



REPORT TO:	Planning Committee
DATE:	10 th January 2024
SUBJECT:	Review of Implemented Planning Decisions
PURPOSE:	To report on the conclusions of the Performance Monitoring Panel and to invite the Committee to submit any comments back to the Panel, following the review/tour undertaken with members.
KEY DECISION:	N/A
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Portfolio Holder for Assets & Planning
REPORT OF:	Phil Norman – Head of Planning
REPORT AUTHOR:	Daniel Allen – Principal Planning Officer
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	There are no wards or communities affected
EXEMPT REPORT?	No

SUMMARY

South Holland District Council's Constitution outlines, within Part 3 (Delegations), Section D (Delegations to Committees), that the Performance Monitoring Panel shall 'revisit a number of implemented planning decisions'.

In this context, the latest 'Implemented Planning Decision' visits took place on 25th October 2023. A follow up report was prepared and presented to the Performance Monitoring Panel on 15th November 2023 which set out the conclusions drawn from the exercise. This report to Planning Committee is the next step in the review process, before returning to the Performance Monitoring Panel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Planning Committee considers the conclusions drawn from the Performance Monitoring Panel and to agree any comments Members may wish to report back to the Panel, following the previous recommendations and conclusions of the Performance Monitoring Panel.

In short, the recommendations presented to the Performance Monitoring Panel included that the Review of Implemented Planning Decisions tour occur every two years, in place of the current process that occurs each year, along with an extension of the member invitation to include members of the Planning Committee.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to inform the Planning Committee of the conclusions of the review and give an opportunity for Committee members to feed back to the Performance Monitoring Panel.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

That the Panel does nothing. However, this would not be a recommended course of action as it would be contrary to the purpose of the 'Implemented Planning Decisions' review, which is to improve the quality and consistency of decision-making, strengthen public confidence in the planning system, and help with reviews of planning policy.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The 'Probity in Planning' guide (updated 2019), prepared by The Local Government Association, highlights the need to review past planning decisions and outcomes (specifically detailed within section 13 of the report).
- 1.2** This guide details that it "is good practice for councillors to visit a sample of implemented planning permissions to assess the quality of the decisions and the development". The guide suggests that this activity "should improve the quality and consistency of decision-making, strengthen public confidence in the planning system, and can help with reviews of planning policy".
- 1.3** Part 3 (Delegations), Section D (Delegations to Committees) of the South Holland District Council Constitution states that the Performance Monitoring Panel shall 'revisit a number of implemented planning decisions'. As such, at South Holland District Council, this review is undertaken by the Performance Monitoring Panel.
- 1.4** The Panel had last carried out a tour of the District on 27th October 2022, with the intention for these tours to be carried out on an annual basis. It is noted, as outlined within the previous year's report, that the Coronavirus pandemic resulted in tours not being undertaken in 2020 and 2021; however, the tours have re-occurred annually the past two years.

2. THE TOUR

The latest tour took place on 25th October 2023, with morning and afternoon sessions taking place on a number of development sites. Five Members took part in the sessions and were present for the whole day.

- 2.1** The morning session comprised visits to Crowland and a commercial site near to Spalding. The afternoon session comprised visits to Moulton Chapel, Holbeach, and Weston.
- 2.2** A selection of five residential developments were visited, in addition to a single commercial site. It is also noted that within the residential developments visited, one visit comprised six individual sites that together formed a wider development.
- 2.3** The sites chosen comprised both small and large-scale schemes, with some schemes having been complete and others currently undergoing construction.
- 2.4** On the day of the visits, Members were provided with an information pack detailing background information and key issues relating to each site, including a brief history of planning applications for each site. Site layout plans of each site were also provided.
- 2.5** The members and officers viewed each site as a collective and allowed for each participant to offer their individual thoughts and opinions on each development, with verbal assistance being provided by officers on site where necessary or requested. Members' feedback and thoughts for each site were noted by officers and forms the notes compiled in Appendix A.
- 2.6** A debriefing was held after the afternoon session, led by Councillor Alcock, to review the day and draw conclusions. This allowed clarity to be provided in respect of the key matters raised within the morning and afternoon sessions.

3. CONCLUSION AND AGREED ACTIONS

- 3.1** The main conclusions drawn from the exercise and the recurring themes of the visits, which have been detailed within Appendix A, included the lack of distinctive purpose or functionality of green spaces, along with the lack of maintenance and lack of clear management responsibility of such public areas throughout the large majority of sites. Maintenance of drains and easement areas was also regularly discussed.

It was noted that only one single area of open space during the visits comprised play equipment, with this being an area for improvement within schemes.

It was also regularly noted that 'smaller' or more 'minor' details on the built form, such as window details, can often result in a wider positive or negative outlook for the development. Likewise, the use of a variation of brick types or external materials, along with a variety of housing types can significantly enhance the overall design of a development.

- 3.2** It was noted that some schemes appeared, due to differing levels, to have 'sloping drives', which resulted in water run-off towards the host dwellings and their associated garages or gardens, with this being highlighted as an area of concern and need for further attention in terms of drainage.
- 3.3** A full summary of comments can be found in Appendix A.
- 3.4** At the Performance Monitoring Panel on 15th November 2023, Members discussed the report and re-emphasised the key considerations of the tour as expressed within this report above.

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

4.1 The delivery of quality development within South Holland on an ongoing basis.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP

5.1.1 None.

5.2 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.2.1 The review of implemented planning decisions relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Your Home – Enable effective planning and delivery of housing solutions to meet local needs and aspirations to ensure that our residents have access to a range of housing options in the district; and ensure that our residents are enabled to live in high quality housing no matter the tenure;
- Your Place – Support Spalding and Holbeach to be attractive places that people want to visit, live and work whilst supporting all other towns and villages in the district to meet the needs of their communities.
- Your Place - Create further outdoor spaces and new woodlands to enhance the natural environment and to encourage our communities to have active lifestyles.

5.3 STAFFING

5.3.1 None.

5.4 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.4.1 None.

5.5 DATA PROTECTION

5.5.1 None.

5.6 FINANCIAL

5.6.1 None.

5.7 RISK MANAGEMENT

5.7.1 None.

5.8 STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

5.8.1 None.

5.9 REPUTATION

5.9.1 None.

5.10 CONTRACTS

5.10.1 None.

5.11 CRIME AND DISORDER

5.11.1 None.

5.12 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

5.12.1 None.

5.13 HEALTH AND WELL BEING

5.13.1 None.

5.14 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.14.1 None.

5.15 LINKS TO 12 MISSIONS IN THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

5.15.1 None.

6. ACRONYMS

6.1 None.

APPENDICES

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

APPENDIX A

Summary of Comments from the Review of Implemented Planning Decisions Tour (25th October 2023)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

Performance Monitoring Panel – 15th November 2023

REPORT APPROVAL

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Signed off by:

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