

EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee - Chairman's Report

Re. planning applications and other matters considered by the Planning Committee in the Municipal Year 2020 -21

- 1. Process.** From May to August 2020, formal meetings of the Planning Committee were suspended due to the restrictions relating to the coronavirus pandemic. During this period, the power to decide upon this Council's comments for submission to Wokingham Borough Council was carried out under delegated powers – by the Deputy Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman or the Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee. Members of the Committee were invited to submit their comments on applications to the Deputy Town Clerk; from June, to facilitate this process, the Chairman held informal virtual discussions with Committee Members. Meetings of the Committee were held virtually w.e.f. August 2020: this enabled residents and community groups to attend and - in the Public Forum section of the agendas - address the Committee.
- 2. Planning Applications etc.** During the year, the number of Applications (all types) received and considered (or noted) was 271. As to those that were specifically planning applications, 189 were Householder Applications; 19 were Full Applications; 1 was an Outline Application; 15 were Prior Approval Applications; - and there were a small number of other types of application. Applications relating to works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders numbered 30. The Committee was ably assisted in giving due consideration to these matters by the advice and recommendations received from its Planning Advisor, Bill Luck.
- 3. Consultation responses.** Throughout the year, the Committee received notification of a significant number of consultations – national and local – that were being undertaken. The formulation and consideration of responses to be submitted on behalf of the Town Council involved, in some cases, a considerable amount of work and collaboration by means of Working Groups and/or by email and virtual meetings. A useful resume of some of the principal consultation responses submitted, with URL links, can be found in The Town Plan (at para. 1.6) – which can be seen on the Council's website.
- 4. In Conclusion.** That the Committee was able to transition to virtual meetings so smoothly and then function so effectively and comprehensively during the year is due to the not inconsiderable efforts of the Vice-Chairman, Andrew Mickleburgh and all other Members of the Committee; and our Planning Advisor; - and could not have been achieved without the advice and guidance from the Deputy Town Clerk, Emma Carroll, as supported by the Senior Office Administrator, Diana Humphries, and Democratic Services Officer, Richard Fryer.

Councillor Geoff Littler, Chairman