

recommendation on whether or not to approve it.

The planning officer at the meeting presents the report and displays the plans using an overhead projector. The Committee then discusses the application before taking a vote on whether or not to approve it. They can add conditions to a permission but they cannot amend the application itself, for example, by only allowing a one-bedroom flat if the application is for a two-bedroom house.

Any member who does not agree with the officer recommendation can propose reasons for refusal, which need to be seconded by another member. If the reasons for refusal are then approved on a vote the application is rejected. The only exception is if there has not been a site inspection in which case the application is deferred to the next meeting, so that the Committee can visit the site, sometimes with a planning officer, and reflect on the issues before taking their final decision.

Public Speaking on Planning Applications

Members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting for certain types of planning applications or when there have been a lot of objections. When public speaking is permitted, the applicant has a right to respond but only if objectors have registered to speak.

The Council publishes a separate leaflet on Public Speaking at Planning Committee, which can be downloaded from the Council's website.

Confirmation of Decisions and Publication of Minutes

The minutes from the meeting are published on the Council's website and with the agenda for the next meeting. You can also contact Democratic Services at any time after the meeting to find out what was decided.

The minutes include details of the conditions attached to permissions granted and the reasons for any application refused but they do not go into any depth about discussions at the meeting.

Your Local Councillor

Details of your local Councillors can be found on the Council's website:

www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk

Planning portal

Current planning applications can be searched for on the following link:

<https://planning.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Your guide to the Planning Committee



Introduction

This guide provides some basic information on the Planning Committee and how it operates. We hope it is helpful and informative. If you would like to know more about the committee's work, please call Democratic Services on 01737 276025 or email democratic.services@reigate-banstead.gov.uk.

To find out more about the Council in general please visit our website:

www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk

What does the Planning Committee do?

The main role of the Committee is to consider planning applications and decide whether or not they should be approved.

When, where and how often does the Committee meet?

The Committee meets on a Wednesday evening, once every four weeks on average. Meetings begin at 7.30 pm and are held in the New Council Chamber at the Town Hall in Reigate.

The annual schedule of all committee meeting dates is on the Council's website.

Membership

There are 15 councillors on the Planning Committee. Seats on the Committee are

allocated to each political group, in proportion to how many seats it holds on the Council overall.

Details of the current committee membership are on the Council's website.

Committee members may appoint a substitute if they can't attend a meeting but the substitute must be from the nominated list for their group.

Meetings are open to the public. Other councillors may attend and speak about an application in their Ward but only the committee members can vote.

Who's who at the meeting?

The Chairman of the Committee sits at the head of the Chamber, supported by the planning officers, a legal adviser and a democratic services officer.

The Agenda

All committee members are sent the agenda in advance of the meeting with a report on each application. A small supply of each report is available to the public on the night and can also be downloaded from the website, both before and after the meeting is held.

Addendum to the Agenda

Officers prepare an addendum on the day of the meeting to report any updates since

the agenda was published. It is tabled to all committee members and copies are made available to everyone attending.

At the meeting

The meeting is presided over by the Chairman of the Committee. First on the agenda is the approval of the minutes of the last meeting, the noting of any apologies and substitutes.

Declarations of interest

Councillors then have to declare any interest(s) they have on agenda items. If a 'disclosable pecuniary interest' is declared, the councillor must leave the meeting for that item.

If a 'non-pecuniary interest' is declared, the councillor can stay and take part in the debate and vote, or choose to leave the meeting if they think their interest is particularly relevant.

Considering the planning applications

The planning applications are the main items of business at the meeting. In general the Chairman will take items with public speakers first, followed by any items with a high public attendance, before proceeding in agenda order.

How are decisions made?

A report is prepared by the case officer for each application, outlining what the application is for, discussing its merits, and making a