



Having your say at Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's Planning Committee

PROCEDURE NOTE FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC/ APPLICANTS RIGHT TO SPEAK AT PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Planning Committee decide the larger, complex or more controversial planning applications in the County Borough.

The Committee meetings usually take place on Tuesday at 2pm in Committee Rooms 1/2, in the Civic Centre, Port Talbot, SA13 1PJ, and are open to the public.

The public have a right to attend the meeting and address the Committee in accordance with the Council's approved protocol.

Who can speak at Committee?

Speaking is limited to one person for and one person against an application.

In the event of more than one person wishing to speak either for or against an application a spokesperson should be nominated. If agreement cannot be reached on nominating a spokesperson then the right to speak shall fall to the first person(s) to register a request to speak for and/or against the proposal

Where a person is permitted to speak against a proposal then the Applicant or Agent will be allowed the right of reply.

A person wishing to speak at a Planning Committee, should be:

- An objector or spokesperson on behalf of a group of objectors who has a genuine interest in expressing a view on the planning merits of a proposal
- A supporter of an application, or spokesperson on behalf of a group of supporters
- An applicant (or the applicant's nominated agent) for the planning application – only where an objector has previously indicated and spoken at the meeting (i.e. it is a right of reply)

In addition, Elected Members who do not sit on the Planning Committee may attend the meeting and exercise their right to speak in accordance with current procedures as specified within the Constitution

Registering your request to speak?

If you would like to speak at Planning Committee on a specific planning application you **must** contact Democratic Services in writing or via email and:

- request to speak by no later than two working days prior to the meeting date, clearly indicating the item number or application number on which you wish to speak and confirming whether you are supporting or objecting to the application.
- give your name and address which will be publicly available unless there are particular reasons for confidentiality

Should an objector register to speak the Applicant/Agent will be notified by the Council of their ability to address committee (their right to reply). Should the applicant/agent wish to exercise that right, it will be necessary to confirm this to the Democratic Services section before noon on the day before the meeting.

Contact details can be found at the end of this leaflet.

What can I say to the Committee?

Under planning law, we can only take into account comments on planning issues. For example, these include loss of light or privacy, highway safety, traffic and parking issues, noise, amenity, pollution, conservation, wildlife and the design and appearance of the development (This is not an exhaustive list).

Issues which cannot be taken into account include loss of view, effect on property values, private rights, covenants and boundary disputes.

In addition to its own Planning Policies, Neath Port Talbot County Borough has to take into account Welsh Assembly Government Policies and guidance and you may wish to refer to these as well.

You must not make statements that are personal, slanderous or abusive.

Keep your address short, relevant and to the point.

The use of visual aids, circulation of plans, photographs, or other material at the Committee meeting will not be permitted.

What happens at the meeting?

1. Persons registered to speak should arrive **no later than fifteen minutes** before the meeting starts. A clerk will advise on seating arrangements and answer any queries.
2. The Chairman of the Committee will open the Meeting

3. Items where people have registered to speak, will normally be taken first on the agenda and will strictly follow the procedure set out below.
 - The item will be introduced by the Presenting Officer who will give 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 Chairperson will invite the Applicant/Agent to address Committee in response to the objector 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
 - Should the Objector registered to speak fail to attend and/or speak, the Applicant/Agent will not be allowed to speak;
 - Should the Objector or Supporter registered to speak arrive after the fifteen minute cut off time, their opportunity to speak will be lost;
 - In the event of an application being deferred for the Planning Committee to visit the site, the objector and/or supporter will be allowed the opportunity to speak when the item is re-presented to Committee following the site visit. The Applicant/Agent will also be allowed the opportunity to speak in response to the objection at that deferred meeting.
 - At the meeting, you should not interrupt another speaker of the Committee debate.
4. Late requests to speak will not normally be accepted, although in exceptional circumstances they may be taken with the specific agreement of the Chair and Committee.
5. An application before committee will not be deferred if a person due to speak is unable to attend. This applies to persons for or against the application and the applicant/agent. Reserve speakers may be nominated in place of the person unable to attend. If no reserve is appointed then depending whether the person due to speak was for or against the application the opportunity to speak will fall to the next person in that category who has registered their request to speak

Please Note:

* The Council Constitution provides for a total time of 5 minutes for representations (a maximum of 5 minutes each for objectors and applicants and supporters). The Chair always has discretion as to whether or not a person speaks and has discretion to allow longer speaking times if appropriate.

After you have exercised your right to speak

After your five minutes has expired, you will be asked to return to the public seating area where you will be able to listen to the debate within the Committee Meeting.

Following the cessation of the debate, Members will be presented with a recommendation and will vote on that recommendation.

The decision of the Committee will be clearly conveyed verbally to those in attendance at the Committee.

If you are not a Voting member of the Committee you may leave the Committee meeting at any time.

Contact Details

If you wish to address the Planning Committee, please put your request in writing to **Democratic Services:**

By Post: Democratic Services
Civic Centre
Port Talbot
SA13 1PJ

By Email: democratic.services@npt.gov.uk

If you have any questions about the procedures above or would like a copy of the full scheme, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01639 763719

Website: www.npt.gov.uk

Translation/Special Requirements

If you would like this information in a different format, for example in Welsh or large print, please contact Planning Services, Environment Directorate, The Quays, Brunel Way, Baglan Energy Park, SA11 2GG.