

Protocol for public speaking at Development Control Board meetings

1. The right to speak

If an application is due to be considered by the Development Control Board, the Council will write to all those who have commented on the application, as well as the applicant and agent advising them of the time and date of the meeting and of the arrangements for public speaking.

If a petition with less than six signatures is received the Council will write to all signatories. If a petition has six or more signatures, the Council will write to the lead petitioner or if that is not obvious, the first signatory.

One speaker will be allowed to speak in favour of an application and one against. This will be operated on a "first come first served" basis. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Council will give priority to the first person that registers. If another person expresses an interest in speaking, the Council will, on request, provide details of the registered speaker so that they can contact them if they wish.

Only those who have commented on the application, along with the applicant/agent will be allowed to speak. Where more than one speaker wishes to speak in support of an application, precedence will be given to the applicant/agent.

The Council will advise all those who made comments on the application of the final decision once it is made.

2. Councillor participation

Where members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions, the Member Code of Conduct supports the Councillor's role as a community advocate and enables them to represent their communities and to speak on issues important to them.

Any Councillor (not restricted to members of the Development Control Board) who has a prejudicial interest in any business to be discussed at a Board meeting, may attend the meeting, but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business and the following rules apply:

- (a) the Member must register with Member Services, their intention to make representations, no later than 12:00 p.m. on the Monday before the Development Control Board meeting. For the avoidance of doubt, the Member will lose their right to make representations where they have not registered;
- (b) having registered with Member Services in accordance with para.(a) above, the Development Control Board will deal with the order of representations on a 'first come, first served' basis. If more than one Member wishes to speak

- on the same item, the Board will give priority to the first Member who has registered;
- (c) the Member will declare the prejudicial interest and the nature of the interest at the beginning of the meeting;
 - (d) if, during public submissions or the debate, a Member realises that they have a prejudicial interest in the item under discussion, they will lose their right to address the Board and must immediately declare the interest and the nature of the interest and leave the meeting room;
 - (e) the Member's representation etc will be heard by the Board, before the public are invited to make their representations;
 - (f) the Member will make his/her representations from the seat reserved for public representation;
 - (g) the Member's representation will be limited to 3 minutes;
 - (h) the Member may read from a prepared statement, but may not distribute or display any written or visual material, e.g. written statements, photos, videos etc;
 - (i) Development Control Board members may ask questions of the Member;
 - (j) having made representations, answered questions or given evidence, the Member must immediately leave the meeting room before the debate on the item starts;
 - (k) if the Chairman decides that the Member has finished speaking, despite their intention to say more, the Member must comply with the Chairman's decision, stop speaking and leave the meeting room.

Any Councillor (not restricted to Development Control Board members) with a prejudicial interest in an item under discussion, cannot be present in the public gallery to observe the debate and vote.

3. Registering to speak

Only those that have registered in accordance with this Protocol will be allowed to speak at Board meetings.

Speakers must register their intention with the Member Services Section, no later than 12:00 p.m. on the Monday before the meeting. Once the register is closed, no changes or additions to the list of speakers will be allowed. If a speaker who has already registered wishes to stand down in favour of another speaker, they must do so before the above deadline.

On the night of the meeting, speakers who have registered must report in to Member Services staff no later than 6.45 p.m.

4. Order of speakers and conduct of meeting

The Chairman may take agenda items in an order which reflects the degree of public interest.

For cases on Section A of the agenda, the officer will first make a presentation, describing the proposal, outlining the main planning considerations and concluding with a recommendation. This will be followed by Councillor representation in accordance with para.2 of this Protocol and then by public speaking.

Where permission is recommended, the objectors will have the opportunity to speak first, followed by any supporter. The reverse will apply for cases where refusal is recommended.

Each speaker will be allowed three minutes to make his/her points.

The speaker may read from a prepared statement but may not distribute or display any written or visual material, e.g., written statements, photos, videos etc.

Members or officers may wish to clarify any points with the speaker before Members consider the application. Thereafter, no further speaking will be allowed and the speaker will be asked to return to the public gallery.

The same arrangements will apply to applications which have previously been deferred by the Board for whatever reason.

The Chairman will have absolute discretion to curtail or extend speaking in individual cases if considered appropriate.