

REPORT OF MONITORING OFFICER

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.

Unfortunately, recently there was some confusion in respect of speaking at Committee, where separate individuals were able to address the Committee at three consecutive meetings on the same planning application. This was contrary to the guidelines and resulted in confusion and uncertainty for members of the public.

Proposal

That the current wording is amended to cure any ambiguity regarding the right to speak at a meeting of the Development Management Committee. It is also proposed to introduce an additional "General Point 2" requesting members of the public to provide an electronic version of their presentation to Committee in the event that their connectivity to any virtual meeting is lost during their address.

Financial considerations

There are no cost or staffing implications.

Risk considerations

The guidance as drafted is ambiguous, which risks causing confusion to members of the public.

Compliance

Public speaking at Planning Committees is good practice, and this minor wording change clarifies the Authority's guidelines.

Human Rights/Equality issues

This minor wording change has 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 recommended change to the wording will prevent attempts to be permitted to speak on a particular application more than once.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee endorses the change in the wording set out in the attached appendix 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

(For further information, please contact Mike Kent, Monitoring Officer)

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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 one meeting of the Committee **only** and extends to:

The local councillor for the area;
A representative of the Community/Town Council in whose area the site is situated;
Any statutory consultee;
The applicant *OR* the applicant's agent *OR* other representative in support 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, by fax 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 planning reasons only and if you would like advice on what constitutes such reasons please contact the office.

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 all cases you should report to Reception 30 minutes before the start of the meeting for a briefing on the Agenda order etc.

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. **It is strongly recommended that you provide an electronic version of your statement at least 24 hours before the meeting to ensure that – should your connectivity to any virtual meeting be lost – the remainder of your address can be read out to the Committee.**
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 not permitted.

Procedure at the Meeting

1. An individual is permitted to speak for a maximum of five 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. See General point 1 above.
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 Council Representative
 - iii) Statutory consultees
 - iv) Objectors (**see previous "Right to speak" section**)
 - v) Applicant or Agent or representative in support
 - d) The Chairman 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

Remember to include the following in your correspondence:

The name of the person who will be speaking;
 Details of the matters to be raised, where appropriate;
 The language you wish to use when addressing Committee.

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.