



## PLANNING COMMITTEE

### PROTOCOL FOR PUBLIC STATEMENTS AT MEETINGS

***The chairman has decided to exercise his discretion to enable members of the public to be able to read out their statements in person via remote video link at the meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021. This version of the protocol has been amended for that meeting to reflect that change. It does not apply to any other meeting of the Planning Committee.***

**This protocol makes provision for public statements to be taken into account in the decision-making process at meetings of the Planning Committee. It enables objectors and applicants/supporters to submit a written statement on planning applications for consideration at the meeting. These statements will be read out at the meeting on their behalf.**

**The protocol is intended to be an interim measure that takes account of on-going limitations resulting from the Covid pandemic. It will remain in force until a revised protocol is adopted.**

**This protocol is separate from and is not intended to replicate or replace the procedure of submitting a written representation on a planning application to the Planning Offices during the consultation period.**

1. Every meeting of the Planning Committee may be attended by any member of the public to the extent as provided for in the Council's adopted Access to Information Procedure Rules as set out in the Constitution. The Council will also aim to electronically live broadcast such meetings\*. The provisions below provide a mechanism for members of the public to submit statements to be read out at a meeting in relation to individual planning applications. As a result, members of the public attending a meeting will not normally be given opportunity to speak at the meeting on such matters save as required to accord with the provisions of the Constitution and the law.
2. Objectors and applicants/supporters, including Parish or Town Council representatives, who wish to provide a written statement to be read out on their behalf at the Planning Committee must submit this to Democratic Services by 12 noon on the day before the meeting.
3. There will be a maximum of six statements from objectors and a maximum of six statements from applicants/supporters on each planning application considered by the Committee. Each statement may consist of up to 450 words.
4. Statements will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Statements will not be accepted once the limit has been reached. Objectors, and applicants/supporters with similar views are encouraged to co-ordinate in advance in the production of statements.
5. Subject to the exception in paragraph 6 below, statements will be read aloud by the Democratic Services Officer once the Presenting Officer has completed their presentation on each planning application.

6. So far as circumstances allow, as an alternative to a statement being read out by the Democratic Services Officer a person(s) may instead read out their statement via a remote video (Microsoft Teams) link. This exception is subject to the following.
  - a. A person wishing to seek to read out their statement remotely must have notified the Democratic Services Unit of their wish in writing by 12 noon on the day before the meeting and given to the Democratic Services Unit such information as may be requested to facilitate this.
  - b. The statement to be read out must still accord with all relevant requirements of this protocol.
  - c. Unless otherwise agreed with or required by the Council, a person reading out their statement should not deviate from the wording of the statement provided to the Council.
  - d. At the discretion of the Chairman, a person may at any time be excluded from reading their statement and/or from any virtual meeting room. In any event a person will only normally be given access to the virtual meeting room facility whilst the item to which their statement relates is being considered by the Planning Committee.
  - e. In the event of a person who wishes to read out their statement not being able to read out the whole or part of it at the allotted time when the statement was to be read out, then the statement (or remaining part of it) shall be read out on their behalf by the Democratic Services Officer. Consideration of an item will therefore continue whether or not a person is able to read out their statement.
7. Ward Councillors who have referred an application to the Planning Committee for decision will be expected to attend and speak at the meeting wherever possible, to explain their reasons for the call in. Other Ward Councillors may also wish to attend and speak at the meeting. Ward Councillor attendance will continue to be facilitated virtually using MS Teams.
8. Any Ward Councillor attending and speaking at the meeting must also submit a written version of what they intend to say to Democratic Services by 12noon on the day before the meeting. In the event of a Ward Councillor not being able to access the meeting at the appropriate time for any reason, this statement will be read out on their behalf to ensure their views can be taken into account. Statements may consist of up to 900 words.
9. Any member of the Planning Committee who has referred an application to the Committee for decision and who has a predetermined view on that application may speak as a Ward Councillor in accordance with the provisions in this protocol, but will not be able to participate in the discussion or vote as a member of the Committee.
10. Written statements should refer to planning related issues as these are the only matters the Committee can consider when making decisions on planning applications. Statements must direct points to reinforcing or amplifying the planning representations already made to the Council in writing. Guidance on what constitutes planning considerations is included at the end of this document. Statements must not include derogatory or defamatory comments.

11. Anyone submitting a written statement who wishes to provide still photographs or illustrations (a maximum of five) to be displayed on screen while their statement is being read aloud must submit these to Democratic Services at least 48 clear hours before the time specified for the start of the meeting on the agenda.
12. Any updates on planning applications to be considered by the Committee will be published by Democratic Services as soon as possible after 12noon on the day before the meeting.
13. In considering each application the Committee will normally consider contributions from people in the following order:
  - Presenting Officer(s)
  - Objectors
  - Applicant/Supporters
  - Ward Councillors (for the avoidance of doubt and for the purposes of this protocol, the term 'ward councillor' means a councillor who is not a member of the planning committee)
  - Questions and discussion by Members of the Planning Committee, which may include points of clarification from Officers, leading to a decision.
14. Exceptionally, in cases of significant major planning applications the Chairman of the Planning Committee may exercise discretion in respect of provisions within this protocol. Arrangements will be agreed in advance in consultation with Planning Services and Democratic Services.
15. Please note that meetings of the Planning Committee are recorded for live and subsequent broadcast by the Council, and will be published on the Council's website for a minimum of six months after the meeting date \*. Agenda, reports and broadcasts can be accessed using the following link:  
<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=290&Year=0>

For further information about public statements at Planning Committee please contact [democratic.services@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

The National Planning Portal provides the following guidance on material planning considerations:

'A material consideration is a matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision. Material considerations can include (but are not limited to):

- Overlooking/loss of privacy
- Loss of light or overshadowing
- Parking
- Highway safety
- Traffic
- Noise
- Effect on listed building and conservation area
- Layout and density of building
- Design, appearance and materials

- Government policy
- Disabled persons' access
- Proposals in the Development Plan
- Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)
- Nature conservation

However, issues such as loss of view, or negative effect on the value of properties are not material considerations.'

[https://www.planningportal.co.uk/faqs/faq/4/what\\_are\\_material\\_considerations](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/faqs/faq/4/what_are_material_considerations)

\* The electronic broadcasting and recording of a meeting is dependent upon the Council being reasonably practically able to do so at the time of the meeting. A meeting may proceed even if it cannot be electronically broadcast and / or recorded.