

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL (EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR PLANNING POLICY AND TRANSPORT– COUNCILLOR BLENCOWE)</b></p>
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**PROPOSED NEW CONVENTION FOR PLANNING COMMITTEE  
RELATING TO DECISIONS CONTRARY TO OFFICER ADVICE**

Planning Committee Members considered a report in January 2014 examining the council's performance with planning appeals and the recent appeal case relating to the redevelopment of 32 – 38 Station Road Cambridge.

The committee agreed a number of follow up actions including the holding of a facilitated member review session and the introduction of a new convention to be followed in the event that the committee is minded to refuse/approve major/significant planning applications against the advice of its officers. The review session was held on 14 April and was supported by external facilitators.

Planning Committee considered a further report in late April detailing how the new convention might be introduced and agreed by a majority that Environment Scrutiny Committee should be asked to look at this issue. The report to Planning Committee and the notes from the discussion at the April meeting are attached at Appendix A and B.

Environment Scrutiny Committee was asked to review the operation of the convention being proposed, to take account of the previous comments of Planning Committee and make a recommendation to Full Council that the convention is introduced. Appendix C of the officers report outlined the proposed convention.

The Environment Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations unanimously.

**Accordingly, Council is recommended:**

- i. To approve an amendment to the constitution to include a new convention for the Planning Committee involving a deferred decision making process for appropriate cases.

- ii. The convention process to be introduced for a 12 month trial period from September 2014. The convention to apply in the circumstances where the committee resolves that it is minded to refuse or approve major applications schemes contrary to the recommendation of its officers and be subject to the operational arrangements outlined in Appendix C of the officers report.
- iii. To delegate to the Heads of Legal and Planning Services authority to amend the constitution to include the new convention, amend procedures, update guidance, provide training as necessary to ensure the smooth implementation of the new convention
- iv. To request the Head of Planning Services to provide a review report to Environment Scrutiny Committee on cases where the convention has applied, after 12 months operation