

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

11th February 2015

**IMPACT OF CHANGES TO NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE ON PLANNING
COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS**

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| Responsible Portfolio Holder | Councillor Greg Chance |
| Responsible Head of Service | Ruth Bamford |

1. Purpose of Report

To receive an item of information in relation to national changes to the planning system in relation to Planning Obligations. Officers will answer any related questions at the meeting if necessary.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to NOTE the revised thresholds and considerations in relation to planning obligations

3. Financial, Legal, Policy and Risk Implications

There are financial implications for the Council as increasing the threshold where payments are required is likely to reduce the quantity of contributions achieved. However, as this is as a result of a central government decision, the Local Authority has no control over this.

Report

Members will be aware that in March 2014 the Government published the National Planning Policy Guidance document as a living guidance document for planning. It is available online only and can be changed as the Government chooses.

Currently, the thresholds in Redditch for seeking contributions towards matters such as open space (including equipped play and pitch provision) is the creation of 5 new residential units (net), and this also applies to County education contributions.

However, on 28 November 2014 the section of the NPPG relating to planning obligations was changed with immediate effect, raising the threshold to exclude:

'developments of 10-units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of no more than 1000sqm.'

Therefore, where applications were reported to Planning Committee and resolved positively to be granted subject to a planning obligation, the policy thresholds in place at the time of the meeting no longer apply.

However, the only applications in that category are above the 1000m² floorspace criteria and thus the S106 requirement still applies.

Had the applications not been determined and fallen below the revised threshold, they would now fall between these two thresholds and could no longer be determined in compliance with the member resolution. Therefore, they would need to be re-considered by Members.

Whilst there are no current cases that fall into this situation, Members are advised to note the changes to the thresholds and be mindful of these when considering applications that are reported to Planning Committee.

Other work will be done to establish a more cohesive way forward in relation to the shortfall in expected income to certain departments as a result of this. In the interim, each case will be considered on its merits by Officers.

Where a S106 agreement is required, these applications will continue to be reported to the Planning Committee for determination as per the scheme of delegated powers.

Officers will assess each case for its compliance or otherwise with the amended thresholds and work with colleagues in the legal team accordingly.

4. Background

Relevant planning application files.
National Planning Policy Guidance
(<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/>)

5. Consultation

There has been no consultation other than with relevant Borough Council Officers.

6. Author of Report

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