

PROCEDURE FOR OBJECTORS, APPLICANTS AND WARD COUNCILLORS BEING HEARD AT PLANNING PANEL MEETINGS

1. Objectors to applications including Ward Councillors wishing to object are encouraged to follow the procedure of making written submissions which can be referred to in reports submitted to the Planning Panel. However, the opportunity to speak in front of the Panel is available.
2. Objectors including ward councillors wishing to speak should write to the Development Services Manager as quickly as possible and not later than six clear working days before the meeting of the Planning Panel. The letter should set out concisely the points to be raised verbally at the meeting. Requests to speak received less than six clear working days prior to the meeting will not be allowed. They are also asked in order to avoid using up part of their time allocation to submit any materials for consideration by the panel such as photographs prior to the meeting.
3. Speaking time will be allocated strictly in order of written requests received. If the grounds for objection are common to several or all the objectors/ward councillors then a spokesperson will be invited to present these collective views. The objector who writes in first will normally be invited to act as spokesperson.
4. In all cases where an objector/ward councillor wishes to speak, the applicant (or applicant's representative) will be offered the opportunity at the same meeting to reply to the points made. An applicant will not be allowed a hearing if no objectors/ward councillors are to speak. Given that the applicant (or applicant's representative) will be invited to address the Planning Panel, supporters of an application will not be allowed to speak.
5. No objector/ward councillor or applicant (or applicant's representative) should speak for more than five minutes other than at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting. Where more than one objector/ward councillor has spoken an applicant will be allowed sufficient time to respond adequately to all objections raised.
6. The opportunity to speak will only be allowed on one occasion other than in the following circumstances:-
 - (i) After a "minded to" decision has been made, the objectors/ward councillors may opt to speak a second time at the meeting following the "minded to" decision provided the timescales referred to in paragraph 2 are adhered to. In those circumstances if the objector/ward councillor speaks the applicant will be given the opportunity to respond;
 - (ii) Where, after an objector/ward councillor has spoken, the Planning Panel decides to have a site visit, then:-
 - (a) the Applicant shall be given the opportunity to speak at that meeting;
 - (b) the objector/ward councillor shall be given the chance to speak a second time when the application is re-considered following the site visit and the applicant shall be given the opportunity to respond. Notification of a request to speak a

second time shall be made in writing within the timescales referred to in paragraph 2.

7. Objectors/ward councillors will be heard following the presentation of the Development Services Manager's report on the relevant application. The applicant (or representative) will be heard after the objectors have addressed the meeting.
8. In order not to cause unnecessary waiting time to objectors/ward councillors and applicants the Planning Panel will, when considering applications, deal first with those applications where objectors wish to speak.
9. With the Chairman's permission, Members of the Panel or officers will be allowed to ask questions of the objectors/ward councillors and/or the applicant about the planning issues raised.
10. Where a member of the Planning Panel who has declared both a personal and prejudicial interest in a planning application and who wishes to speak on the application, they shall follow the same procedures as for Ward Councillors and having presented their case, shall immediately withdraw from the Planning Panel meeting room.
11. Otherwise, following consideration of the application the objector/ward councillor and applicant (or representative) may leave the meeting.
12. Any objection deemed by the Development Services Manager or Head of Legal and Democratic Services to be defamatory or which relates to a specific officer or Member or an issue which is subject to the Data Protection Act will not fall within the scope of this scheme and the objector/ward councillor will be informed in writing of the reason for such a matter not going forward to a meeting. If such an issue is raised at the meeting, the Development Services Manager/Head of Legal and Democratic Services will so advise the Chairman who will stop the objector/ward councillor/ applicant.
13. In the circumstances of an application made by the Council under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 to which objection has been made, the same facilities will be allowed with the additional benefit of being able to submit further written questions at the meeting of Full Council at which the decision is made.

Note:

- (i) Upon arrival at the Copeland Centre, please report to the reception desk from where you will be directed to the Bainbridge Room.
- (ii) Please make your presence known to the Committee Clerk who will advise you of the procedures to be followed.
- (iii) When speaking to the Chairman it is suggested that "Mr/Madam Chairman" is an appropriate form of address.
- (iv) Meetings are open to the public – anyone can attend whether or not they have elected to speak.
- (v) If you have any queries in advance of the meeting please do not hesitate to contact staff in the planning department who will be pleased to assist (tel: 01946 598418/598421)

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