

**PLANNING COMMITTEE
19 JUNE**

AGENDA ITEM: 9

REVIEW OF PLANNING COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Portfolio Holder Cllr R J Chesterton
Responsible Officer Head of Planning and Regeneration

Reason for Report: To review Planning Committee procedures in light of issues that have arisen and following visits to other Local Planning Authorities.

RECOMMENDATION: That Members approve:

1. That a public consultation exercise be undertaken.
2. That a further report be brought before Planning Committee for consideration incorporating the results of the consultation.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Links to corporate target of empowering our communities via public participation at Planning Committee meetings.

Financial Implications: Increased efficiency will lead to savings. Changes to Planning Committee procedures may also increase Council costs if further ICT such as an electronic voting system are proposed. Detailed financial implications are not known at this stage, but will become clearer in the proposed follow up report.

Legal Implications: The existing procedures for Planning Committee at Mid Devon stem from the Constitution. Recommendations from the Planning Committee on changes to their procedures will need to be approved by Council after consideration by the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer. Prior to this, recommendations for change will also need to be considered by the proposed Constitution Working Group.

Risk Assessment: None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Over a 3 month period in late 2011 – early 2012, a working group of 3 members of the Planning Committee including the then Chairman, together with the Professional Services Manager visited 6 other councils. The purpose of these visits was to compare and contrast planning committee procedures and identify best practice. These visits were also to form the basis for a review of planning committee procedures at Mid Devon and to make recommendations.

1.2 The Councils visited were Torbay, Teignbridge, Plymouth City, Taunton Deane, East Devon and Dartmoor National Park.

1.3 Issues for consideration within the review arising as a result of the visits to other councils are as follows:

- Information publicising committee procedures.
- Layout of venue.
- Participants.
- Agenda format and order.

- Report format and contents.
- Officer presentations – content, visuals, format and length.
- Speaking – order, number, time.
- Voting.
- Site visit arrangements.

2.0 INFORMATION PUBLICISING COMMITTEE PROCEDURES.

- 2.1 Many of the councils visited produce either a guide to Planning Committee (including how members of the public can speak) or include a section at the beginning of the agenda. At present a generic guide to participation at all Mid Devon's committee meetings is available on the website together with information on how the plans list is considered. However neither provide a full guide to Planning Committee including associated site visits. Given the amount of queries currently arising from both the public and Parish Councils regarding Committee procedures, the working group consider that there is a need to produce a comprehensive guide. A copy of the guide produced by East Devon is attached as **Appendix 1**. This approach is favoured over including information at the beginning of the agenda as it can be placed on the website and paper copies made available at the meeting.
- 2.2 The working group proposes that the guide also include clear directions to the venue with a map and identify available parking in the vicinity.

Recommended change 1: That a clear guide to Planning Committee procedures is produced to inform the public and other participants.

3.0 LAYOUT OF VENUE.

- 3.1 The layout of the committee venue needs to ensure that all attending can understand the proceedings, hear the debate and clearly see visual material. Those speaking should be visible to the public and members of the Planning Committee should be able to be identified by members of the public. On attending a range of other Planning Committees, it was not always readily apparent who was sitting where, their role in the proceedings nor who was speaking.
- 3.2 The working group favour a 'U' shaped seating arrangement for committee members with the screen located at the top of the 'U'. This change may need to be timed to coincide with proposed upgrading of the visual display screens in the Council Chamber. Members and Officers should be able to be identified by name plates. Speakers are invited to come forward to signed positions. The screens should be located and sized to be readable by all present. The sound system should ensure that all can clearly hear the proceedings. The working group also favour information signs within the venue covering such issues as recording the meeting and phones to be turned off.

Recommended change 2: That the layout of the venue is amended to a 'U' shape once display screens have been upgraded in the Council Chamber.

4.0 PARTICIPANTS

4.1 Within recent years a Legal Officer has not attended Planning Committee at Mid Devon as a matter of course, although is available to attend by prior arrangement depending on the content of the agenda. On the day, a Legal Officer is also available by phone. The working group noted that in the other councils visited, a Legal Officer attended as a matter of course and gave legal advice during the proceedings. The working group considered that Mid Devon would benefit from a similar arrangement and that legal input was needed in the preparation of the agenda, pre committee briefing and at the meeting itself.

Recommended change 3: That Legal advice is available in the preparation of the agenda, pre committee briefing and in person at the meeting itself.

4.2 Members of the working group noted that committee attendance by other officers of the councils visited varied widely with some reliant upon Senior Planning Officers present, whilst in other authorities this was supplemented by officers from other areas of the council and consultees as needed. Examples of attendance included representatives from Environmental Health and the Highway Authority. The working group considers that the attendance of other officers should be arranged via advance request in order to address specific issues/questions raised in relation to items on the agenda. This is already the practice at Mid Devon. **There is no change proposed in this respect.**

5.0 AGENDA FORMAT AND ORDER

5.1 Agenda formats between the different planning authorities visited were very similar, with generally only small variations between them. The working group considered that the existing Mid Devon practice of dealing with enforcement items in advance of planning applications and dealing with member interests item by item rather than in a block up front should be retained.

5.2 The format used at Mid Devon considers planning and other applications first (via an itemised list approach) then a range of performance, management and briefing type reports which are later in the agenda (referred to as agenda reports). In that manner the items likely to attract the most public attendance are considered earlier in the proceedings.

5.3 During the meeting, the itemised list of applications is reviewed by Committee members before their individual consideration. Where there are members of the public, Parish / Town Councils, Members or Officers that wish to speak to that item, they are reserved for individual consideration by the Committee. All other applications (those with no speakers) are determined in accordance with the recommendation contained within the reports by a single motion for each item moved by the Chairman and subsequent vote. This takes place in advance of the consideration of individual applications where there are speakers. This arrangement allows the meeting to focus on applications where

members specifically wish to have a debate on the issues or where there are speakers who wish to bring particular issues to their attention.

The working group proposes no change in this respect.

6.0 REPORT FORMAT AND CONTENTS

6.1 The format, content and in particular length of officer reports on planning applications has been considered on several previous occasions, most recently in October 2010 as which time it was resolved that no changes be made to the reports being presented to the Planning Committee.

6.2 It is important that consideration of planning applications is open and transparent with reports containing all necessary information to allow for fair and robust determination of applications. Planning matters can also be controversial and subject to challenge via appeal, ombudsman and judicial review. The length of planning reports needs to achieve a careful balance in order to provide sufficient detail in order to ensure robust decision making that takes into account relevant material considerations, consultations and representations but not being over detailed and repetitive.

6.3 Previous legal advice on the content of officer reports was as follows:

- *'There are no specific legal requirements as to what the report to the committee ought to contain and it may be oral rather than written or a combination of part written and part oral. It is the usual practice that all written reports are supplemented by oral advice and explanation at the committee meeting. It is usual for the report to contain the following; a description of the application, the relevant planning history and policies and will summarise the representations received from statutory and other consultees. It is common to refer to matters that are not material planning considerations and to state why these are not material however this could be done orally at the meeting.*
- *It is important that the officer's report, whether written or oral, is as accurate as possible regarding both the facts and the law and be fair to both the applicants and any objectors. The report will usually contain a recommendation to grant or refuse planning permission, to state any conditions on which permission is granted including whether a legal obligation is required.*
- *The advantage about setting out all relevant matters in a report is that there is clear evidence, in the event of either an appeal or a judicial review application to the High Court, of what matters were considered by the planning committee in arriving at their decision. If parts of the report are given orally then the minutes would need to reflect this and this would present a higher risk that the evidence would be discounted or given less weight by a Planning Inspector or the Court.*
- *It is unusual for costs to be awarded in a planning appeal unless one party has, for example, acted unreasonably. Costs could however be*

awarded against the Council so it is important that the Council presents its evidence clearly, fully and preferably in written form. It is noted that Planning is one of the most contentious areas of the Council's functions, appeals are common and the Council does occasionally face judicial review proceedings.

- *The length of reports will to a large part, depend on the complexity of the application.*

6.4 From the attendance at other planning committees, the working group has concluded that the content of officer reports at other authorities are broadly similar to those produced at Mid Devon. Three issues of detail arose from viewing the reports from other authorities:

- Whether the conditions and reasons / reason(s) for refusal be moved up to the front of the report immediately after the recommendation? However this could be confusing in this position in the report as conditions deal with matters of detail arising from the content of the material considerations section. However in the event of a refusal, members may wish to see the reasons for refusal immediately after the recommendation at the front of the report.
- The inclusion of the name of the case officer to allow members to easily identify the officer to contact in the event of any questions on the application or content of the report in advance of the meeting.
- Whether an executive summary is needed at the front of the report? However, all approvals of planning permission are required to contain a reason for the grant of that permission. This reason already acts as a summary and is included in the report where approval is recommended. For refusals, reasons for refusal are needed and succinctly act to summarise why the proposal is considered unacceptable when considered against relevant policies. Accordingly this is not a recommended change.

Members of the working group were satisfied with the balance of information in the reports.

Recommended change 4: That in the case of refusals, the reasons for refusal be moved up to the front of the report to follow the recommendation and the case officer name be included.

7.0 OFFICER PRESENTATIONS

7.1 Officer presentations should assist those present in their understanding of the site, its surroundings and the determining planning issues. The presentation should support the written report within the agenda, but not repeat it. It should not act as a substitute thereby discouraging the reading of the report in advance of the meeting. Presentations need to be focussed and not overly long. They should act as a tool to assist robust decision making.

- 7.2 The officer presentations currently use powerpoint with plans of the proposal including its location, together with photographs and a summary slide of the determining material considerations. Other local authorities use a variety of methods to achieve the same purpose: video, google maps and streetview, photos and plans. Members of the working group did not consider the format of the officer presentations needed to substantially change, but that more clarity was needed over some matters of detail in terms of clearly marking the location of any photographs, enlarging both the title slide and cursor. Should the site photos come before the detailed application plans?

Recommended change 5: That officers review the length and content of presentations to make them more focussed and succinct.

Recommended change 6: That the content of officer presentations be amended to increase the size/ colour of the cursor, the location of photographs be clearly indicated and the title slide be enlarged.

8.0 PUBLIC SPEAKING

- 8.1 The circumstances under which public speaking takes place at Planning Committee is perhaps the most controversial area of procedure in terms of who is able to speak, when they speak, the number of people able to speak for or against proposals, how long is allowed and the order in which speakers are called. All councils visited offered the opportunity of public speaking at Planning Committee, but great differences were apparent between them.
- 8.2 **When may public speaking take place?** Public speaking is currently accommodated at two points in the agenda; firstly, at public question time of up to 30 minutes at the beginning and secondly, later in the running order in relation to individual planning applications. Speaking to agenda items needs to be clarified and it is suggested that it could take place when the item is dealt with rather than up front during public question time. This could take place for all agenda items, except perhaps those included for information such as the list of major applications or the list of delegated decisions.
- 8.3 **Who is able to speak and the number of speakers.** All Councils visited allowed objector(s), supporter(s) or the applicant / agent, a representative of the Parish or Town Council and the Ward Member to speak. A range of procedures were evident over the number allowed to speak on each application. Some Councils allowed only a single objector and a single supporter or the applicant / agent to speak, one allowed up to 2 of each and others did not limit the number of speakers. Issues to consider on this include the need to give opportunity for a fair, balanced hearing for the different parties whilst avoiding repetition of the same views and allowing the meetings to proceed in a timely manner. The current limit on one speaker for and one against an application is cause for applicant and particularly public frustration. This has been shown by the increasing number of questions being asked at the beginning of planning committee that

relate to individual applications. **The current restriction of the number of speakers should therefore be reviewed and form part of the consultation exercise. This should be considered in conjunction with the amount of time given per speaker.**

- 8.4 Members may wish to consider allowing more speakers, either in all instances or perhaps on major applications only. In the event that more speakers are allowed, Members will also need to consider the length of speaking for each person. For example:

Major applications

1 speaker for and 1 against	5 minutes each	(10 mins)
2 speakers for and 2 against	3 minutes each	(12 mins)
3 speakers for and 3 against	2 minutes each	(12 mins)
+ Parish + Ward Member		

Non major applications

1 speaker for and 1 against	3 minutes each	(6 mins)
2 speakers for and 2 against	2 minutes each	(8 mins)
3 speakers for and 3 against	2 minutes each	(12 mins)
+ Parish + Ward Member		

- 8.5 **How long to allow for speaking.** Most other Council's visited limited the time given for individual speakers to 3 minutes as is currently the case at Mid Devon with the exception of Ward Members who are not time limited. However it was noted that in a few instances this was extended to 5 minutes in the case of major applications. In some other Councils time limits on speaking length applied equally to both Parish Councils and Ward Members. The working group asks that these too be considered. The length given for each speaker should be considered in conjunction with the number of speakers.

- 8.6 **When public speaking takes place and the order of speaking.** Speaking currently takes place in the following order:

- i) Officer report
- ii) Supporter /applicant or agent
- iii) Objector
- iv) Parish or Town Council
- v) Ward Member

Feedback from the Planning Service's Agent's Forum is that agents / applicants request the ability to speak last in order to address comments or to correct any perceived inaccuracies made by others. Feedback from those that have objected to applications and also from Parish and Town Councils is that they too would wish to speak after the agent or the applicant for the same reasons. One party will inevitably be disappointed. When considering this issue one precedent for the order of speaking is that used by the Planning Inspectorate when considering planning appeals. The applicant is given the opportunity to speak last.

It is helpful for those wishing to speak advise Member Services in advance and 'register'. Individuals speaking either for or against an application are registered on a first come, first served basis.

- 8.7 **Questioning speakers.** In several Councils members of the Planning Committee asked questions of the speakers – either directly or through the Chairman. This is favoured by those attending the Agent's Forum and has advantages as a means to clarify issues as they arise. The working group suggest that this too form part of the consultation exercise to see if this change to current procedure has wider support.

Recommendation 7: That views be sought on arrangements for speaking at planning committee in terms of who, when, how many, how long for and the order of speakers. Should the questioning of speakers by Committee Members be included?

9.0 VOTING

- 9.1 At Mid Devon Members currently indicate their vote by a raising a hand. The count is taken out loud by the Member Services Officer. At other councils a range of methods were employed including an electronic system recording the vote from each member. The key in all cases is that it is clearly understood by all present which item is being determined, what the proposition is being voted on and that the result of the vote is clearly announced. This was not all always the case in other councils visited.

- 9.2 The working group considers that there needs to be a clearer procedure for the taking and announcing of votes at planning committee.

Recommended change 8: A clearer procedure be put in place regarding voting: that the item description, address and proposition be announced, Members clearly indicate their vote, that the vote is counted out loud and the outcome of the vote be announced.

10.0 SITE VISIT ARRANGEMENTS

- 10.1 Planning Committee site visits currently take place in two ways: as a visit by the whole of Planning Committee in advance of the meeting (normally on the morning of the meeting) when the application is a major or as a meeting of the Planning Working Group following the deferment of the application.

- 10.2 Normal meetings of Planning Committee (non specials) include a list of up and coming major planning applications. In order to identify such items early and timescale their consideration members are asked to indicate which they wish to visit. This involves all Committee members and takes the form of fact finding in preparation for the meeting. Members are accompanied by a Planning Officer who explains the scheme, points out specific features of the site and its surroundings and answers questions. The merits of the application are not debated and no decision is made during this visit. No other party attends.

- 10.3 Site visits may also take place by the Planning Working Group, a smaller subgroup of Planning Committee Members. This occurs when the application is deferred for a site visit by Planning Committee. Clear reasons for the site visit help members to focus on particular issues that can be seen during the visit. These may then be reported back at the next Planning Committee meeting at which time the application is normally determined. The applicant or the agent, an objector, the Parish or Town Council and the Ward Member are invited to attend and present their views on the application. There is also the opportunity for them to ask / answer questions. Speaking is controlled by the Chairman. The order of speaking is the same as outlined above. Once this has taken place, they are asked to leave. Members of the Planning Working Group then reflect on what they have heard and what they can see on site. No decision is taken. Summarised notes of the meeting are taken and reported back to Planning Committee with the agenda.
- 10.4 Members need to consider whether the Council continues to operate different site visit arrangements for members, particularly in light of recent poor attendance. Should the Planning Working Group be disbanded with deferrals for site visits being open for attendance by all members of Planning Committee? Would video presentation be beneficial and act as a substitute?
- 10.5 **Recommendation : That the arrangements for site visits be reviewed. Should the Planning Working Group continue or should site visits following a deferral be open to all members of Planning committee to attend? Clear procedures on the operation of site visit are needed.**

11.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 Members of the working group welcomed the opportunity to visit other Planning Committee meetings in order to identify best practice and issues for consideration at Mid Devon. The main finding of the working group was the high degree of consistency between Councils over the operation of Planning Committees. However several differences, particularly in public speaking arrangements were found that need to be considered. Detail of the operation of Planning Committee and its associated procedures are overdue an open and transparent review that takes into account the results of a public consultation exercise. The existing written procedures for the working of this Committee are not clear and need to be overhauled as part of this process. The Government has recently commented that the public needs to be brought back into the planning system and feel able to fully participate. This review and associated consultation will assist in this and will also aid robust, yet fair decision making that is clearly understood by all present.

Contact for Information: Jenny Clifford, Professional Services Manager
01884 234346

Circulation of the Report: Cabinet Member
Planning Committee

List of Background Papers: Sample planning committee agendas and
guidance from the Council's visited (on their
websites)
Report to Planning Committee October 2010 on
officer reports

Development & Management and Planning Inspection Committees

How they work

A guide for anyone who would like to:

- understand how the committee process works
- attend a committee meeting
- speak about an application at a committee meeting

Introduction

This guide is intended to help you to understand how planning applications are decided by the Development Management and the Planning Inspection Committees.

Only about 10% of planning applications come to the Development Management Committee for a decision. Most planning applications are decided by the Head of Planning and Countryside Services, in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman because there is general agreement on the decisions. These applications are decided under delegated powers agreed by the Council.

The role of the two Committees

- The Development Management Committee decides those applications where:
 1. The Ward Member(s) disagrees with the Head of Planning's recommendation and has offered planning grounds to support his/her case. For the smallest scale of planning application the Chairman must agree to the request for the Committee to consider the case

2. It is an application submitted by the Council itself for development of its own land or property
 3. It is an application submitted by a Councillor, or employee or a family member of either
 4. The Head of Planning asks the Committee to decide – usually very large scale or controversial applications
 5. The Head of Planning is recommending approval, against adopted policies
- If the Development Management Committee cannot agree and believes that a site visit should take place before a decision is reached, the matter is referred to the Planning Inspection Committee.

The site visit is informal and private, but is followed by the Committee members returning to the Council offices and in a formal committee meeting, deciding the application.

When and where do the Committees meet?

Both planning Committees normally meet in the Council Chamber at Knowle, in Sidmouth. The doors open 15 minutes before the meeting starts.

Very occasionally, a meeting will be held on another day or elsewhere within the District.

This may be for a Special meeting of the Committee and advance notice is always given.

The Development Management Committee usually takes place every four weeks, on a Tuesday, starting at 2.00pm.

The Planning Inspection Committee normally meets 10 days after the Development Management Committee, on a Friday, to consider any applications referred to it.

For a list of meeting dates please visit our website at www.eastdevon.gov.uk or contact our Democratic Services Officers on 01395 517546.

Who is on the Committee?

The Development Management Committee is made up of 16 District Councillors representing the whole of East Devon. Local Ward Members not on the Committee may attend and speak on applications within their ward. These Members do not have a vote.

The Planning Inspection Committee is made up of eight Members drawn

from the Development Management Committee. In the event that a Member of the Committee cannot attend, their place will be taken by an appointed substitute. Ward Members may also address this Committee, but again may not vote.

The names of the Chairman and Vice Chairman along with other members of the committees and their contact details can be found on the Council's website or from the Democratic Services team.

Which Council Officers support the Committee?

The lead officer is either the Chief Executive, or in his absence, a Corporate Director or the Senior Council lawyer. He or she will advise the Chairman on the Committee procedure.

A Democratic Services Officer will also be present to take a record of the meeting. They will also manage the list of anyone wishing to speak at the meeting. For information on how to speak at the Committees, please see the end of this guide.

The Head of Planning and/or the Development Manager will usually be the planning advisor to the Committee –

presenting reports and answering any questions the Chairman refers to them. Other Planning Officers sometimes attend to present specific reports.

Occasionally other officers attend to give specialist advice, such as an Environmental Health Officer on noise, or a County Council Highway Officer on road safety.

There is a diagram at the end of this document setting out the layout of the Committee Chamber and showing who sits where.

Who may attend the meetings?

Any member of the public can attend Committee meetings and listen to the debate. They are not public meetings because the Committee Members don't debate with those present. They are Committee meetings which are held in public and at which public speaking is allowed, subject to rules which are explained later in this guide.

There may be times when the Committee needs to discuss private matters – usually financial information, legal challenges or appeals. This will normally take place at the end of the meeting and the press and public will be asked to leave.

How the Committee meetings work

Both Development Management and Planning Inspection Committee meetings can seem very complicated. It is necessary however for these particular Committees to be formal in their approach as they are often dealing with complex matters.

Although Officers will make a recommendation, the committee has the right to make any decision it chooses as long as it is legally correct.

You may not agree with the end decision, but provided it has been reached taking into account all the relevant planning matters and having dismissed irrelevant points, it is unlikely that the decision can be successfully challenged.

If you wish to have more information on what are and are not material planning grounds please contact the Development Management Team on 01395 516551 or access the Planning section of the Council's website.

Agendas are published 10 days before the meeting takes place. Members are encouraged to look at sites before the meeting.

The agenda is also available on the Council's website, at the District Council Offices in Sidmouth and at Council Information Points. All Town and Parish Councils receive reports for applications in their area.

The Chairman will open the meeting by signing the minutes of the last meeting as a true record of that meeting, take apologies for absent Councillors and hear declarations of interest from Councillors if they relate to the cases to be decided that day. The Committee will also consider if there are to be any private matters which Officers recommend should be dealt with in private (known as Part B items).

This is followed by any urgent items the Chairman has allowed to be presented – usually cases where there is a deadline that has to be met which does not allow the case to await the next meeting.

Reports on planning policy, Government consultation documents, procedural matters and information items are dealt with next, followed by items submitted for information on delegated planning decisions made during the month and any planning or enforcement appeals submitted or decided.

The Chairman will then turn to the individual planning application reports.

Each report will be dealt with as follows:

- The planning Officer will be invited to give a verbal update on the report with any late items received since it was written. In more complex cases they may also summarise the key issues.
- Members of the public, the applicant and any Town or Parish Council representative, who have indicated on arrival at the meeting, that they wish to speak, will be invited by the Chairman to do so. There may be questions from the Committee members.
- The Ward Member(s) will make their contribution at the beginning of the debate and are invited to comment again before a vote is taken.
- The Chairman will open the debate to the Committee Members.

When a Member makes a recommendation (known as a Motion or Proposition) the Chairman will ask Members to debate it. When, in the Chairman's view, there has been sufficient discussion, the Member who moved the motion will be given the chance to reply. There will then be a vote.

It is often the case that during a debate on a motion another Member will suggest that it should be altered in some way (an "amendment"). If this happens the meeting will also have to discuss this amendment. Only one amendment can be dealt with at a time.

An amendment cannot be the direct opposite of the original motion. The Proposer of the original motion also has the right of reply before the summing up of the amendment proposer.

If an amendment is agreed it then becomes the substantive motion (the original motion is considered to have been defeated). If the amendment is not agreed and there are no further amendments, then the meeting will vote on the original proposal. Decisions can be reached by agreement or by a formal show of hands. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairman has, if he wishes to use it, a second or 'casting' vote.

This becomes the formal decision of the Committee and is recorded in the minutes.

- The voting process may appear confusing especially where Members are voting in favour of a refusal, or where there are various motions or amendments being

raised. However the Chairman and the lead officer of the Committee will ensure that the vote is accurate and the Chairman will confirm the final decision before moving on to the next case.

- Planning applications are either:
 1. approved
 2. approved with conditions and sometimes a Section 106 legal agreement)
 3. deferred with delegated authority (being given to the Head of Planning) to approve in consultation with the Chairman and Ward Member(s)
 4. refused (on specific grounds)
 5. referred to the Planning Inspection Committee for a site visit and final decision
 6. or are Deferred for more information (to come back to a later Committee meeting when the final decision will be made).

Minutes

The minutes of the Committee meetings are available on the Councils website and/or available for inspection at the Council Offices, Knowle, Sidmouth. For these committees the minutes are not a description of the debate, but are a record of the decisions taken and any key action points that may arise.

Public speaking procedure

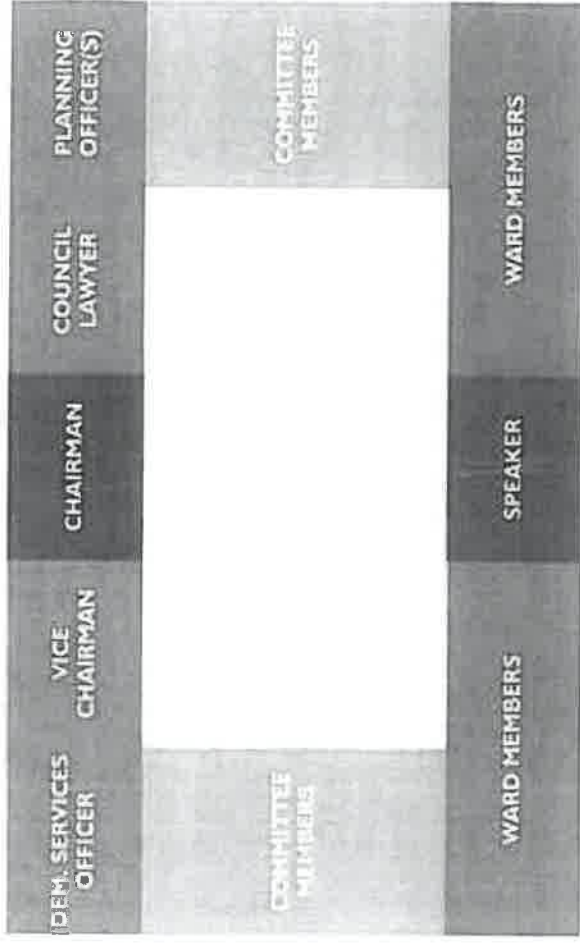
If you wish to speak:

- When you arrive at the meeting please enter your name on the sheet for the application you are interested in.
- When a matter is discussed the relevant Officer will introduce and outline the item to be discussed. The public will then be able to speak on that matter only.
- All individual speakers will be limited to a period of three minutes – where there is an interested group of objectors or supporters, a spokesperson should be appointed to speak on behalf of the group. **Extra papers and/or handouts cannot be circulated at the meeting.** There is a timing clock to assist you.

- Speakers should restrict their comments to planning matters only.
- The Chairman has the right to control speaking to avoid disruption, repetition and to make best use of the meeting time.
- There may be occasions at certain meetings when at the Chairman's discretion, the time allowed for each speaker is appropriately adjusted.

- Speakers are asked not to come to the microphone if their points have already been covered.
- After the public speaking period has finished the debate will begin and the public will take no further part in the meeting.
- All attendees at the meeting are asked to offer speakers the courtesy of listening to others' points of view, even if they do not agree with it.
- The Chairman will not tolerate any interruptions from the public and is entitled to exclude people from the meeting if the business of the committee cannot be carried out effectively.
- Members of the public must not pass notes to the Committee Members during the meeting.

Committee seating plan



PUBLIC SEATING AREA

How to get in touch



East Devon District Council
Knowle
Sidmouth
EX10 8HL



Telephone
01395 517546



Email
memberservices@eastdevon.gov.uk

www.eastdevon.gov.uk

