



**Isle of Man  
Government**

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# Planning Committee Public Speaking Guidance

## January 2021

Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

Planning and Building Control Directorate Murray House

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## **Introduction**

The Planning Committee is an independent body of people appointed to make decisions on many of the development proposals made to the Isle of Man Government's Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture.

The Planning Committee Standing Orders provide for members of the public to address the committee and provides for guidance to be published to provide more detail, which is the purpose of this document.

Please note that you do not have to speak to make your views known, you can still write to the Department about any planning application and your views will be taken into account.

## **Who Can Speak?**

The Standing Orders indicate that Members of the public (including local authority representatives, applicants and agents) attending a meeting of the Committee may address the Committee on a planning application only in the circumstances where –

- the person has registered a request to speak on the planning application in accordance with the Department's published guidance; and
- the person has previously made written comments on the planning application which is the subject of the registration above.

## **How Long Can I Speak For?**

The Standing Orders set out the following points.

- Any person (including a local authority, objector, supporter and applicant and/or agent) who is registered to speak will be allocated a maximum of one three-minute time slot and Local Authority representatives may only speak as either the Local Authority or, where relevant, as the applicant.
- Preference will be given to the applicant and/or agent, if applicable, in respect of any person speaking in support of a planning application.
- Subject to the provisions above, if there are multiple requests to speak either in support of or in objection to a planning application, those persons can appoint one or a number of speakers to speak on their behalf and will be accordingly allocated a maximum of one three-minute time slot to speak on the application.
- The Chair may stop the address if the speaker goes over the allocated three minutes and/or if the speaker discusses non-planning matters.
- If a person who is registered to speak does not appear before the Committee, the Chair may at their discretion reallocate the time to another speaker who has previously registered to speak.

## **How Do I Register to Speak?**

Once the agenda for each Planning Committee Meeting is finalised, at least two working days prior to the Committee Meeting (Meetings are usually on a Monday), it will be published on the

Department's website ([www.gov.im/planningagendas](http://www.gov.im/planningagendas)) and you can then contact the Department to register your wish to speak. You can ask to be included in an agenda alert available by email by emailing [planning@gov.im](mailto:planning@gov.im)

If you do not have access to the internet to view the agenda, you can contact the Planning Administration team on 01624 685950 to see if the item is on the agenda.

**It is your responsibility to find out if the planning application in which you have an interest is on the agenda; the Department will not be able to contact parties to let them know.**

In order to register you must **telephone** Planning Administration on 01624 685950. You must register by 4.30pm on the working day prior to the Committee meeting. If the meeting is on a Monday, for example, this means you must register by 4.30pm on the Friday before.

Please note that you will not be able to register by e-mail or letter.

When you register to speak you will be asked to confirm whether you wish to speak for or against the application.

If there are multiple requests on the same application, you may wish to co-ordinate with the others to appoint a speaker who will represent all your views. If you do not do this, the speaker who registered first will be the one allowed to address the Committee. Therefore, if you wish to speak against an application, you will be asked if you are willing for your details to be given to anyone else who may also wish to participate.

## **What Happens at the Committee Meeting?**

Committee meetings are usually held once every two weeks on a Monday, starting at 10am.

The meetings will either be held at the Ground Floor Meeting Room, Murray House, Mount Havelock or by electronic means. Make sure you check the Agenda for when, where and how the meeting is taking place when you register to speak. If you wish to speak via electronic means at a meeting which is being held at Murray House, please contact Planning Administration on 01624 685950 to confirm if provision can be made for this. Where you are contributing by electronic means you may wish to refer to our supplementary guidance at [www.gov.im/planningcommittee](http://www.gov.im/planningcommittee)

Please attend at least 10 minutes before the start of the meeting in order to reaffirm your wish to speak and where virtual connectivity can be tested, if required. Please note that items may be taken out of order of the agenda and the Committee will not wait for you if you are not present.

The Chairman introduces each item. There will be a short explanation by the Planning Officer, whose report will contain a recommendation to approve or refuse the application. The Committee does not have to follow the recommendation.

The Chairman will call you when it is your turn to speak. The Local Authority is given the opportunity to go first, then the objectors, then the applicant or supporter. The Committee will discuss the matter and may have questions for the Planning Officer. The Standing Orders allow for speakers to respond to questions from the Committee to provide factual clarification of relevant matters.

The Standing Orders also state that speakers who are not the applicant or agent cannot circulate or make reference to documents, photographs or other information at the Committee meeting unless they have been received as part of a duly made representation. Speakers who are the applicant or agent may only make reference to documentation which has been submitted as part of their application. Any Speakers may give a transcript or note of their intended speech to the Secretary of the Committee, to aid minute taking, but such documentation will not, in itself, be considered by the Committee unless a meeting is held by electronic means and the Speaker cannot be heard by all the Committee due to a failure of those electronic means.

### **What Can I Speak About?**

The Standing Orders indicate that:

- speakers can only speak about the merits of the planning application proposal upon which they have registered an interest to speak; and
- speakers cannot speak about enforcement matters or items not on the agenda.

There is separate guidance on how applications are determined that sets out what constitutes genuine planning considerations, this is available at [www.gov.im/materialconsiderations](http://www.gov.im/materialconsiderations)

The best presentations deal clearly with the planning impacts of any proposal. It is also important to be clear on whether what you are saying is opinion or fact. If you wish to raise questions these may be best dealt with before the day of the Committee by talking to a Planning Officer. You will only get one opportunity at the meeting to address the Committee. The minutes of the meeting will only reflect the topics and issues raised and will not be recorded verbatim.

If the item is deferred for consideration at a future Planning Committee, you will get another opportunity to speak, but you will need to register beforehand in the same way.

The Chairman retains the right to refuse any speaker to continue if they feel that they are acting in a manner which is inappropriate.

#### **Further help and advice:**

Phone: 01624 685950 E-mail: [planning@gov.im](mailto:planning@gov.im)

Website: [www.gov.im/categories/planning-and-building-control/](http://www.gov.im/categories/planning-and-building-control/)