

Minutes

Planning Committee

2.00pm, Wednesday 3 February 2021

Present

Councillors Gardiner (Convener), Child (Vice-Convener), Booth, Jim Campbell (substituting for Councillor Mitchell), Mary Campbell, Griffiths, Mowat, Osler, Rose, Frank Ross (substituting for Councillor Gordon) and Young.

1. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the Planning Committee of 2 December 2020 as a correct record.

2. Business Bulletin

The Committees Business Bulletin for 3 February 2021 was presented.

Decision

To note the business bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted.)

3. Scottish Government Position Statement on National Planning Framework 4 – City of Edinburgh Council

National Planning Frameworks (NPFs) should be updated every five years. The most recent, NPF3, was published in 2014.

Work on NPF4 had been held back due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the need for the Scottish Government to address other significant matters. In the interim, the Planning (Scotland) 2019 Act was approved and put the NPF on a different foundation, as a statutory part of the development plan which informed regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Plans and had regard to them.

The Position Statement was published for comment and made reference to NPF3 remaining in place until Ministers adopted NPF4. The legislation also provided that a reviewed Scottish Planning Policy would form part of NPF4.

Approval was sought for a supportive response to the Scottish Government's Position Statement on NPF4 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

Decision

- 1) To note the Scottish Government's Position Statement on National Planning

Framework 4 (NPF4)

- 2) To note that the Ministers seen this as a consultative document that did not replace National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) and that only once NPF4 was adopted by Scottish Ministers would that be the case.
- 3) To approve the proposed response to the consultation (Appendix 1 of the report) that sets out the Council's broad support for the policy proposals set out in the Statement, with the provisos set out in the Appendix, including that the Position Statement be considered a significant material consideration.
- 4) To agree that the proposed response be submitted to the Scottish Government by 19 February 2021.

(Reference– report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

4. Response to Scottish Government's consultation paper on Mediation in the planning system

Details were provided of a consultation paper issued by the Scottish Government which sought views on draft guidance on the promotion and use of mediation in the Scottish Planning system. Whilst it recognized the wide potential use of mediation, it intended to focus initially on aspects of the development plan process and the pre-application stage in development management.

The proposed response to the consultation paper was set out which agreed in principle with the Scottish Government's proposal but identified some practical issues to be considered further.

Decision

To approve Appendix 1 to the report as the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation paper on mediation in the planning system.

(Reference - report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

5. Annual Review of Guidance

Committee considered a report that advised of changes to planning guidance in 2020 and sought approval for the programme in the coming year and of minor updates to certain guidelines.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress in consolidating and updating guidance for users of the planning service (Appendix 1 of the report).
- 2) To approve the attached updates to certain guidelines (Appendix 2 of the report).

- 3) To approve the programme for work in 2021 as set out in Section 4 of the report.

(Reference - report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

6. Development management - discretionary charges

An update was provided on the delivery of the pre-application advice service (PAAS) introduced by Council on 1 July 2019 and proposed some changes.

The introduction of new discretionary charges to cover applications for non-material variations was proposed.

Decision

- 1) To approve the proposed changes to the Council's pre-application advice service and approve that the proposed additional charges for providing pre-application advice be implemented from 1 April 2021.
- 2) To approve the proposed changes to the non-material variation service and the introduction of the proposed charges for providing the service from 1 April 2021.
- 3) To agree that a follow-up report be brought to Planning Committee within six months of the implementation date to continue to monitor performance.

(References – Planning Committee, 29 January 2020 (item 6); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

7. Accessibility of New Buildings

At its meeting of 10 December 2020, the City of Edinburgh Council requested a report to Planning Committee on 3 February 2021 that set out how accessibility was considered through Building Standards and the planning system and how compliance with the Building Regulations was ensured. Appendix 1 of the report showed the agreed motion in full.

Details were provided on how these matters were considered through both systems and explained how compliance with the Building Regulations was ensured.

Decision

To note that planning applications were considered against planning policies and guidance which promoted accessibility and that the Building Regulations ensured that technical requirements for access to and within buildings were met.

(Reference - report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

8. Coronavirus Measures and Publication of Weekly Lists and Posting of Site Notices

The Council published its weekly list of applications in libraries, Hub buildings and its principal office at Waverley Court. These buildings were closed to the public as a result of the Coronavirus Emergency.

Planning Committee agreed on 2 September 2020 that weekly lists would continue to not be published in libraries and offices until 31 December 2020. It also agreed that if the Chief Planning Officer considered that these measures needed to continue beyond that date, he would take a decision to do so following consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener of the Planning Committee and report to Committee on that decision thereafter.

The arrangements for publications needed to be extended as libraries and offices would remain closed due to continuing Coronavirus measures. Following consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener, the Chief Planning Officer had taken the decision to extend these measures to 31 March 2021.

Decision

- 1) To note the decision taken by the Chief Planning Officer in consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener to extend the period during which weekly lists were not published in libraries and offices to 31 March 2021.
- 2) To note the decision to suspend the physical posting of site notices and to publish these on the Council's website.
- 3) To agree that officers would inform and refer Councillors, Community Councillors and members of the public to the 'Tell me Scotland' website where information on public notices could be found.
- 4) To agree that officers would reinstate site notices before 31 March 2021 if it was possible in terms of Coronavirus restrictions being eased.

(References – Planning Committee, 2 September 2020 (item 6); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

9. Edinburgh Urban Design Panel Annual Review

Details were provided of the findings from the annual review of the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel's work. A series of recommendations and actions were proposed for approval.

Decision

- 1) To note the findings of the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel's annual review.

- 2) To record the Planning Committee's appreciation of the voluntary contributions made by the Panel members to the design review process particularly in the landscape of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3) To approve the revised Remit, Function, Roles and Procedures of the Panel as set out in Appendix 3 of the report.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

10. Land Strategy to Support Delivery of Affordable Housing and Brownfield Regeneration – referral from the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

On 14 January 2021, the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee considered a report which provided an update on the progress with the implementation of the land strategy for Council-led housing developments. The report was referred to the Planning Committee for information.

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

11. Housing Land Audit and Completions Programme 2020

Committee considered a report that summarised the findings of the 2020 annual Housing Land Audit and Completions Programme.

Decision

- 1) To note the findings of the report including Appendix 1, 'The Housing Land Audit and Completions Programme 2020'.
- 2) To refer the report to the SESplan project board.
- 3) To refer the report to the Scottish Government to assist in the ongoing development of planning practice in relation to housing delivery and measuring the availability of land.
- 4) To refer the report to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee for its information.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

12. Planning Improvement Plan – Interim Refresh

Approval was sought for changes to the Planning Improvement Plan (PIP) 2018/21 to reflect progress and other changes since it was first prepared. Approval was also sought for a new template for application reports to the Development Management Sub-Committee.

Decision

- 1) To approve the appended Service Improvement Plan as a refresh of the Improvement Plan originally approved in December 2018 (Appendix 1 of the report).
- 2) To approve the appended sample template for application reports to the Development Management Sub-Committee (Appendix 2 of the report), subject to any amendments necessary for technical reasons.
- 3) To note the appended update on progress in implementing the recommendations of an internal audit on developer contributions (Appendix 3 of the report).
- 4) To note the Scottish Government's feedback on the service's performance in 2019/20 (Appendix 4 of the report).
- 5) To agree that officers would look at the possibility of putting comments made by members of the public on planning application in the same place on the portal to make them easier for Councillors to access.

(References – Planning Committee, 2 September 2020 (item 7); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)