

Neighbourhood Planning Network



Making the best use of Public Forum in Development Control Committees

July 2018



DC Committee or Delegated Decision?

Depends on a range of factors including:

1. Is it a major or controversial development
2. Has the application been considered by DC Committee before?
3. Has the application been referred to a DC Committee by a Ward Member within the appropriate timescale? (7 days beyond initial public consultation period)

Largely an OFFICER decision (often taken in liaison with DC Members) apart from 3 above, as referral is an undisputed right

Agenda setting meeting

Just over 2 weeks before the DC Committee meeting

Attended by Chair, Vice Chair & other party leads

Decide which items are coming to DC Committee, which can be delegated and the running order

Following confirmation of agenda, interested parties are notified and sent a link to this document

Planning applications



Having your say at Bristol City Council's Development Control Committees

- Speaking at the DC Committee
- Who can speak
- Submitting a written statement
- What you can say to the Committee
- What happens at the meeting

Listening to local people's views is a vital part of Bristol City Council's work. The Development Control Committees welcome statements and/or petitions from local people about planning applications that affect them.

Speaking at the DC Committee

The Development Control Committees decide the larger, complex or very controversial planning applications in the city.

The committee meetings usually take place on Wednesdays at 2.00 pm or 6.00 pm and the venue will normally be City Hall, College Green. It is not possible to say what time a case will be considered.

The public have a right to attend the meeting and may present a statement to the committee (subject to advance notice being received) if they wish.

Copies of statements are sent to committee members prior to the meeting so that they have all of the information to hand when making the decision and will have read all the statements.

It should be noted that comments and objections made in advance of the meeting carry just as much weight as those made at the meeting.

Who can speak?

Any member of the public, provided they give proper notice (see below) may speak directly at one of the Development Control Committees.

Submitting a written statement

If you are thinking of speaking, please contact us as soon as possible. You can write to us or e-mail and you must:

- Supply a copy of your statement (i.e. what you wish the Committee to see) or petition in writing (along with your request to speak) by no later than 12.00 noon of the working day before the meeting.
- Following this deadline the Clerk to the Committee will circulate all statements to the committee members in order that they have an opportunity to read them before the meeting.
- Give your name (which, along with your statement or petition, will be publicly available unless there are particular reasons for confidentiality). Statements will be made available to the public one hour before the meeting commences.
- Try to keep your statement short (about one side of A4 paper maximum) and the use of bullet points can be an effective way of getting your points across.

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, design and appearance of the development.

“Having Your Say” – key points

1. It is not possible to say what time a case will be considered
2. Statements to be submitted to Democratic Services by 12.00 Noon of the working days before the meeting (No flexibility on this!)
3. The Chair has discretion as to whether or not a person speaks and for how long, and this may be as short as one minute

My Advice

1. Keep statements short and snappy – try not to read them out
2. If more than one person speaking, avoid repetition and cover different topics
3. Keep to planning issues
4. Use it as an opportunity to prompt questions from Members
5. Remember it is your only opportunity to speak at the meeting

Material Planning Considerations – Site-Specific Factors

These are Material:

- Design & Visual Impact
- Privacy / Overbearing Effect
- Daylight / Sunlight
- Noise, Odours, Pollution
- Traffic, Access & Highway Safety
- Impact on Protected Fauna & Flora
- Economic Impact
- Vitality & Viability of Identified Centres – Sequential Test & Impact Assessment
- Planning History of the site
- Financial Matters – Viability & Deliverability
- Financial Matters - “local finance considerations” eg. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Material Planning Considerations – Site-Specific Factors

These are not Material

- The Applicant or nature of Occupier (National chain / Local business; Jamie Oliver / McDonalds)
- Changes of Use that don't require planning permission – expanded in recent years
- Land Ownership
- Private Rights (eg. Access) or Restrictive Covenants
- Property Value
- Competition between operators
- Loss of View
- “Moral” Issues (eg. Payday Loan companies, betting shops)
- Prospects of a “Better” proposal, or a better site (“need” or “sequential testing” is material in some circumstances)
- Change from Previous Scheme
- Other Council Matters (eg. Licensing; Harbour issues – boat moorings)