

## **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING/ATTENDANCE AT PLANNING COMMITTEE/SUB COMMITTEES**

### **How the Planning Committees are organised.**

Kirklees Council has a Strategic Planning Committee which meets on a 4 weekly cycle and two Sub Committees, each meeting on a 6 weekly cycle. The Planning Sub Committee (Heavy Woollen Area) meets at Dewsbury Town Hall, and the Planning Sub Committee (Huddersfield Area) and Strategic Planning Committee meet at Huddersfield Town Hall.

The meetings usually commence at 1.00pm and the venues have seating areas, where members of the public are able to observe how the decisions on planning applications are made. Please note that all Planning Committee meetings are webcast live.

The Agenda for the Meeting, which will include the Officer's report on the application, will be available one week in advance of the meeting and can be viewed on the [Council's web site](#) If you require assistance in accessing the agenda, please contact the Governance Officers (details on page 4).

Less than 10% of all planning applications are decided at Planning Committees. Most are determined by Officers within a delegation scheme agreed by the Council. However, the applications that are decided by Councillors are usually the most contentious, often relating to large development sites, or proposals that have attracted a lot of public interest.

The Planning Committees are open to members of the public. Any person wishing to speak is required to pre-register and will be permitted to make a verbal representation of up to three minutes. Representations should be directed to the Councillor who is 'Chairing' the meeting. By convention, this person is addressed as 'Chair'. If you refer to a Member of the Council, then the correct way to do this is to refer to them as 'Councillor (last name)'. Dialogue between members of the public and Members of the Committee or Officers is not permitted once the meeting has started.

### **How to pre-register your intention to speak at Planning Committee**

If you wish to speak at a Planning Committee meeting you need to pre-register your intention to do so at least two working days prior to the relevant Planning Committee. (e.g. for meetings commencing at 1pm on Thursdays, the deadline for pre-registration will be 5pm on the previous Monday by telephone or midnight Monday by email request).

**Registration should be sent to the Governance Officers (Richard Dunne, Sheila Dykes and Andrea Woodside) by email to [governance.planning@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:governance.planning@kirklees.gov.uk) or by telephone to 01484 221000 extension 74995 (Richard Dunne) or extension 73896 (Sheila Dykes) or extension 74993 (Andrea Woodside)**

Your pre-registration needs to include:

- The Planning Committee meeting you wish to address (e.g. Huddersfield Area Planning Sub Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018)
- Your name and address
- The application number/address for which you are pre-registering
- Brief details of the issue(s) you intend to raise (e.g. highways, residential amenity etc.), and
- The capacity in which you will be speaking (objector, supporter, applicant/agent).

The Chair of the Committee meeting has discretion in 'very exceptional circumstances' to allow additional speakers who have not pre-registered their intention to speak. When this occurs the person wishing to speak must complete a relevant note setting out the details of the issue(s) that they wish to raise and give this to the Governance Officer. This will be considered by the Chair before the meeting commences.

Please aim to arrive at the Committee venue not later than 12.45pm (or at least 15 minutes before the meeting starts) in order to confirm your pre-registration with the Governance Officer, or to submit your 'exceptional circumstances'. The Town Hall Reception staff will be able to direct you to where the meeting is being held.

### **Circulation of Documents in support of your presentation**

Please note that you should not normally circulate documents to the Planning Committee in support of your presentation that you have not previously made available to the relevant planning case officer at least 48-hours before the start of the meeting (e.g. for meetings commencing at 1pm on Thursdays, the deadline for receipt of additional documents/information etc will be 1pm on the previous Tuesday).

This is because all parties may not have time adequately to respond to and address the issues raised in those submissions. In particular, Members of the Committee are unlikely to be able to give proper consideration to the matters raised and officers are unlikely to be able to provide considered advice on any material considerations.

### **Principal points regarding speaking at Planning Committees**

Detailed information is provided later in this note. However, please be aware that:

- You can only speak about an application when invited to do so by the Chair.
- Make sure you can put your case in three minutes or less.
- If you are part of a group of people wanting to speak about the same application, you may be asked to choose a representative.
- All comments have to be made to the Chair of the Committee

The following applies whether you want to speak for or against the application.

The Committee meetings usually start at 1.00p.m. Please aim to arrive at the Committee venue no later than 12.45pm (or at least 15 minutes before the meeting starts) in order to confirm your pre-registration with the Governance Officer or to submit your 'exceptional circumstances'. The number of people who will be allowed to speak is at the Chair's discretion, and his/her decision is final. If there are a large number of people who want to comment on the same application, the Chair may ask the group involved to organise a representative so that the case for/against may be put collectively.

Once the meeting has commenced there will be a number of standard constitutional items on the agenda which will be dealt with first, before the Committee progress to consider the schedule of planning applications. The Chair will indicate which application is being dealt with in turn. The Planning Officer will then make a presentation, following which the Chair will ask members of the public who have registered their intention to speak to verbally address the Committee. Local residents and objectors will be called to speak first, followed by the applicant and/or their agent.

Your case should be concisely made, concentrating on the 'planning' issues that the Members of the Planning Committee can take into account, such as,

- *The planning history of the site*
- *The visual impact of the development*
- *Effect on public amenity*
- *Access, traffic and highway considerations*
- *The impact on listed buildings, conservation area or protected trees*

Matters that cannot be taken into account include,

- *Effect on property values*
- *The character or identity of the applicant*
- *Boundary or property disputes*
- *How the application affects a view (as opposed to the wider affect on public amenity)*
- *Issues of commercial competition*

You should make sure that you can make your case in about three minutes. The Chair may have to ask you to conclude your presentation if the allotted time has been exceeded. All comments have to be made to the Chair of the Committee. Dialogue with Planning Committee Members or Officers is not permitted.

The Committee will then discuss the application. Officers may be asked for more information, but further contributions from members of the public, applicants or agents will not be accepted, unless the Chair invites further

comment. The application will be determined by a vote of the Committee, which will be done in public. Once a decision has been taken, the Chair will proceed to the next item.

Decisions on planning applications can be challenged by the applicant making an appeal to the Secretary of State. In the English planning system, third parties e.g. objectors to the application, have no rights of appeal against the decision.

However, the Local Government Ombudsman can investigate any claims that the Council did not follow its own procedures, or allegations of impropriety. Ask a Council Officer for more information if you are considering approaching the Ombudsman.

## **Contact Information**

### **Governance Team**

#### **Huddersfield Area Sub-Committee/Strategic Planning Committee**

Officer: Richard Dunne - 01484 221000 (extension 74995)

#### **Strategic Planning Committee**

Officer: Sheila Dykes – 01484 221000 (extension 73896)

#### **Heavy Woollen Area Sub-Committee.**

Officer: Andrea Woodside 01484 221000 (extension 74993)

### **Planning Services**

Development Management - 01484 414746

### **Legal Services**

#### **Heavy Woollen Area Sub-Committee**

Officer: Sandra Haigh - 01484 221000 (extension 77871)

#### **Huddersfield Area Sub-Committee/Strategic Planning Committee**

Officer: Deborah Wilkes - 01484 221000 (extension 77875)