

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND PARK DIRECTION

SUBJECT:

REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SCHEME AT MEETINGS OF THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (DMC)

Purpose of Report

To recommend changes to the public participation scheme at Development Management Committee meetings.

Background

The Authority introduced public speaking at its Development Management Committees in 2002 and some changes were made to the procedures at a meeting of the National Park Authority on 7th December 2011 when they were reviewed. The clear intention of the scheme was to allow public speaking at one meeting only on each application and the wording of the scheme was intended to make that clear.

By and large the current arrangements have been working well and they have enabled the service to become more transparent and accountable by allowing members of the public and other interested parties to express their views which, in turn, assists Members of the Committee in reaching a decision on applications which come before it.

Several queries have been raised by members of the public in regard to the public participation arrangements and officers considered that the current policy was due to be reviewed. A workshop was held on 19th May 2021 with Members to discuss the matter.

Proposal

That the current policy be changed to allow the following:-

1. Public speaking be permitted for the following:-

- The local County Council Member for the area;
- A representative of the Community/Town/City Council in whose area the site is situated;
- Any statutory consultee;
- An objector of an application;
- A supporter of an application;
- Applicant/Agent

2. An individual who has addressed the Committee on a particular application at a previous meeting shall be permitted to address the Committee again if the application is deferred for any reason to subsequent meetings, for a maximum

time of 5 minutes. (The current scheme allows an individual to address the Committee at one meeting only.)

3. More than one person can share the allocated 5 minutes for public participation at the Chair's discretion.
4. Any documentation in relation to an application circulated to Members must be submitted 48 hours prior to the Development Management Committee to be considered. Anything received after this period will not be considered.

Financial considerations

There are no cost or staffing implications.

Risk considerations

A clearly written policy will minimise any confusion to members of the public

Compliance

Public speaking at Planning Committees is good practice.

Human Rights/Equality issues

These changes have no human rights or equality implications.

Biodiversity implications/Sustainability appraisal

There are no implications.

Welsh Language considerations

Members of the public have always, and will continue to have, the ability to address the Committee through the medium of Welsh, with appropriate notice as set out in the guidance.

Conclusion

It is considered that the public participation policy be amended to public speaking on an application more than once, the 5 minute allocation to be shared and that no additional information shall be accepted within 48 hours of the Development management Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members endorse the changes to the Policy as per the wording set out in the attached appendix and for the changes to take effect immediately.

Background Documents

- Report to NPA 20 March 2002 Introducing public speaking at Development Control Committee
- Report to NPA 7 December 2011 - Review of the Public Participation (public speaking) Scheme at Development Management Committee Meetings and Site Inspections and the submission of documents in relation to committee items

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**PEMBROKESHIRE COAST
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**



**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
AT
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

For more information telephone
Development Management on 01646 624800

Your Right to Speak at Development Management Committee Meetings

As part of our commitment to openness and transparency, this Authority has adopted a policy of allowing members of the public to address the Development Management Committee when planning applications are being determined.

The right to speak

The right to address the Committee is available at all meetings of the Development Management Committee and extends to:

The local County Council Member for the area;
A representative of the Community/Town/City Council in whose area the site is situated;
Any statutory consultee;
The applicant *OR* the applicant's agent;
A supporter of the proposal;
An objector to the proposal
(where one or more wish to speak one person will need to be nominated to speak on behalf of all; in the absence of agreement the first registered will be allowed to speak).

Please note the right to speak does not apply to Committee Site Visits

Notification

Anyone wishing to speak must notify Admin Support, Development Management at the address overleaf, in writing or by e-mail, (a pro-forma is enclosed for your convenience) no later than 10am, or receipt of the first post, 3 working days before the meeting. Under the present arrangements this will mean by 10am on the Friday morning preceding the Committee Meeting commencing 10am on the following Wednesday.

All requests to speak should identify clearly the application in question and specify the name of the person who wishes to speak. A summary of the points to be addressed should also be included. **This should be**

based on matters raised in original representations and be 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.

Speakers should avoid referring to matters outside the remit of the Development Management Committee, such as;

- Boundary disputes, covenants and other property rights
- Personal remarks (e.g. Applicant's motives or actions to date or about Members or officers)
- Rights to views or devaluation of property.

You may address the Committee in English or Welsh, at your discretion. The advance notice should specify which language you wish to use when addressing the Committee.

As there will be many items on the agenda, we cannot advise you at what time the application in which you are interested will be heard. In cases where the meeting is not a virtual one you should report to Reception 30 minutes before the start of the meeting for a briefing on the Agenda order etc. For virtual meetings a test access meeting will be held the day before.

General

1. Determination of an application will not be postponed because an individual who has indicated a wish to speak is not ready to do so when the application is announced or is unable to attend the meeting.
2. In the case of a request to share the time allocated for public speaking this can be agreed at the Chair's discretion.
3. In the case of dispute, the Chairman's ruling is final.
4. The use of video or tape recorders or cameras at the meeting is permitted but you should, out of courtesy to the others present, advise the meeting that you are about to do so

5. Disparaging remarks about officers or Members will not be tolerated

Procedure at the Meeting

1. An individual is permitted to speak for a maximum of 5 minutes.
2. Only those persons who have given advance notification will be entitled to speak. Late requests will not be accepted.
3. Those invited to speak will be called on to do so by the Chairman when the relevant part of the agenda is reached.
4. Those who speak are urged to speak as succinctly as possible, without repeating points that are already known to Committee Members and without over-running the time allotted to them by the Chairman. It is important to restrict discussion to planning issues. It is in everyone's interests to present views courteously and with proper respect for the opinions of others.
5. The procedure at the Development Management Committee meeting will be as follows (subject to the Chairman's discretion):
 - a) Chairman announces the application
 - b) Planning officer describes the application, the matters to be considered and provides a recommendation with visuals of site and plans as necessary
 - c) Representations will usually be heard in the following order:
 - i) Local County Council Member
 - ii) Community/Town/City Council Representative
 - iii) Statutory consultees
 - iv) Supporter
 - v) Objector
 - vi) Applicant or Agent
 - d) The Chairman and/or Members (?) may seek clarification on any points raised after each representation, as deemed necessary.
 - e) Planning Officer makes final comments and recommendation
 - f) Debate and decision by the Committee (officers will respond to points as necessary)

Contacting the Authority

To notify the Authority that you wish to speak in respect of a planning application please contact Admin Support, Development Management, in writing at:

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock, Pembrokeshire, SA72 6DY

By e-mail to dc@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk

NOTE: Speakers should bear in mind that in making their presentations to Committee they have no special protection from the laws governing slander, libel or defamation.