

Dorset Council

Covid-19 Pandemic – Addendum to the Guide to Public Speaking Protocol for Planning Committee meetings

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the council has had to put in place measures to enable the council's decision making processes to continue whilst keeping safe members of the public, councillors and council staff in accordance with the Government's guidance on social distancing by applying new regulations for holding committee meetings from remote locations.

The following procedures will apply to planning committee meetings until further notice, replacing where appropriate the relevant sections of the Guide to Public Speaking at Planning Committees:

1. While planning committee meetings are held remotely during the Coronavirus outbreak public participation will take the form of written statements (and not public speaking) to the committee.
2. If you wish to make a written statement it must be no more than 450 words with no attached documents and be sent to the Democratic Services Team by 8.30am two working days prior to the date of the committee – i.e. for a committee meeting on a Wednesday written statements must be received by 8.30am on the Monday. The deadline date and the email contact details of the relevant democratic services officer can be found on the front page of the committee agenda. The agendas for each meeting can be found on the Dorset Council website
<https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>
3. During this period the council can only accept written statements via email and you should continue to bear in mind the guidance in the public speaking guide when preparing your representation.
4. The representations made by members of the public will be read out, in the order in which they were received, by the Chairman or an officer (but not the case officer), after the case officer has presented their report and before the application is debated by members of the Committee. It may be that not all of your representation will be read out if the same point has been made by another representation and already read to the Committee.' The time period for the receipt of the written representations will remain at 15 minutes, although the Chairman of the Committee will retain discretion over this time period as she/he sees fit.
5. This addendum applies to members of public (whether objecting or supporting an application, town and parish councils, planning agents and applicants.