Report to CABINET

Planning Application Validation Checklist

Portfolio Holder:
Councillor Elaine Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for
Neighbourhoods

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Report Author: Peter Richards, Assistant Director for Planning,
Transport & Housing Delivery
Ext. 1917

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Reason for Decision
To consider the Draft Validation Checklist for planning applications submitted to the
Council and approve it for public consultation.

Recommendations
That the Draft Validation Checklist be approved for public consultation.

That authority to agree amendments to the Validation Checklist to take onboard comments
from the public consultation and to then adopt the Validation Checklist is delegated to the
Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Decent
Homes.

Planning Application Validation Checklist

1   **Background**

1.1   The Validation Checklist for Planning Applications provides guidance to applicants on what information they need to submit with a planning application, for the council as local planning authority to be able to validate the application and then consider it.

1.2   It was last updated in March 2011, since when there have been many changes to the planning system and planning policy, particularly recently with the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain, changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and the adoption of the Places for Everyone Joint Plan. As a result, it is necessary to update the Validation Checklist and ensure that applicants understand what information they need to submit with their planning applications.

1.3   Some validation requirements are set nationally, but local planning authorities are able to have a local list of validation requirements as well to require information that is necessary to help assess planning applications against statutory requirements, the NPPF and their adopted Development Plan.

1.4   Planning Practice Guidance encourages regular reviews of the local list and, where changes are considered necessary, it requires that the draft revised Validation Checklist should be consulted on with the local community, including regular applicants and agents that use our Planning Service.

2   **Current Position**

2.1.   Having reviewed our existing Validation Checklist, given its age and the recent changes in legislation, national policy and local planning policy, there is a need to update the Checklist. The proposed revised Validation Checklist is attached at Appendix 1.

2.2.   As a result, this report is seeking approval to publicly consult on the revised Validation Checklist. The consultation will be an open consultation on the council's consultation platform, with any member of the public or interested party able to comment. A specific invitation to comment via the consultation will be sent out to planning agents and consultants who regularly use our Planning Service, given they are most affected by the Validation Checklist.

2.3.   Following the consultation, the feedback will be reviewed, and the proposed revised Checklist will be amended as considered appropriate, before the final Validation Checklist is finalised and adopted. The recommendations propose to delegate this finalisation and adoption to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Decent Homes.

3   **Options/Alternatives**

3.1.   Option 1 (Preferred) – approve the public consultation on the revised Validation Checklist

         There are no disadvantages to this preferred option, as it is positive to review our Validation Checklist regularly and consult on the revisions. Conversely, the advantages are significant, to facilitate the efficient validation of planning applications, and ensure that appropriate information is submitted with an application so that their determination is not delayed.

3.2.   Option 2 (alternative) – Do Nothing, and continue to use the March 2011 Validation Checklist

The alternative option brings no benefits and will continue to create delays in the processing of applications, both at validation stage and in determining planning applications caused by the fact that the authority does not receive the necessary information with an application when it is first submitted.

4   **Preferred Option**

4.1.   That the Draft Validation Checklist be approved for public consultation. It is positive to review our Validation Checklist regularly and consult on the revisions, and so ultimately adopt a revised Checklist to ensure our Planning Service can efficiently validate and consider planning applications.

5   **Consultation**

5.1   The recommendation is seeking approval to consult.

6   **Financial Implications**

6.1   There are no financial implications for the approval of the draft validation checklist for public consultation. (Mohammed Hussain, Accountant)

7   **Legal Implications**

7.1   Paragraph 45 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that local planning authorities should publish a list of their information requirements for applications for planning permission. The requirements should be kept to the minimum needed to make decisions and should be reviewed at least every 2 years. Supporting information should only be requested if it is relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. (Alan Evans, Group Solicitor - Environment)

8   **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

8.1   No – the decision does not have any equality impacts

9   **Key Decision**

9.1   Yes

10   **Key Decision Reference**

11.1   RBO-02-25

12   **Background Papers**

12.1   None

13   **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft revised Validation Checklist for consultation