**South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC)**

**Planning Agents Forum**

**23rd May 2016**

**South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne**

**8.30am – 10am**

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| **1.** | **Welcome and introductions**  Cllr Robert Turner (Planning Portfolio Holder) introduced the following:  Julie Baird – Head of Development Management  Jane Green – Head of New Communities  Caroline Hunt – Planning Policy Manager  Cllr Lynda Harford – Planning Committee Chairman |
| **2.** | **Development Management Update**  Julie Baird - Head of Development Management provided an update on the Planning service. Consultants have been recruited to deal with the backlog of out of time applications.  Applications will be validated within 5-10 days and applicants will receive a phone call when it has been validated.  Feedback will be provided after the consultation process rather than after a decision is made. It is not always the same officer who will deal with the pre-app and application.  Consultations will be available on the website.  Performance indicators are to improve as a priority.  Extensions of time can be negotiated. |
| **3.** | **Validation**  Ian Papworth – Technical Support Team Leader outlined validation processes. Validation will be taken from planning officers and actioned by the TSO team. Appropriate training will be given. The target for validation will be 5 days by the end of summer.  The planning section on the SCDC website will be reviewed to ensure it is up-to-date. |
| **4.** | **Local Plan**  Local Plan was submitted in March 2014. The Inspectors identified some issues that they considered required further work. South Cambs have worked Cambridge to address these. The examinations have now resumed.  In the week commencing 6 June there will be 3 days of joint hearings relating to the additional work. The statements that were submitted are the SCDC website.  Following Cambridge only hearings, there will be around 12 weeks of South Cambs only hearings running into 2017. There will then be some further joint hearings.  Consultation will take place on modifications and it is anticipated that the Plan will be adopted later in 2017.  **An email will be sent regarding the situation with Berkshire Council on the affordable housing threshold which has gone to the Supreme Court.** |
| **5.** | **Questions and AOB**  Agents raised concerns about poor communication with a number of officers not returning calls or emails.  Planning Committee will visit neighbouring authorities to find out about their processes.  Stephen Kelly will start as Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire in June.  Jo Mills was thanked for her hard work as Director of Planning and New Communities. |
| **6.** | **Date of next meeting**  Wednesday 21st September 2016 |