



Procedures in respect of planning matters

1. Summary

This procedure sets out how the Town Council considers planning matters on which it is consulted by the Planning Authority. It considers that:

- The consultation period for planning application is 21 days, which means that not all planning applications can be considered by the Town Council at its scheduled meetings.
- The Town Council believes that its constituents are best served by the Town Council responding to application in a timely fashion.
- To ensure that consultations on planning applications are dealt with in time, the Town Council has appointed a Planning Building and Environment Committee to facilitate the responses of the Council to planning matters.

The Town Council has therefore resolved that any substantive actions in respect of planning matters shall be taken either by:

- the Town Council as a whole, or
- by the Clerk acting on the advice of the Amenities Committee, via email.

2. Planning Building and Environment Committee

2.1 Membership

- At each Annual Meeting the Town Council shall appoint from amongst its members Amenities Committee of at least 6 members to serve until the following annual meeting.
- If a vacancy occurs at any time by way of resignation or otherwise the Council may appoint one of its members to fill the vacancy who will serve until the next following Annual Meeting.

2.2 Duties

- It shall be the duty of the Amenities Committee to consider any planning matters on which the Town Council is consulted including policy matters such as local plans as well as specific planning applications.
- Where the Council is invited to make representations on a planning application to the Planning Authority, it shall be the duty of the Amenities Committee to ensure that the Council's Planning Protocol, as set out paragraph 3 below is adhered to in all material respects.
- The Amenities Committee will seek to ensure that the Town Council is seen to be fair in its treatment of the rights of applicants and local residents and that its views as consultee are consistent and well-considered.
- The Amenities Committee shall have no power to make substantive decisions in respect of planning matters.

2.3 Conflict of interests

- A member of the Amenities Committee who has a material interest in a planning matter referred to it shall take no part in the discussion or handling of the application.

3 Planning Protocol

3.1 Options for responding to planning applications.

One of the following options shall apply when notice of a planning application on which the Town Council is invited to comment is received.

Option 1:

If there is a scheduled Town Council meeting before the end of the consultation period, then the Clerk will place the matter on the Agenda for that meeting and any decision will be taken at that meeting.

Option 2 :

If there is no scheduled meeting before the end of the consultation period, but the Amenities Committee [or the Chairman of the Council considers that the applications should be considered by the full Town Council then a special meeting will be called for this purpose and any decision taken at that meeting. This option shall also apply if at least two members of the Council request that the Chairman or Clerk call a special meeting.

Option 3:

In other cases, any response by the Council shall be delegated to the Clerk who shall seek advice from Amenities Committee and shall circulate any draft response to all Councillors for their comments. Should there be an equal decision then the planning application is to be circulated to Full Council for consultation to reply within 48 hours.

Option 4:

For the Amenities Committee to meet before any meeting to discuss the application or for the Clerk to arrange an impromptu meeting for members to discuss and decide a response to the application

3.2 Procedure at meetings of the Council

- In those cases where a planning application comes before a full meeting of the Town Council, the any residents will be able to speak at the meeting during public participation.
- If a request is received from the applicant to speak to the Council then this will normally be permitted unless the Council, by a majority decision, determines otherwise.
- Any Councillor with a material interest in the application will take no part in the debate, unless invited to speak by the Chairman, and will not be entitled to vote on any relevant motion.
- The Council shall consider the application in public session and will decide on what response, if any, shall be provided.