



ST. AGNES PARISH COUNCIL

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Protocol for Handling Planning Correspondence from Members of the Public Adopted 16th July 2018

Overview

The Parish Council regularly receives correspondence from members of the public about planning applications. There is currently no protocol adopted by the Council regarding handling such correspondence, particularly requests to share information (either privately or publicly). The Council should adopt a protocol which enables it to deal consistently, legally, and fairly with public correspondence on planning matters.

Detail

To ensure compliance with the new General Data Protection Regulations regarding sharing information, and in order to ensure no unfair advantage or access is afforded to individual members of the public (including developers and applicants), it is necessary that the Council adopt a transparent and consistent approach. Specifically, this means that the Council office will not distribute public correspondence to Councillors, and will not read out correspondence at meetings. It should, however, be highlighted to the public that participation can take place physically at Council meetings (by proxy if necessary), and correspondence can be addressed to the Planning Authority which will then be displayed publicly for Councillors and everyone else to view online.

Without such a protocol in place, the Council may be vulnerable to treating each item of correspondence differently and unwittingly affording advantages to some members of the public over others. By taking such an approach as outlined above and below, the Council will conform to the latest legislation, best practice, and a sound transparency ethos.

Procedure

When receiving written correspondence from a member of the public the Council will acknowledge receipt of the correspondence and respond with the following advice:

- All comments should be directed to the relevant Cornwall Council Planning Case Officer and submitted on the online planning portal
- The correspondent (including their representative or proxy) may speak at the public participation session of Planning Committee meetings on any matter
- That the Parish Council Office will not circulate public comments or read them out at the Planning Committee meeting

