

**DIRECTORATE OF PLACE
REGENERATION AND REGULATORY SERVICES**



PLANNING PROTOCOL

PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. Public speaking at Planning Committee will be allowed strictly in accordance with this protocol. This protocol shall not apply to delegated items unless they are referred to Planning Committee for determination in accordance with the operation of the scheme of delegation.
2. This Protocol applies to all standard Planning Committee meetings. From time to time, an Extra Planning Committee may be called to consider a substantial or very high profile application. A decision as to whether it is considered necessary to hold such a meeting shall be made by the Head of Regeneration and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy of Planning Committee. At such meetings, the 'Public Speaking at Extra Planning Committee' Protocol will apply.

Who Can Speak

3. Speaking will be limited to:
 - a. one member of the public objecting to the development; and
 - b. one member of the public supporting a development. Any person wishing to speak in support of an application must be an independent third party (e.g. a neighbour or local resident, but not a relative or friend of the applicant); and
 - c. the applicant or their agent, regardless of whether or not an objector is speaking and regardless of the Officer recommendation.
4. When there is more than one person in opposition or support, the relative groups should work together to establish a spokesperson. In the event of no agreement being reached, the right to speak shall fall to the first person to register a request.
5. Representatives of Community Councils will be treated in the same way as all other persons wishing to speak at Planning Committee meeting and will be subject to this Protocol.

Webcasting / Broadcasting of Meetings

6. The Council has agreed that certain meetings of the Planning Committee may be the subject of live web transmission ('webcasting'), or recorded for subsequent transmission. Fixed cameras are located within the Council Chamber for this purpose.

The Council will ensure that in doing so it is compliant with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Notice on the agenda and the Chair at the meeting will make it clear that whilst generally the public seating areas are not filmed; by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, members of the public are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. The process for prospective public speakers will be explained to them.

Registering Requests to Speak

7. To register a request to speak, the objector or supporter must first have made written representations on the application. Their representation must clearly state the application case officer and application reference. An email to planning@newport.gov.uk is acceptable.
8. In any event, the request to speak by any party (objector, supporter or applicant/agent) must be made no later than 09:00am on the Wednesday a week prior to the Wednesday when the application will be presented to the Planning Committee. For example, if the application is due to be presented to the Planning Committee on the 8th of the month, the request to speak must be received no later than 09:00am on the 1st of the month. Should the Planning Committee meeting in question not fall within the normal cycle of Wednesday meetings, the deadline to request to speak will be the same, i.e. 09:00am 1 week prior to the date of the meeting as per the example given above.
9. ***[It is the responsibility of the objector, supporter or applicant/agent to check whether the application is to be considered by Planning Committee by contacting the Case Officer who will be able to provide details of the likely date on which the application will be heard and the procedure for registering the request to speak].***
10. In any correspondence notifying applicants, supporters or objectors of the meeting date on which an application will be heard, advice in relation to Broadcasting / webcasting of meetings will be included.

Procedure at the Planning Committee Meeting

11. Broadcasting / Webcasting:

At the start of each meeting to be filmed, an announcement will be made to the effect that the meeting is being, or may be, webcast.

The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming, if in the opinion of the Chair continuing to do so would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting or if the Chair, on advice, considers that continued filming might infringe the rights of any individual.

12. Planning Committee meetings will normally be held on the first or second Wednesday of each month. Dates for Committee meetings can be found on the Council's website www.newport.gov.uk/planning or by contacting the City Contact Centre on 01633 656656. Committee meetings take place at the Civic Centre, Newport and commence at 10.00am. Persons registered to speak should arrive **at least fifteen minutes** before the meeting starts. A clerk will advise on seating arrangements and answer any queries. Items, where people have registered to speak, will be taken first on the agenda and will strictly follow the procedure set out below:

- The item will be introduced by the Presenting Officer followed by a formal presentation of the item, concluding with a formal recommendation;

- The Chairperson will then invite, in turn, the Objector and/or Supporter to speak for a maximum of five minutes each;
- The Chairman will invite the Applicant/Agent (if applicable) to speak for a maximum of five minutes;
- Time limits will be strictly adhered to;
- Response by Officers if necessary to the points raised;
- Consideration and discussion by Members before reaching a decision;
- The Objector, Supporter or Applicant/Agent may not take part in the Members' consideration of the application and may not ask questions;
- The Chairperson or a Member of the Committee may occasionally seek clarification on a point made;
- Should the speaker arrive after the presentation of the relevant application has commenced, their opportunity to speak will be lost;
- On occasion, following the presentation, public speaking and Member discussion, the Planning Committee may decide that it wishes to visit the site before making its decision. The site would then be visited by the Planning Site Inspection Sub-Committee or the Full Planning Committee, and then presented back to a future Planning Committee meeting for a decision. No public speaking will be permitted when the item is re-presented to Committee following the site visit;
- Determination of an application will not be deferred on the basis that a registered speaker cannot attend the Committee meeting. If a speaker is unable to attend the Committee meeting, he/she may nominate somebody to speak in their place (a 'reserve'). Where another Objector is not nominated to speak, the opportunity to speak will pass to the second person to have registered a request to speak;
- If an Objector, Supporter and/or applicant/agent wishes to speak on more than one application being presented at any Committee meeting, a request to speak must be made for each application. Each application will be reported and debated separately, and the Objector, Supporter and/or applicant/agent will be allowed to speak for five minutes on each application.

Content of the Speeches

13. Comments by the Objector, Supporter or Applicant/Agent should be limited to relevant planning issues. These include:
 - Relevant national and local planning policies;
 - Appearance and character of the development, layout and density;
 - Traffic generation, highway safety and parking/servicing;

- Overshadowing, overlooking, noise disturbance, odours or other loss of amenity.
14. Speakers should avoid referring to matters outside the remit of the Planning Committee, such as:
- Boundary disputes, covenants and other property rights;
 - Personal remarks [e.g Applicant's motives or actions to date];
 - Rights to views or devaluation of property.
15. Under no circumstances will an Objector, Supporter or Applicant/Agent or any other third party be permitted to circulate or submit notes, letters, plans or photographs or any other material during the Planning Committee meeting, whether as part of their public speaking opportunity or for any other reason.
16. The deadline for the receipt of comments on applications being presented to Committee is 12 noon on the Monday immediately before the Committee meeting. Comments received by the case officer before that deadline will be summarised and sent to Planning Committee Members and the relevant Ward Member(s). Comments or any other document or information received after that deadline will not be taken into consideration.