Report No.
DRR10/00124

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker:	**Development Control Committee**
Date:	**23rd November 2010**
Decision Type:	Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key
Title:	**TEMPLATE FOR REPORTS TO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**
Contact Officer:	Peter Martin, Head of Strategy and Renewal Tel: 020 8313 4548 E-mail: peter.martin@bromley.gov.uk
Chief Officer:	Bob McQuillan
Ward:	N/A

1. Reason for report

Comments made at the Development Control Committee meeting on 14th October 2010 have given rise to the need to consider the most appropriate use of the Council's standard report template for use in reports to Development Control Committee.

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2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

Members views are asked to consider the best use of the standard template in the light of suggestions made in paras 3.5 to 3.18 of this report

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: N/A.
2. BBB Priority: N/A.

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No cost
2. Ongoing costs: N/A.
3. Budget head/performance centre: Planning Division
4. Total current budget for this head: £N/A
5. Source of funding: N/A

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 106ftes
2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: No statutory requirement or Government guidance.
2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable.

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): N/A

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 Following comments made at the last DCC meeting concerning the use of the Council's standard template for use in reports, the author of this report attended a useful course for managers on the Council's guidelines for reports and the use of the template. Many of the issues concerning the use of the template have been clarified but some difficulties remain regarding reports to DCC.

3.2 The purpose of the template is to assist those Members who may not be attending the Committee and may only have the first page delivered to them. The template should give them enough information for them to judge whether it is necessary for them to request the whole of the report and perhaps attend the meeting or request further information.

3.3 It is accepted that the template is not applicable to planning applications (the green sheets). Other reports to DCC (the white sheets) typically cover :

a) Consultation on policy or regulatory changes proposed by government, government agency (eg English Heritage), or by the Mayor (eg consultations on the draft London Plan);

b) Matters arising from previous planning decisions (eg Crystal Palace Masterplan);

c) Procedural matters (eg on section 106 agreements);

d) Monitoring of planning activities (eg enforcement reports);

e) Budget monitoring or staffing reports;

f) Proposals to engage with frameworks or partnerships (eg the 'Green Grid')

3.4 None of the examples given above give rise to additional Council expenditure. Indeed it is not the role of DCC to deal with Council expenditure on any type of proposal. Hence there are difficulties with the headings in the template under 'Financial' and 'Staff' as these seem to relate mainly to projects where there is a clear staff and financial input. The other headings in the template are straightforward. The headings are itemised below with reference to the Council's 'Guidance Note for Report Authors' with suggestions on how they might be addressed in typical future reports to DCC.

Corporate Policy

2. Policy Status:

3.5 In most consultative reports to DCC this is '*New policy'* or '*Existing policy' (being amended)* as appropriate.

2. BBB Priority:

3.6 In most reports to DCC this is '*Quality environment'* and or '*Thriving town centres'*

Financial

'1. Cost of proposal:'

3.7 The bulk of reports to DCC do not cover matters that will result in any additional cost to the Council. It is suggested therefore that the clearest answer to give in such cases (bearing in mind the interests of those Members who may only be reading the first page of the reports) is '*No additional cost to the Council arising from the decisions recommended in this report '*.

'2. Ongoing costs:'

3.8 It would be appropriate to indicate here whether the issue being discussed is likely to continue (as in the case of the Crystal Palace Masterplan) or is a 'one off' (as in the case of a consultation on a change in regulation). Either '*None*' or '*Staff involvement likely to continue'*, as appropriate.

'3. Budget head/performance centre:'

3.9 In almost all cases for reports to DCC this is the *Planning Division Budget*

'4. Total current budget for this head:'

3.10 The total budget for the Planning Division *(£3.8m)*

'5. Source of funding:'

3.11 *Existing revenue budgets* (in most cases)

Staff:

'1. Number of staff (current and additional):

3.12 This should refer to the number of staff who currently provide the service. It has been usual to put in the total number of staff in the Planning Division (*103.89ftes*) in this box. Alternatively, the number of staff involved in writing the report (usually 1) or the number of staff in the section concerned could be appropriate; however, the latter could be misleading without some explanation. It is suggested that the number of people directly involved in writing the report is most appropriate.

3.13 Reports to DCC rarely, if at all, make recommendations that be concerned does not have a remit over staffing budgets and therefore in almost all cases there would not be any additional (or change in) staff.

'**2. If from existing staff resource, number of staff hours:**'

3.14 The guidelines state that it is not necessary to quantify the time spent in preparing the report. This would be in any event be difficult to calculate and misleading to Members since the intention is to give an estimate of costs of providing a new service; hence '*N/A'* is going to be the best answer in most reports to DCC where consultations or views are being given on polices and proposals external to the Council, where writing the report is part of the author's normal work and there are no additional staff costs to the Council.

Legal:

1. Legal requirement:

3.15 This box should be used to indicate whether there is a mandatory or discretionary requirement. Most reports to DCC arise from a statutory requirement and in such cases the legislation eg *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* (in the case of reports regarding the Local Development Framework) or the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990* (in most other cases) should be noted in the adjoining box.

2. Call-in

3.16 Call-in only applies to Executive decisions; thus in all reports to DCC *'Non-applicable'* should be selected.

Customer Impact:

1. Estimated number of users/ beneficiaries (current and projected):

3.17 This is difficult to predict when making comments on guidance that might affect the Borough as a whole generally. A typical response might be '*All residents of the Borough as well as those who make planning applications for development in the Borough*'.

Ward Councillor views:

2. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comment:

3. Summary of Ward Councillor comments:

3.18 These headings are self explanatory but are often not applicable where there are Borough-wide issues being considered.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Policy, Financial, Personnel and Legal Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Guidance Note for Report Authors, LBB, October 2010 Committee Report Writing Checklist