

Other leaflets in the series:

- An introduction to the Planning One Stop Shop for applicants
- A guide to planning applications and the decision-making process for applicants
- An introduction to public speaking at planning committee
- An introduction to Planning Committee Site Visits
- Mobile telecommunications masts

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The department is open at the following times:

8.45 to 5pm Monday to Wednesday

8.45 to 7pm Thursday

8.45 to 4.30pm Friday



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

An introduction to Public Speaking at Planning Committee

June 2004

Why do we need a Planning Committee?

Most planning applications for development within Stockton-on-Tees Borough are straightforward and are decided by Development Control Case Officers, however there are a small number that under the rules need to be decided by the Planning Committee. The Planning Committee consists of 17 local elected Councillors. If an application is to go before the Planning Committee, everyone that has either supported or objected to the application in writing during the consultation period, will be invited to the meeting.

Where and when is the meeting?

The Committee meets at Stockton Central Library, every 3 weeks on Wednesday at 1.30pm. The dates of the meetings and a list of the Members are available from the Democratic Services Unit, (telephone 526190)

Can I speak at the meeting?

Yes, the Chairman of the Planning Committee will allow people to speak, but only if you have already supported or objected to the application in writing.

If you wish to speak, you must arrive 15 minutes early for the meeting to register with the Democratic Services Officer. You may be required to leave your name and address.

Where there is more than one person wishing to speak either for or against an application, a spokesperson must be chosen. There is limited time to consider each application. If a spokesperson cannot be agreed upon, the Chairman will nominate a speaker.

At the discretion of the Chairman, a person who has an additional point to those that have already been raised may be allowed to speak, but he/she must not repeat those point already made.

You may speak for a maximum of 3 minutes.

How do I know when to speak?

The Chairman will announce the application to be discussed, and invite the Development Control Officer to present his/her report. After the report, the following order is used:

- Members' questions to the Development Control Officer

- The applicant/agent may speak
- (A nominated) supporter of the application may speak
- Members' questions to applicant/agent and supporters
- (A nominated) objector may speak
- Members' questions to objector

The Members will then debate the application before arriving at a decision. A vote will be taken if there is no consensus.

What should I say/not say?

You should stick to the facts and avoid making statements that are inaccurate or untrue. Keep your comments relevant to the planning issues, and relevant to the application being discussed. You should avoid making personal or insulting comments.

Can I speak longer than 3 minutes as I have a lot to say?

No, the 3 minute time limit must be observed to ensure that meetings run efficiently. You may not speak at any other time, or be involved in the debate. If you interrupt the proceedings or are otherwise disruptive then you will be removed.

Can I have confirmation of the Committee's decision?

Written confirmation of decisions made by the Planning Committee will only be sent to the applicant/agent, and to people who wrote to support or object to the application. Letters are normally dispatched within 10 working days of the Committee meeting.

If I am unhappy with the decision, can I appeal?

No, only the applicant has the right to challenge the decision with an Appeal to the Secretary of State. If the applicant does appeal, everyone who supported or objected to the application in writing will be notified.