

Dear Guy

Please see below further comments from Keele Parish Council, which were agreed at their meeting on 8th October 2014. As you confirmed last night I'm hoping this will be included in the report being finalised today.

"Disappointment at the short notice given to Parish Councils bearing in mind their monthly meeting cycles.

The Parish Council however do feel that this review dodges the issue of demonstrating the competence of planning officers and environmental health officers. There is evidence of a bias towards applicants. In particular there have been cases of expert professional advice (through objections) rejected by planning officers which have later been accepted when submitted by the applicants. The Parish Council is concerned that the Peers carrying out the review quickly dismissed the opportunity to look at factual evidence that was available to support the above statement – their reasoning being that they only had an hour.

The Parish Council also feels that as there is specific reference to the appeals that are ongoing in the report, this could undermine the council's defence on undecided appeals and should be removed from the report."

Kind regards
Clare

Clare Withington
Parish Clerk to Keele Parish Council
c/o Lyngarth
Barthomley Road
Audley
Staffs ST7 8HU
clerk.keelepc@gmail.com
website – www.keeleparish.org
07901 692414

From: Benson, Guy [mailto:Guy.Benson@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk]
Sent: 10 October 2014 07:51
To: 'Clare Withington'
Cc: Clifton, Neale
Subject: RE: Newcastle Borough Council's Planning Peer Review

Clare

With reference to your email of the 30th I can confirm that comments from Audley PC soon after their meeting on the 16th will still be able to be reported to Cabinet when it considers the action plan at its meeting on the 12th November, but they will be received too late to be taken into account in the report that will go to the Planning Committee on the 28th October (that report has to be published on the 17th October to comply with Access to Information requirements).

Thank you for the comments from Keele PC which you sent through on the 2nd and your own personal comments upon the review, also received on the 2nd.

Guy Benson

Head of Planning and Development
Regeneration and Development Directorate
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
01782 742408

www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

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From: Clare Withington [<mailto:clerk.keelepc@gmail.com>]
Sent: 30 September 2014 19:53
To: Benson, Guy
Cc: Clifton, Neale
Subject: RE: Newcastle Borough Council's Planning Peer Review

Dear Guy

Unfortunately this email arrived after both Parish Council's September meetings. The next meeting for Keele is 8th Oct and Audley is 16th Oct – as they only meet once a month. I know for certain that they will both want the opportunity to input into this – therefore if it is acceptable I would like to ask that I send their approved comments immediately after the meeting on the following Friday – so the latest will be 17th Oct for Audley.

I hope this is ok.

Clare

Clare Withington
Parish Clerk to Keele Parish Council
c/o Lyngarth
Barthomley Road
Audley
Staffs ST7 8HU
clerk.keelepc@gmail.com
website – www.keeleparish.org
07901 692414

From: Benson, Guy [<mailto:Guy.Benson@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk>]
Sent: 19 September 2014 17:48
Cc: Clifton, Neale
Subject: Newcastle Borough Council's Planning Peer Review

In July my colleague Beverley Clearly invited your Council to participate in a Review of the Council's Planning Service with the aim of addressing perceived concerns about facets of the Service to ensure that this important service is both effective and efficient. The review process was undertaken in accordance with a nationally-agreed approach. This involved an assessment around a number of key themes. The review team spent three days on site during which they interviewed a wide range of Members, officers and other stakeholders.

The Borough Council has received a final report from the Peer Review Team, a copy of which is being circulated to you, and to other stakeholders. I attach the report

The Planning Peer Review Team have made a number of recommendations. You will find these listed in Appendix 1 of the report. We would welcome your ideas on what action the Council should take in response to the recommendations, so that consideration can be given to including them in the Action Plan that the Council is now preparing. **Please could you submit them to me by no later than the close of play on 2nd October.**

You may wish to note that the current intention is to bring a report on the Action Plan to the Council's Cabinet at its meeting on the 12th November.

Yours sincerely,

Guy Benson
Head of Planning and Development
Regeneration and Development Directorate
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
01782 742408

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