From: Ruthie Pollington <rpollington@middevon.gov.uk>
Sent: 01 July 2019 11:05
Cc: Ruthie Pollington <rpollington@middevon.gov.uk>
Subject: Delays in responding to customers

Dear Applicants/Agents

We are writing to advise that the planning department is currently experiencing delays in responding to customers and processing planning applications due to a high volume of work.

In order to mitigate the impacts on customers we are changing the way that we are working in order to allow for dedicated customer response time and report writing so work on planning applications, pre application enquiries and other departmental duties can be managed. The aim is to better manage responses to customer contact and workloads during this busy period.

From Monday 8th July 2019 any calls made to a planning officer will be redirected to planning administration for logging on the Council Customer Management Call System.

During the hours of 9am – 12pm Monday – Friday

The planning administration team will be handling all calls and taking messages on behalf of the planning officers for them to call back.

The planning officers will be making customer contact by dealing with the existing back log of call backs in their emails, as well as working through any new calls logged in date order.

In order to manage the workloads after 12pm Monday – Friday
The planning officers will be focussing their efforts on writing necessary reports, dealing with site visits and meetings in order to get planning applications processed in a timely manner.

The planning administration team will be processing decisions, representations and validating applications as normal.

We sincerely apologise for the delays you have been experiencing, and can assure you that the planning team are working hard on clearing the backlog of applications, pre application enquiries, discharge of conditions, and calls backs to all applicants and agents.

During July 2019: Pre-application advice service
During July 2019 we will not be accepting or logging any new pre-application advice requests. This temporary measure has been brought in to give planning officers the opportunity to address the backlog of work currently being experienced. Again, this is to better manage responses to existing customer contact and workloads during this busy period.
During this period we will continue to offer the Duty Planning Service providing general planning advice either via a 30 minute appointment between 10.00 am and 1.00pm on Tuesdays and 1.00pm and 4pm on Thursdays. This appointment may be either face to face or via the telephone. A fee of £36 (incl VAT) is charged per appointment. Please note that the Duty Planner service does not provide pre-application advice for specific projects. More information on this service is available here https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/planning/duty-planning-services/
We hope this method of working will prove to be more successful in expediting your enquiries and application(s).

If you wish to discuss this matter further then please do not hesitate to contact me on 01884 234273 or email rpollington@middevon.gov.uk

More information on Planning at Mid Devon District Council is available on the Council's website together with our complaints procedure.

Kindest regards
Ruthie Pollington
Planning Administration and Performance Monitoring Team Leader