

Public Speaking at the Planning Committee Code of Practice

1. This *Code of Practice* explains the rules that apply to public speaking about planning applications, enforcement and other related planning matters at meetings of the Planning Committee. Planning applications which are decided by officers under Chichester District Council's (CDC) scheme of delegation do not come before the Planning Committee and so public speaking rights do not apply in respect of them.
2. If you wish to check whether a planning application in which you are interested is on the agenda for the Planning Committee, please look at the committee papers on CDC's website:

<http://chichester.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=134&Year=0>

or contact Democratic Services (see para 4 below).

3. If you wish to speak at a Planning Committee meeting, **you must register by no later than 17:00 on the day before the meeting.**
4. You can register by using the online speaker registration e-form which may be accessed via the following link to CDC's web-site:

<https://www.chichester.gov.uk/article/26457/Planning-Committee-speakerform?formid=120659>

Alternatively you can contact Democratic Services at East Pallant House, Chichester:

- Sharon Hurr, Democratic Services officer - 01243 534614 or shurr@chichester.gov.uk

You will need to provide the following details:

- The application(s) in respect of which you wish to speak – the full site address needs to be provided but it assists if you are able also to give the application reference and the agenda item.
 - Your name, full postal address, a contact telephone number and (if applicable) an e-mail address.
 - The speaker category which applies to you – there are six of them: parish representative; West Sussex County Council member; objector; supporter; the applicant, an agent or another person on behalf of the applicant; and CDC member.
5. In order that the meeting runs efficiently and all business is covered, normally only one representative in each of the parish and applicant categories may speak and no more than three people in each of the objector and support categories. Only one speaker per household will normally be permitted to speak on an application. Additional objectors or supporters will be placed on a reserve list.

In exceptional cases, the chairman may exercise his discretion to increase the number of people permitted to speak. Where a large number of objectors or supporters wish to speak they will be encouraged to consider appointing a spokesperson to represent them.

6. Each speaker will be allowed to address the Planning Committee for no more than three minutes. Where there is more than one application relating to the same site, speakers will still be limited to one opportunity to speak for no more than three minutes on each application, unless the chairman permits a longer contribution.
7. The Planning Committee meeting will be managed by the chairman with the advice of the Principal Solicitor or Democratic Services. Where people have registered to speak, applications will be dealt with as follows:
 - The chairman will introduce the application by reading out its reference number, address and report page number
 - The planning officer will introduce the application and provide the Planning Committee with any update as necessary
 - The chairman will invite those who have registered to speak to come to the lectern and address the Planning Committee in the order in para 8
 - The chairman will then invite the Planning Committee to debate and decide the application
8. The order of speaking is as follows:
 - Parish representative (one person only)
 - West Sussex County Council member (one person only)
 - Objectors (a maximum of three individuals)
 - Supporters (a maximum three individuals)
 - Applicant or someone on the applicant's behalf eg agent (one person only)
 - CDC member(s) who do not sit on the Planning Committee
9. You might find it helpful to write out your speech beforehand or at least to make notes about what you want to say to the Planning Committee. Please speak slowly and clearly and adjust the microphone (which is switched on throughout the meeting), as necessary. Time limits will be strictly observed. A traffic light system is used to warn you and the chairman of when the three minutes have expired.

10. You should focus your comments on relevant planning issues, for example:
 - The external design, appearance and layout of the development
 - The impact on trees and nature conservation or overshadowing and privacy
 - Highway safety
 - Planning policy and government guidance
11. You should avoid referring to matters which are not relevant to planning, for example:
 - Boundary disputes or other property rights
 - The applicant's motives, character or reputation
 - The loss of property value or loss of a view
 - Matters covered by other legislation
12. You must not (without the chairman's permission) pass written material such as diagrams and photographs around the table to members of the Planning Committee, although you may hold it up for display. If you wish members to consider written material, you should send this directly to members in advance of the meeting. You may request the members' contact details from the Democratic Services officers listed in para 4 above.
13. You will not have the right to question other speakers, officers or members.
14. Once you have spoken you will not be allowed to speak again on that application at that meeting. However, if the application is deferred, you can register afresh to speak when the application is reconsidered at a subsequent meeting. Applications can be deferred for various reasons, principally in order to hold a site visit, obtain further information or enable negotiations to take place.

[Revised December 2016]