

Code of practice for dealing with planning applications at Area Committees and Strategic Development Control Committee

Planning controls the development and use of land in the public interest. Applications must be determined in accordance with the Council's development plans unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Committee must be conducted in an orderly, fair and impartial manner.

The following minimum standards of practice will be followed:

1. All Members will have pre-read the officers' report. Members are also encouraged to view any supporting material.
2. At Area Committees applications will either be dealt with as a separate section on the agenda so that it is clear to all present that the nature of the meeting has changed from being participatory, or if necessary at a separate meeting. The Chair will make an announcement to this effect and will clarify for all present which Members are entitled to vote.
3. The sequence for each application shall be as follows:-
 - (a) The Planning Officer will introduce;
 - (b) Parish and County Councillors may speak for up to 5 minutes in total provided that the application lies within their parish or division;
 - (c) Any objectors may speak for up to 5 minutes in total;
 - (d) Any supporters may speak for up to 5 minutes in total;
 - (e) Speaking times may be extended by the Chair provided that equal time is given to both sides
 - (f) Voting members of the Committee may ask questions (which shall be directed via the Chair to the relevant Officer or speaker);
 - (g) Voting members will debate and determine the application.
4. Members of the public wishing to speak must complete a "Planning Speakers" form and hand it to the Area Co-ordinator or Democratic Services Officer or the Chair before the planning part of the meeting commences or alternatively you can e-mail [xxxxx](#) before 10.00 am on the day of the meeting, giving details of the your name, the application/agenda item you wish to speak on and whether you are objecting or supporting the application. No documents may be referred to unless they have been circulated to all parties at least 48 hours before.
5. All representations should be heard in silence and without interruption. The Chair will discourage disruptive behaviour. Members of the public are reminded that if the meeting is not allowed to proceed in an orderly manner then the Chair will withdraw the opportunity to address the Committee. The Committee is a meeting held in public, not a public meeting.
6. Members should not:-
 - (a) Rely on considerations which are not, in law, material;
 - (b) Question the personal integrity or professionalism of officers in public;
 - (c) Proceed to a vote if minded to determine an application against officer's recommendation until the reasons for that determination have been formulated.
 - (d) Seek to re-design, or negotiate amendments to, an application (but the committee may impose appropriate conditions).