

Part 2: Public Speaking at Planning Development Control Committee Meetings

Following a successful trial period, the procedure for public speaking at Planning Development Control Committee meetings now includes, under paragraphs 17 and 18, a right of reply option whereby, at the conclusion of the debate on a matter, the Chairman will allow the applicant/supporters and objectors to have up to a minute in which to re-emphasise key points, or to correct errors of fact that they believe have been made. Speakers will not be allowed to raise new issues. There will not be any further public speaking, except at the Chairman's discretion, after the right of reply has been exercised.

The order of proceedings is as follows:

1. Any member of the public, any member of the Authority speaking in accordance with paragraphs 13 or 14 below, and any representative of a Parish, District or County Council, wishing to ask a question, make a statement or present a petition at a meeting of the Planning Development Control Committee must inform the Member Services section of the Authority at least two clear working days prior to the commencement of the meeting in writing, by e-mail or telephone. The notice must identify the agenda item and planning application number in question. Public speakers are also required to indicate whether they wish to speak in support of or against an application; however this latter provision shall not apply to representatives of a Parish, District or County Council nor members of the Authority (excluding those with a prejudicial interest – paragraph 15 below refers).
2. The Member Services section of the Authority will inform the Chairman presiding at the meeting, before the commencement of that meeting, of all questions, statements and petitions notified by any member of the public. Member Services will produce a list of public speakers for all members of the Committee and relevant officers for the Committee meeting.
3. In the event that a speaker wishes to refer to a visual aid, it must be submitted to the case officer at least two clear working days before the meeting. The case officer will be responsible for ensuring the information is scanned into the Authority's electronic document system, having verified the contents.
4. A representative from the Member Services section of the Authority will be available half an hour before the start of each meeting to meet public speakers and explain the procedure.
5. On each agenda item the planning officer will introduce the proposal with a short presentation.

6. The Chairman will then invite those members of the public and Authority members who have given prior notice to speak.
7. A total of three minutes is allowed for the Applicant or supporters of an application. Where more than one person wishes to speak in support of an application, the time must be shared between the speakers accordingly or they may select a single speaker to represent the group. No questions may be asked by the speaker(s) of the officer or members.
8. The members of the Committee may then ask the speaker(s) any questions of fact.
9. A total of three minutes is allowed for the objectors to an application. Where more than one person wishes to speak against an application, the time must be shared between the speakers accordingly or they may select a single speaker to represent the group. No questions may be asked by the speaker(s) of the officer or members.
10. The members of the Committee may then ask the speaker(s) any questions of fact.
11. A representative of a Parish Council who has given notice to speak on an application may then address the Committee (no time limit). The members of the Committee may then ask the representative any questions of fact.
12. Any District and County Councillors who are not also members of the Authority and have given notice that they wish to speak on an application may then speak (no time limit). The members of the Committee may then ask any questions of fact.
13. Subject to paragraph 15 below, any member of the Authority who has declared a prejudicial interest in an application to be considered at a meeting may speak at the meeting, having given notice in accordance with the provisions of this Schedule.
14. A member of the Authority who is not a member of the Committee and who has given notice that he/she wishes to speak at a meeting of the Committee on an application may do so (no time limit) in accordance with the provisions set out in this procedure (unless they have declared a prejudicial interest).
15. A member wishing to speak pursuant to paragraph 13 above must indicate whether he/she wishes to speak in support of or against a particular application and must share the three minutes allowed with the members of the public speaking in support of or against (as appropriate) that application.
16. The Committee will then debate the proposal.

17. Once the debate has ended, the Chairman will invite the applicant/supporters to sum up and/or reply to the debate for up to a total of one minute (i.e. those speaking further to paragraph 7 above). Speakers will not be allowed to raise new issues.
18. The Chairman will then invite the objectors to sum up and/or reply to the debate for up to a total of one minute (i.e. those speaking further to paragraph 9 above). Speakers will not be allowed to raise new issues.
19. The planning officer will then respond to any issues raised by the speakers.
20. There will be no further public speaking unless at the discretion of the Chairman.
21. The Chairman will then take the matter forward to the vote.