

Procedure for Public Speaking

The Council encourages public speaking at meetings of the Development Control Committee (DCC). This procedure sets out the scheme in place to allow members of the public to address the Committee at the following meetings:

1. Scheduled DCC meetings

2. Special meetings of DCC

Introduction

Public speaking slots are available for those items contained within the schedule of applications. Unfortunately, it is not permitted on any other items on the agenda.

The purpose of public speaking is to emphasise comments and evidence already submitted through the planning application consultation process. Therefore, you must have submitted written comments on an application if you wish to speak to it at Committee. If this is not the case, you should refer your request to speak to the Committee Chair in good time before the meeting, who will decide if it is appropriate for you to speak.

Those wishing to speak should refrain from bringing photographs or other documents for the Committee to view. Public speaking is not designed as an opportunity to introduce new information and unfortunately, such documentation will not be accepted.

Scheduled DCC meetings are those which are set as part of the Council's civic timetable. Special DCC meetings are irregular additional meetings organised on an ad-hoc basis for very large or complex applications.

Before the meeting

You must register your wish to speak at the meeting. You are required to notify both our Democratic Services Team democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk and our Planning Team planning@stroud.gov.uk in advance and you have until noon one clear working day before the day of the meeting to let us know.

At the meeting

If you have registered to speak at the meeting, please try to arrive at the Council Chamber 10 minutes before the Committee starts so that you can liaise with the democratic services officer and other speakers who have also requested to speak in the same slot. Where more than one person wishes to speak, you may wish to either appoint one spokesperson or share the slot equally.

If you have not registered to speak, your ability to do so will be at the discretion of the Chair.

1. Scheduled DCC Meetings

There are three available public speaking slots for each schedule item, all of which are allowed a total of **four minutes** each: -

- Town or Parish representative
- Objectors to the application and
- Supporters of the application (this slot includes the applicant/agent).

There is an additional speaking slot available for all Ward Councillors with no time restraints.

Please note: to ensure fairness and parity, the four-minute timeslot is strictly adhered to, and the Chairman will ask the speaker to stop as soon as this period has expired.

Those taking part in public speaking should be aware of the following:

- They will be recorded and broadcast as part of the Council's webcasting of its meetings.
- Webcasts will be available for viewing on the Council's website and may also be used for subsequent proceedings e.g. at a planning appeal.
- Names of speakers will also be recorded in the Committee Minutes which will be published on the website.
- Speakers will not be allowed to ask questions of the Councillors or Officers; Committee Members are not able to question speakers directly but can seek points of clarification through the Chair with responses delivered by Officers.
- Minutes of the meeting will be taken, and these will record the names of all speakers on all applications and the decision made.

The order for each item on the schedule is:

1. Introduction of item by the Chair
2. Brief presentation and update by the planning case officer
3. The Ward Member(s)
4. Public Speaking:
 - a. Parish Council
 - b. Those who oppose the application
 - c. Those who support the application
5. Committee Members questions of officers
6. Committee Members motion tabled and seconded
7. Committee Members debate the application
8. Committee Members vote on the application

Special DCC meetings

There are three available public speaking slots for each schedule item, all of which are allowed a total of up to **eight minutes** each: -

- Town or Parish representative
- Objectors to the application and
- Supporters of the application (this slot includes the applicant/agent).

There is an additional speaking slot available for all Ward Councillors with no time restraints.

Please note: to ensure fairness and parity, the eight-minute timeslot will be strictly adhered to and the Chairman will ask the speaker to stop after this time period has expired.

Those taking part in public speaking should be aware of the following:

- They will be recorded and broadcast as part of the Council's webcasting of its meetings.
- Webcasts will be available for viewing on the Council's website and may also be used for subsequent proceedings e.g. at a planning appeal.
- Names of speakers will also be recorded in the Committee Minutes which will be published on the website.
- Speakers will not be allowed to ask questions of the Councillors or Officers; Committee Members are not able to question speakers directly but can seek points of clarification through the Chair with responses delivered by Officers.
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