

 Executive 18 April 2012		Agenda Item No. 12
Title	Proposed revisions to the Conservation Area Advisory Forum and Planning Forum	
For further information about this report please contact	Gary Stephens, Development Manager gary.stephens@warwickdc.gov.uk 01926 456502 Graham Leach Civic & Committee Services Manager graham.leach@warwickdc.gov.uk 01926 456114	
Wards of the District directly affected	None	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A	
Background Papers		

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive		
Head of Service		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		
Monitoring Officer		
Finance		
Portfolio Holder(s)		
Consultation & Community Engagement		
There has been extensive discussion with a group of officers and Members, including a representative of CAAF, and consultation directly with CAAF, Planning Forum and Planning Committee.		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The report brings forward a proposal for amendments to the Constitution of the Conservation Area Advisory Forum and Planning Forum, including establishing a clearly defined purpose for both forums.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the proposed constitution for the Conservation Advisory Forum attached as Appendix One is approved.
- 2.2 That the proposed constitution for the Planning Forum attached as appendix two is approved

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 As part of the Council's Fit for the Future Programme and the Development Services Intervention, officers have been reviewing the role and operation of the Conservation Area Advisory Forum (CAAF). A design team was established involving officers from Development Services, the Chair of CAAF, the Council's Heritage Champion, Chair of Planning Committee and a representative of CAAF. The team have prepared a revised constitution which has been discussed with CAAF and is now being put forward for comment before going to April Executive for approval. The main revisions to note are extending the remit of CAAF to provide advice to developers at pre-application stage, and to cover all of the historic environment within Warwick District (not just the town Conservation Areas as at present). This includes the rural historic environment and two representatives will be added to the Forum to increase their knowledge. This balances the competing objectives of the need to keep the Forum numbers manageable, keeping the current volunteers engaged and involved, but gaining some expertise on the rural historic environment. If this is found to be insufficient, we can review that decision in 12 months if we find the Forum lacks expertise in any particular area.

This broadened remit will mean a greater focus on those proposals which have the greatest potential impact on the historic environment, and on proposals where the Council need their expertise and advice.

- 3.2 The revised remit and Constitution of the Planning Forum are based on a discussion at the Forum and have been consulted on with all members of the forum, plus all Warwick District Councillors. No objections to the proposal were made and several letters of support have been received.

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 The revision to the constitution of CAAF will provide greater clarity on its work and purpose, which in turn will hopefully improve the quality of new developments that preserve and enhance the historic environment in accordance with the Local Plan.
- 4.2 The revision to the process of Planning Forum will provide greater clarity on its work and purpose and would also enable greater engagement and training on planning matters.

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 It is believed that the changes to the constitutions can be accommodated within existing budgets, and that other operational changes to the way officers facilitate CAAF will deliver savings to the Council. However cost will need to be considered as part of the proposed remit reviews in 12 months.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED

- 6.1 It would be possible to continue with the existing constitution, however, this would not provide a clear purpose for CAAF or deliver the benefits for new development in terms of providing expert advice at pre application stage or in helping to protect and enhance the historic environment of the District beyond the towns.
- 6.2 It would be possible to continue with the approach at present of Planning Forum, however attendance at meetings has typically been low and at present no defined remit is known to be held by officers.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 Officers of the District Council have felt for sometime that Planning Forum is struggling and needed a defined remit. Following a survey of members in 2011 it was found that members of the forum agreed.
- 7.2 A draft proposal was outlined to the Forum in September and consulted on at the end of 2011. No negatives comments on proposal were received but some aspects of clarification have been included within the proposal as an outcome of the consultation.
- 7.3 The Planning Forum considered the proposal at its meeting on 2 February 2012 and made some minor changes to the proposal.

Warwick District Council

Conservation Advisory Forum Constitution

Purpose & Role

The purpose of the Conservation Advisory Forum is to assist in protecting and enhancing the District's special historic and architectural character

The role of the Conservation Advisory Forum is therefore:

1. To provide expert, constructive, impartial advice on historic buildings and their use, historic landscapes, and Conservation Areas to:
 - a. potential applicants and the Council at the pre-application stage (before submission) of an application that may affect the historic environment;
 - b. applicants and the Council (including the right to speak at Planning Committee on any item) by commenting on planning, listed building, conservation, advertisement, and tree applications that may affect the historic environment;
 - c. the Council and other bodies, such as Town and Parish Councils, on the designation of the historic environment, and formulation of policy and guidance relevant to the historic environment;
 - d. the Planning Inspectorate when determining appeals for planning and listed building applications that may affect the historic environment; and,
 - e. the Council and other statutory bodies when undertaking works under their statutory powers that may affect the historic environment.
2. To draw the Council's attention to possible unauthorised works to the historic environment; and,
3. To provide a forum for the sharing of knowledge and experience of best practice in relation to the historic environment between members of the Forum, officers of the Council and developers.

The Forum is an informal consultative body organised by Warwick District Council.

Membership & Roles

The Forum will consist of the following members:

1. Two elected Members of Warwick District Council who have an interest in the historic environment and planning matters.

Their role is to Chair and Vice Chair the Forum, give legitimacy to the Forum, inform its views through sharing their knowledge, and help develop their experience of the historic environment and planning matters.

The Chair of the Forum shall also act as the Council's Heritage Champion in promoting the historic environment both within the Council and the wider community. The Vice Chair shall be a Member with a desire to have a future involvement in Planning matters.

Elected Members may feedback the views of the Forum to District Council Ward Members as appropriate to individual cases.

2. One representative from each of the following organisations who will be invited to represent the views of that organisation on the historic environment at the Forum:

- a. Leamington Society
- b. Warwick Society
- c. Kenilworth Society
- d. Whitnash Society
- e. Victorian Society
- f. Georgian Group
- g. Twentieth Century Society
- h. Warwickshire Gardens Trust
- i. Central Leamington Area Residents Association
- j. Royal Town Planning Institute
- k. Royal Institute of British Architects
- l. Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
- m. Royal Leamington Spa Chamber of Trade
- n. Warwick Chamber of Trade
- o. Kenilworth Chamber of Trade
- p. Campaign to Protect Rural England
- q. Representative of the Rural Community Forums

Elected Members and representatives will be allowed to nominate a substitute to carry out their duties in the event of them being unable to attend a Forum meeting. A meeting will only be considered quorate if at least one elected Member and five representatives are in attendance.

Operation of the Forum

The Forum will normally meet every three weeks at the Town Hall.

The Forum is not a public meeting and members of the public will not be allowed to attend.

The Forum will be facilitated by officers from Development Services who will:

- a. prepare and distribute an agenda for each meeting;
- b. arrange for any invited participants to attend the Forum to present items, in accordance with criteria a, c and e of the agreed purpose and role of the Forum above;
- c. present items to the Forum for their consideration;
- d. record the consensus view (or opposing views where there is no consensus) of the Forum and feed this back to the Council or other relevant organisation as appropriate; and,
- e. publish the agenda and record of the meeting on the Council's website.

The more detailed operation of the Forum shall be agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair, in consultation with the Forum and the Development Manager.

Annual Review of the Forum

The Development Manager will measure the effectiveness of the Forum in delivering its purpose, and undertake an annual review of its membership and operation with the Forum.

An Annual Report demonstrating the Forum's performance over the previous year and the output of the above review will be reported to the Forum, before being reported to the Planning Committee. Any amendments to the Constitution must receive approval by the Planning Committee, or its successors.

Warwick District Council

Planning Forum Constitution

1. Purpose

- To educate Members of the Forum, and, thereby, the wider public, in the planning system and its operation;
- To inform Members of the Forum on the development of planning policy affecting the District; and,
- To discuss and receive feedback from Members of the Forum on the District Council's operation of the planning system within the District (excluding discussion on any 'live cases', i.e. current planning applications, proposals yet to be submitted as planning applications, or ongoing enforcement investigations).
- To discuss issues of general planning concern or interest at the discretion of the Chairman of the Forum.

2. Why do we do it?

- To improve understanding of the planning system and its operation amongst our partners, and to improve the quality of their input into the planning process;
- To involve and raise awareness of our partners with the development of planning policy within the District;
- To help improve our service and to understand the views of our partners

3. When is it?

- The Forum shall meet regularly twice yearly in April and October on either a Monday or Thursday evening at 6pm.
- Other Forums may be held as required

4. Where is it?

- The Forum will be held at the Town Hall Chamber (seating arrangement to be in an informal theatre style)

5. Who will be invited to attend

- All Warwick District Councillors
- All Town & Parish Councils within the Warwick District Area
- All Warwickshire County Councillors for the Warwick District Area
- Any community organisation from within the District who wishes to attend
- The public can attend as observers to the meetings but not participate.

6. How does it operate?

- The Forum is chaired by the Vice - Chair of Planning Committee
- The Forum receives presentations by officers/Members of the District Council as appropriate
- Copies of presentations will be made available to our partners
- For 30 minutes before the start of the Forum there will be tea & coffee available to allow time for networking
- The operation of the Forum will be regularly reviewed every 12 months