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**Development Control Committee – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012**

**Report of the Director of the Urban Environment**

**Update on the Black Country Business Friendly Planning Project and Changes to the validation of planning applications.**

**Purpose of Report**

- 1 The reason for this report is to provide information to Members on:
  - an update on the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Planning Project and
  - The changes in the operation of Development Control with regard to the validation of planning applications.

**Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)**

- 2 The Black Country Local Enterprise Board (LEP), constituted in January 2011, acts as a forum between business and local government. The LEP has developed an operation plan around 7 key priorities for the Black Country's economic growth and prosperity. Under the priority work stream 'Planning', the LEP Board wished to continue to address the barriers to growth in the Black Country, ensure that the approach to planning adopted by the Black Country was fit for purpose and 'business friendly'.
- 3 Senior officers from the planning and development teams at each Black Country Authority worked alongside the LEP Board Sponsor- Carillion Plc, the Black Country Consortium and a focus group of customers from the planning, land and property and business sectors, to develop a Customer Charter and Implementation Plan highlighting key areas for improvement and suggested mechanisms for delivering change within each of the four local authorities.
- 4 The adopted charter/pledges can be accessed via our web pages through the following link:  
[http://cms.walsall.gov.uk/black\\_country\\_planning\\_charter.pdf](http://cms.walsall.gov.uk/black_country_planning_charter.pdf)

**Validations Checklist**

- 5 One of the first actions in the improvement plan nearing completion is the Black Country Validations checklist. The four Local Authorities already have their own individual checklists following their introduction in April 2008. This updated version provides a single checklist for the Black Country to help customers in

submitting the required information alongside planning applications to the four Local Planning Authorities.

- 6 The list sets out the minimum national requirements for all applications. These include:-
- Completed Form
  - Plan identifying land and any other plans and drawings as necessary (to identified scale and north marked on plans).
  - A copy of the Article 7 (Agricultural Holdings) Certificate.
  - A copy of the completed and dated Ownership Certificate (A, B, C or D).
  - Design and Access Statement (if required).
  - The appropriate fee.
- 7 It also details the additional local information that will also be required in certain specified circumstances, (dependant on development and the site location specifics). For example, transport assessments, ecological surveys and flood risk assessments.
- 8 Our existing validations checklist can be found at <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/environment-planning/planning/planning-services/submitting-a-planning-application-/validation-checklist-for-planning-application/>
- 9 Whilst guidance is provided it is still expected and encouraged that prospective applicants seek pre application advice prior to submission.
- 10 The draft of the new Black Country Checklist will go out to consultation for 8 weeks in February. Following the receipt of feedback the list will be amended and then brought back to Committee prior to formal adoption.
- 11 Given the emerging changes through the Localism Bill and the emerging national Planning Policy Framework, this will be a live document subject to review and update.

### **Finance**

- 12 There are no direct financial consequences arising from this report.

### **Law**

- 13 The relevant law is: -
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
  - Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
  - Circular 9/95 General Development Order 1995.

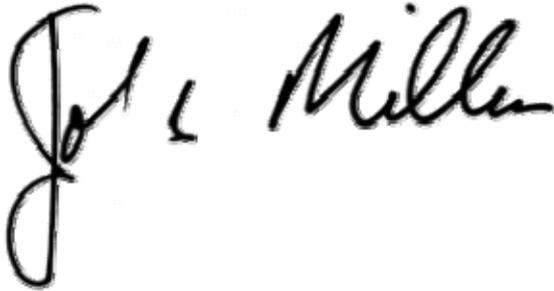
### **Equality Impact**

- 14 The proposals take into account the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

**Recommendation**

15 It is proposed that Committee considers and notes the contents of the report.

**J. B. MILLAR  
DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT**



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**List of Background Papers**

- Dudley MBC - Statement of Community Involvement.
- Validation of Planning Applications - DCLG July 2006
- Best Practice Guidance on the Validation of Planning Applications - ODPM March 2005.
- Town and Country Planning (Applications) Regulations 1988
- National planning guidance (PPG's and PPS's).