



ST. AGNES PARISH COUNCIL

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Protocol for Handling Planning Correspondence from Members of the Public Adopted 16th July 2018; Reviewed May 2024

Overview

Members of the public may wish to express their views to the Parish Council regarding planning applications. This Protocol details how such correspondence is dealt with consistently, legally and fairly by the Parish Council in their role as a statutory consultee in the planning process. Essentially, members of the public have two ways to air their comments, which may be in support of, or in objection to a planning application, and these are: via the Cornwall Council online planning portal and/or by attending a Parish Council Planning Committee meeting and addressing Councillors during the public participation session.

Detail

To ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation regarding sharing information, and to ensure no unfair advantage or access is afforded to individual members of the public (including developers, applicants and objectors), it is necessary that the Parish Council adopts a transparent and consistent approach. Specifically, this means that the Parish Council office will not circulate planning correspondence from members of the public to Councillors and will not read out individual's correspondence at meetings. Members of the public will be informed that they can express their view by attending a Parish Council Planning Committee meeting (by proxy, if necessary) and also through the Local Planning Authority (Cornwall Council) online planning portal, where comments are displayed publicly for Councillors and everyone else to view online.

Without such a Protocol in place, the Parish 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 Parish 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 Parish Council will acknowledge receipt of the correspondence and reply with the approved template letter found in Appendix A, signposting them to the relevant planning policy documents and explaining how they may express a view on an application. The following advice will be given:

- All comments should be directed to the relevant Cornwall Council Planning Case Officer and submitted via the online planning portal
- The correspondent (including their representative or proxy) may speak, in support or in objection, at the public participation session of the relevant Parish Council Planning Committee meeting
- The Parish Council office will not disseminate public correspondence relating to planning applications and/or read comments aloud at Planning Committee meetings

The Parish Council will always direct members of the public to express their views about planning applications to the online portal and/or a Planning Committee meeting, as opposed to contacting individual Parish Councillors. If members of the public choose to communicate directly with an individual Parish Councillor, the view expressed may be taken into consideration by Councillors, but a personal response to the correspondence will not be provided.