

Planning Committee

Public Speaking Scheme

Issued April 2023

Introduction

South Holland District Council operates a scheme which allows a limited right for the public to speak at Planning Committee meetings. This information explains the scheme and details how and when the public can speak.

The scheme relates to planning and related applications only.

Who can speak at the Planning Committee?

Four people can speak at Planning Committee in relation to any one Planning Application.

Out of the two slots reserved for the supporters

- the applicant may speak, or their agent can speak on his/her behalf and
- a member of the public or a member of an organisation with whom the Council consults can speak.

Out of the two slots reserved for the objectors

- a member of the public can speak; and
- a member of an organisation with whom the Council consults can speak.

An applicant can speak even though an objector does not, and vice-versa.

Statutory consultees, relevant to SHDC determined applications, who are allowed to speak include:

- Environment Agency
- Garden History Society
- Health & Safety Executive
- Natural England
- Sport England
- English Heritage
- Rail Network Operators
- Theatres Trust
- Lincolnshire County Council (Highway Authority) and
- Adjoining Local Planning Authorities
(South Kesteven District Council / Boston Borough Council / Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council / Fenland District Council / Peterborough City Council / Norfolk County Council / Cambridgeshire County Council).

Non-statutory consultees, relevant to SHDC determined applications, who are allowed to speak include:

- Parish Councils within South Holland
- Forestry Commission
- Ministry of Defence
- Police and Crime Commissioners
- Anglian Water
- Internal Drainage Boards
(Black Sluice; Kings Lynn; North Level South Holland and Welland & Deeping)

Non-statutory consultees, relevant to SHDC determined applications, who are allowed to speak include: (continued)

- Civic Societies
(Spalding & District; Holbeach & District; Long Sutton & District)
- The Wash and North Norfolk Coast
- Eastern Inshore Fishery and Conservation Authority
- National Grid
- Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
- Lincs Bat Group
- Pedals
- Ramblers Association
- RSPB
- South Lincs Clinical Commissioning Group
- Lincs Historic Buildings Committee
- Lincolnshire County Council (Childrens' Services)
- Lincolnshire County Council (Archaeology) and
- Lincolnshire County Council (Rights of Way).

How Are Speakers Selected?

Anyone wishing to speak, as a supporter or objector, should register by telephone with the Planning Support Team:

Tel: 01775 764725

email: planningadvice@sholland.gov.uk

Where more than one speaker for each available slot, wishes to attend the Planning Committee, the Council will contact the person who first registered their intention to speak and provide a contact name and telephone number of the other persons, to give that person the opportunity to combine their comments and select a single spokesperson.

The Council will only permit the first person to register to speak unless he/she submits an alternative name in their place.

All speakers must register their wish to speak by 12 noon on the day of the Planning Committee meeting. All speakers who have registered will be informed of the actual committee date when the agenda is published, as committee dates and agenda items may be subject to change.

Speakers cannot 'turn up' to speak at Planning Committee without the due notice being given in line with the procedures detailed within this scheme.

What Can Speakers Say?

Speakers have 3 minutes to state their views. Information already given to committee members within the Officer's report or in letters of objection need not be repeated by speakers.

Speakers should confine their comments to matters relevant to the planning application. The following is a brief summary of matters which would not/will not influence a decision on whether to grant planning permission.

- Civil disputes between neighbours
- Alleged increase or decrease in property values
- Loss of a private view
- A developer's character, morals, motives, or financial circumstances
- Matters covered by other legislation (public health, licensing etc)
- Restrictive covenants

Speakers should not introduce new information, make new "promises", verbally amend the application, or attempt to negotiate with the Planning Committee. If an applicant introduces this type of information, the Chairman may stop the speaker and/or defer the application for consideration at a future meeting or invite the Committee to consider the application on the basis of existing information.

The Chairman reserves the right to stop or eject the speaker from the meeting.

What Happens at the Planning Committee?

Speakers should arrive at the venue shortly before the start of the meeting to register with the Democratic Services Officer. They will then be asked to sit in a reserved area.

The Chairman will introduce the application and a Planning Officer will then provide the Planning Committee with a presentation, consisting of an overview of the Committee report, details of any recent information not included within the report and a verbal recommendation. The Chairman will then ask the speaker to come forward.

The speaker should take their allocated seat, next to the Democratic Services Officer, who will then switch on the microphone and start the clock timer. The speaker will have precisely 3 minutes to make their statement. After the sounding of the alarm the microphone will be switched off. The speaker should then return to the reserved seating provided.

Speakers and committee members cannot interrupt or cross-examine each other. However, the Officers or Councillors may comment on the facts presented by a speaker.

Speakers should not 'hand in' or circulate written materials or photographs on the day of the Planning Committee. If there is a need to add new material to written comments already submitted, speakers should send copies to the Planning Manager a few days before the meeting so that it can be properly taken into account.

When does an Application go to the Planning Committee?

Approximately 10% of all planning and related applications are considered by the Council's Planning Committee. The remaining 90% are determined by officers under delegated powers and these applications are not subject to the public speaking scheme.

An application that would normally be determined under delegated powers will not be referred to the Planning Committee on the grounds that someone wishes to speak publicly.

During the processing of a planning application the applicant or third parties can ask the case officer if the application is likely to be considered by the Planning Committee. Committee reports are publicly available 5 clear working days before the meeting.

On occasion speakers may arrive at Committee to be told that they cannot speak, because the application has been deferred to the next meeting or has been withdrawn by the applicant.

Regrettably this is unavoidable.

Webcasting at the Planning Committee?

Planning Committee meetings are live streamed on our social media channel and therefore public speakers will be recorded.

Please notify the Democratic Services Officer if you have any concerns about this. Details of the Council's webcasting facility can be found on the Council's website:

www.sholland.public-i.tv/core/portal/home

Which Council Committees Have Public Speaking?

The Public Speaking Scheme will only apply to the Planning Committee. This Committee normally meets at the Priory Road Offices of South Holland District Council.

Is Public Speaking compulsory?

No one is obliged to speak at Committee. Speaking at Committee supplements and does not replace written comments. Persons wishing to speak are encouraged to also submit their views in writing within the statutory consultation period for the particular planning application.

Who can help?

All enquiries about public speaking should be made to:
The Planning Support Team

Tel: 01775 764536

email: planningadvice@sholland.gov.uk

Between 9am and 5pm Monday - Friday.

When The Planning Support Team is unavailable, enquiries about public speaking will be dealt with by administrative staff in the Planning Team.

When contacting staff, please make it clear that you wish to register to speak at the Planning Committee.



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