

## **Handling Arrangements for Council Developments Policy**

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1. The Council can act as local planning authority in respect of planning applications for development of its own land (“Council Developments”) and can grant planning permission to itself.
- 1.2. Council Developments that are likely to have significant environmental effects are subject to enhanced scrutiny known as environmental impact assessment. For these applications, regulations require the Council to put in place appropriate administrative arrangements (“Handling Arrangements”) to ensure separation of functions and an “information barrier” between teams of officers acting for the Council as applicant and the Council as local planning authority.
- 1.3. The Handling Arrangements must be published on the Council’s website and must set out the officers in each team, appropriate communications between those teams, and how access to the Council’s document storage systems will be restricted to maintain an information barrier between those teams.
- 1.4. The Council will also put Handling Arrangements in place for Council Developments which do not require environmental impact assessments, in order to improve the transparency of Council decision-making.

### **2. Policy Context**

- 2.1. The Council previously had informal arrangements in place to separate its functions as developer and local planning authority. As set out below, formal Handling Arrangements are required and must be made publicly available in order to comply with regulatory requirements.

### **3. The Policy**

- 3.1. The Council will put in place Handling Arrangements for current and future Council Developments.
- 3.2. The Handling Arrangements will:
  - 3.2.1. be made public by publication on the Council’s website;
  - 3.2.2. specifically refer to Regulation 64(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the “EIA Regulations”) and make it clear that they set out a regime that is necessary to comply with the Council’s legal obligations, not just guidance;
  - 3.2.3. identify the teams within the Council which will carry out the functions of promoting and deciding the development;
  - 3.2.4. prohibit those in the team deciding the application from being involved in promoting or assisting in the promotion of the application;
  - 3.2.5. prohibit communications between the two teams other than through the formal channels appropriate to the application process; and

- 3.2.6. set out the measures put in place to implement an information barrier between the two teams, such as restricting access to files in the Council's legal and planning document management systems.

**Standards Committee  
September 2023**