



Public Speaking

at meetings of the Planning Sub-Committee

(date)

When and where do Planning Sub-Committee meetings take place?

The Planning Sub-Committee meets at South Cambs Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6EA at intervals of about six weeks, subject to cancellation due to lack of business. Further details, including contacts, directions, and variations to dates are available on the Council's website or by phoning Democratic Services on 08450 450 500.

Can members of the public attend Planning Sub-Committee meetings?

Yes. The vast majority of agenda items will be considered in public. However, the law does allow Councils to consider a limited range of issues in private session without members of the Press and public being present. An example would be a planning enforcement issue in which sensitive personal matters are discussed, or options, which, if publicised, could prejudice the Council's position. In every case, the public interest in excluding the Press and Public from the meeting room must outweigh the public interest in having the information disclosed to them.

Can members of the public speak at Planning Sub-Committee meetings?

Yes, at the Chairman's discretion and so long as they fall into one of these categories:

- One objector (including someone on behalf of a protest group)
- Applicant / owner (or an agent) or one supporter

who has already written to the Council in response to formal consultation. Elected or co-opted members of parish councils (who are not also district Councillors) and local district Councillors also have speaking rights. Those wishing to speak must register with Democratic Services by 12 o'clock noon two working days before the meeting. Speaking to a Planning, Legal or Enforcement Officer will not register someone to speak at the meeting; they must register with Democratic Services. Members of the public and parish councils are not allowed to ask questions of each other, officers or the Sub-Committee once the meeting has started. Further details are available on the Council's website or from Democratic Services.

What can people say and for how long can they speak?

Each speech is limited to three minutes. Speakers must restrict themselves to material planning considerations such as:

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Design, appearance, layout, scale and landscaping
- Environmental health issues such as noise, smells and general disturbance
- Government Planning Policy Guidance
- Highway safety and traffic issues
- Impact on trees, listed buildings, conservation areas and other designated sites.
- Loss of an important view from public land that compromises the local character
- Planning law and previous decisions
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework
- Visual and residential amenity

Councillors will **not** be able to take into account issues such as:

- boundary and area disputes
- the perceived morals or motives of a developer

- the effect on the value of property
- loss of a private view over adjoining land (unless there a parallel loss of an important view from public land)
- matters not covered by planning, highway other relevant legislation
- **private rights of access and covenants**
- suspected future development,
- processing of the application.

Speakers should be careful not to say anything derogatory or discriminatory, which could expose them to the risk of legal action. After the public speakers, parish councils and local Councillors have had their say, Sub-Committee members may ask them to clarify matters relating to their presentation. If those registered to speak are not present in the meeting room by the time the relevant item is considered, the Sub-Committee won't be able to wait, and will continue with the meeting – officers will be able to say whether a particular item is at the beginning, middle or end of the agenda, but cannot give an accurate idea of when it will be considered.

Can public speakers give Sub-Committee members written information or photographs relating to an application or objection?

Yes, but **not** at the meeting itself. Councillors will be given lots of information to read and digest before the meeting, so need to be given as much time as possible to read or view the information. Contact details are available on the Council's website or from Democratic Services. The same information must be sent to every member of the Sub-Committee and to local Councillors representing the parish in which the subject matter is located. All the members of the Sub-Committee can be contacted by sending one e-mail to (replace (at) with @). Any information sent to Councillors should be copied to the Democratic Services Officer as well (democratic.services@scamb.gov.uk).

How are issues considered?

The appropriate officer will introduce the item. Councillors will then hear any speakers' presentations. The order of speaking will be (1) One Objector, (2) The Applicant / owner or the agent or one supporter (3) Parish Council (4) local Councillor(s). The Sub-Committee will then debate the subject matter and vote on either the recommendations of officers in the agenda or a proposal made and seconded by members of the Sub-Committee. Should the Sub-Committee propose to follow a course of action different to officer recommendation, Councillors must give sound planning reasons for doing so.

Further information is available from Democratic Services, South Cambridgeshire District Council, South Cambs Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6EA – Telephone 08450 450 500.

The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you.
