader and the Team Leaders from Development Control and Major Developments attended that meeting to answer the Committee's questions about the Council's policy and practice with regard to conservation areas.

Conclusion

- 1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee concluded its review into the Council's Built Environment Conservation Policy at its meeting on 6 December 2010. The Committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations are set out in the main body of the report (Appendix 1).
- 1.5 All of the background information and evidence considered during the review is available on request from Democratic Services.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One To accept some or all of the overview and scrutiny recommendations.

Option Two To reject some or all of the overview and scrutiny recommendations.

Implications

Financial: There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by Denise Taylor, Service Accountant CS&R, 01295 221982

Legal: There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, 01295 221686

Risk Management: There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer, 01295 221566

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

A Cleaner Greener Cherwell
Cherwell, an accessible value for money Council

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Gibbard
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Built Environment Conservation Area Policy Scrutiny Review
Background Papers	
N/A	

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