

Parish Council Planning Consultation

At present the Development Services issues a weekly list of new planning applications which we send out to each parish council either electronically or paper versions. Town and Parish Councils have a right to be notified of planning applications in their area and make representations within 14 days of the notification. In practice, Swale Borough Council, in their consultation letters, which includes copies of the application details, gives Town and Parish Councils 21 days to comment. These letters also advise that details of the applications can be viewed online at the Council's website or at the Council offices either at Sheerness, Faversham or Swale House. Town and Parish Council comments will be placed on the planning file and are available to applicants and members of the public as soon as they are received.

Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) are required to meet Government performance targets for determining planning applications. The above arrangements reflect our view on the ability to meet such targets while giving appropriate opportunity for Town/Parish Councils to respond. These consultation arrangements are similar to other LPA's.

Beyond the 21 day period, if the application has not been determined, then you may wish to liaise with the case officer to consider whether there is any opportunity to extend the time for receipt of representations (if necessary). However, this should not be considered an accepted right and the Head of Service retains the delegated power to determine the application without reference to the Planning Committee.

Should a Town / Parish Council consider that there is insufficient information provided within a planning application to respond effectively, they should contact the case officer at the earliest opportunity to seek further guidance or clarification in terms of the officers' view on the acceptability of the application concerned.

The Council also sends Town and Parish Councils copies of applications for listed building consent and other types of application. In some cases, for example, applications for agricultural buildings submitted under the notification procedure do not allow for notification because the Council has a shorter period to determine the application.

Parish Councils and members of the public can inspect planning application files at Swale House. Current files are often in use by officers so it is always advisable to check the file will be available by ringing 01795 417441 prior to making a journey.

Where the view of the Head of Development Services upon a particular application differs from that of a Town/Parish Council representation received within the 21 day consultation period, the application will be referred to the Council's Planning Committee for a decision. Prior to the Committee meeting the Council advises the Town/Parish Council of the fact that the application is to be reported to the Planning Committee and invite the Town/Parish Council to speak at the meeting if they so wish. Copies of the relevant Committee agenda report for the particular item are also sent to the Town/Parish Council for their information prior to the committee meeting.

In all cases the Council will let the Town and Parish Councils have a copy of the decision notice on any application made in its area.