

Speaking at Planning Committee



Do I have to speak at the meeting?

No

The comments you have already made will be contained in the Officer's report to the Committee. You may decide there is little point in adding to them.

If you are the Applicant/Agent and the Officer's recommendation is to approve your application, you may decide there is no point in adding to the proceedings.

If you represent the Parish/Town Council your written comments will already be included in the Officer's report. If you disagree with the recommendation being made you may wish to address the Committee. This should be done by a single representative expressing the majority view of your council.

If I want to speak, how do I arrange it?

The week before the Committee meeting we will write to every person who has written to comment on an application due to be heard. We will also notify all Applicants/Agents and Parish/Town Councils. If you do not make a written representation you will still be able to speak, but we will not write to you about the meeting in advance.

If you intend to speak you must register your interest with the Member Support Officer. It is preferable that you register by telephone the day before the meeting. However, if this is not possible, you can still register with a Member Support Officer outside the Council Chamber at least 20 minutes before the meeting. One person is allowed to speak in favour and one against (not including the Parish/Town Council). If you have any documents you want to circulate to Members we must have them 48 hours before the meeting. Documents brought on the day of the meeting will not be circulated. If more than one person wishes to speak for or against they will be advised to agree on a single spokesperson to put that view. If an agreement cannot be reached the first person to register will be allowed to speak.

What happens at the meeting?

The Chairman will introduce the item and ask the Planning Officer to introduce the report. The Chairman will then ask the members of the public to speak in the following order:

1. Parish/Town Council
2. Objector
3. Applicant/Agent or Supporter

Members of the Committee will then debate the application, but the public will not be allowed to interject or comment further.

What can I say?

You will have a maximum of 3 minutes to express your views (10 minutes for large scale major applications and those supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment in which case a maximum of 2 speakers can share the 10 minute slot). You will be advised after 2 minutes and again after your 3 minutes is up, at which point you must stop speaking.

You should make sure your comments are relevant.

Remember: A good point does not get better by repeating it.

You may comment on matters such as:

- National, regional and local planning policies
- Highway safety
- Landscape impact
- Local amenity, noise, privacy
- Case law/previous decisions
- Conservation issues

You should not comment on matters which are not relevant such as:

- Alleged increase/decrease in property values
- Civil disputes between neighbours
- Loss of a private view
- A developer's character, morals, motives or financial circumstances
- Restrictive covenants
- Matters covered by other legislation
- Business competition

Applicants/Agents should not introduce new information, verbally amend the application or attempt to negotiate with the Committee. Such action would lead to a deferral of the application to allow for proper consideration or the application being considered on its original merits.

You are not allowed to ask questions directly of the Officers, Members or other speakers.

If an application is on the agenda will it definitely be considered?

Most applications on the agenda will be dealt with but it is possible for an applicant to withdraw an application at any time up to a decision being made. It is also possible that the Committee will be advised to defer and discuss at a later stage. If this happens, we will endeavour to contact you before the day.

These rules on Public Speaking may be varied in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Chairman.

For further information on this scheme or any other aspects of the Committee system, please contact:

Member Support Officer

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