



## **Changes to the Planning Process at East Suffolk Council**

If you are interested in planning matters in your village then we hope this is of assistance to you. Following the merger of Suffolk Coastal DC and Waveney DC on 1<sup>st</sup> April, East Suffolk Council (ESC) was formed. ESC have taken this opportunity to streamline some of their processes and one that has been changed is the way they deal with Planning applications. The following changes are now in force:

### **Area Teams**

There are now two specific Area Teams covering the whole district; Hollesley is in the Southern Area. The major change here is that we no longer have a specific officer dealing with our applications. They are now dealt with by anyone within the team to enable “*greater caseload management and resilience*”.

### **Communications with the Team**

All queries in relation to planning matters should be directed to a central e-mail of [planning@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:planning@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) This is monitored constantly and enquiries then passed to the most appropriate team or person. Please refrain from using any old addresses you may have in your address book as these will not be monitored as closely.

Where a planning matter is being dealt with by the ‘Enforcement Team’ the e-mail address of [d.c.enforcement@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:d.c.enforcement@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) should be used.

### **Commenting on Planning Applications**

It is still possible for members of the public and Statutory Consultees such as the Parish Council to comment on any planning application. The standard 21 days within which anyone can comment has not changed but in the past this could often be extended upon request (*perhaps to coincide with a Parish Council meeting*). However, henceforth extensions will be permitted only in very exceptional circumstances. Due to this it may be necessary for the Parish Council to hold a meeting between its regular meetings, just to discuss planning matters. Where this is necessary agendas will be placed on all the notice boards and on the web site.

### **Referral Process**

This process has changed slightly. Whereas before the Parish Council could request that a planning application be discussed by the Planning Committee, that option has now been removed. An application where the planning officer is minded to make a decision that is contrary to the views of either the Parish Council, the Ward Member or another Statutory Consultee will now be referred to a ‘Referral Panel’ (made up of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the relevant Planning Committee and supported by Senior Planning Officers). This panel will decide if the application should go to full Committee or if the officers decision is to be followed.

The outcome of this is that the Parish Council only gets one opportunity to 'state its case'. Therefore, we will need to ensure our correspondence is comprehensive and quotes various aspects of both national and local planning guidelines and regulations.

### **Planning Committee Meetings**

If an application in Hollesley goes to the full Planning Committee details will be available on the ESC Web Site. However, previously the Clerks have been notified of the impending meeting; this will no longer happen. To ensure we do not miss out on the opportunity to speak at the Planning Committee Meeting, the Clerk will monitor the agendas and alert residents via the Grapevine about an application to be considered.

If you would like further explanation of any of these changes please do not hesitate to contact the Parish Clerk on 01394 411405

Judi Hallett  
Clerk to Hollesley Parish Council  
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