

BACKGROUND

The clerk has been asked to review the terms of reference to ensure that they are still fit for purpose. Where a word or sentence has been highlighted in blue it proposed to be added to the document. Where a word or sentence has been struck through it is proposed to be removed from the document.

Planning & Highways committee Terms of Reference

Constitution

1. The Planning & Highways Committee is constituted as a Standing Committee of Haslemere Town Council under Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972.
2. The Planning & Highways Committee consists of no less than 8 councillors (ideally 2 from each ward, with Hindhead and Nutcombe being taken as a single ward as per borough).
3. Committee members must attend planning training [Standing Order 27].
4. The Planning & Highways Committee meets every four weeks, and the calendar of meetings shall be confirmed at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Haslemere Town Council.
5. The Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman to be elected annually by the Committee before proceeding to any other business at the first meeting of the Planning & Highways Committee.
6. The Chairman shall have a second or casting vote in the case of an equality of votes [Standing Order 3s].
7. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the council are ex officio members and entitled to vote.
8. A quorum of the committee is a third of all members.

Areas of Responsibility

The Planning Committee has delegated authority from Haslemere Town Council:

1. To make representations to the Local Planning Authority on applications for planning permission which have been notified to the Council.
2. To identify and make representations to the relevant authorities in respect of enforcement action or any matters considered to be breaches of planning regulations.

3. To monitor, review and where necessary make recommendations to the Council for amendments to the planning consultation procedure.
4. To deal with any other planning related matters that a meeting of the full Council considers appropriate to be referred to the Planning & Highways Committee for further discussion.
5. The Planning & Highways Committee shall have full delegated powers to comment on and pass to Waverley Borough Council and, as appropriate, Surrey County Council, the Council's views on all planning applications/highway issues, received by the Council as well as other planning or highway matters which may have an impact on Haslemere Town area.
6. The Planning & Highways Committee shall have powers to consider and make recommendations to Council on all planning and highway matters referred to it and, in the case of matters requiring decision before the next meeting of the Council, shall act with full delegated powers.
7. ~~The Planning & Highways Committee shall have powers to consider and make recommendations to Council on any licensing applications as requested by Waverley Borough Council and, in the case of matters requiring decision before the next meeting of the Council, shall act with full delegated powers.~~

Meetings

1. The Chairman of the Planning Committee and Deputy Clerk have delegated authority to submit comments to Waverley Borough Council on any application that cannot be considered in time for the next Planning Committee meeting.
2. The Chairman of the Planning Committee may call additional meetings as and when necessary to ensure that all applications received can be discussed and replied to within the timescale for consultation set by central Government (14 days for PiPs and TDCs and 21 days for all others).
3. The Planning Committee has an obligation to ensure that all comments received prior to or at the meeting, from all relevant parties, applicants and objectors, for planning applications (not including enforcement notices) are considered at the meeting.
4. A record of all planning applications and the responses shall be noted in the minutes of meetings which are passed to full Council for approval.
5. All correspondence shall be conducted through the Clerk of the committee wherever possible.
6. ~~Minutes of all meetings are to be kept by the Clerk and forwarded by e-mail to the Committee Chairman/Vice Chairman for approval before being published on the website and a hyperlink to the minutes forwarded to all members of the Council.~~
7. The process for reviewing planning applications is as follows:
 - a. The clerk receives the weekly list of applications, which is sent to all members of the committee, together with which parish ward boundary it is in.

- b. The Chair and clerk review all applications received weekly and provides an initial comment as to whether in their view, an application does not require comment, should be referred to an arboricultural or conservation officer, is for information only or should be discussed by the Committee.
- c. Unless the Chair or a member has “called in” an application, the meeting will be cancelled.
- ~~d. The list of applications is sent to all members of the committee with initial comments next to each application, together with which parish ward boundary it is in.~~
- ~~e. At a minimum, members must review applications in their own wards, regardless of the Chairman’s comment, together with any marked for committee.~~
- ~~f. At the meeting, the Chair reminds the committee that the initial comments are just that and if any committee member wishes to discuss any other application at all, then they need to raise.~~
- g. All Councillors must avoid any suggestion of pre-determination and avoid comment until they have heard argument for and against any application.

8. The Call-in rule (default response)

- a. Default position: where an application is not called in under section 9 below, the Clerk will submit “No Objection” on behalf of the Council.
- b. Called-in applications: only called-in applications will be placed on the agenda for member debate and resolution.

9. Who may call-in an application

An application may be called in for Committee consideration only by:

- a. The Chairman, or member, of the Planning Committee.

10. Call-in procedure and timescales

- a. The Clerk will circulate to members a weekly list of new applications and deadlines by which to respond
- b. A councillor or the Chairman must notify the Clerk of a call-in by 12:00 noon on the Thursday prior to the meeting the following (or sooner if the consultation deadline is earlier).
- c. The call-in request must include a brief reason (e.g., policy conflict, neighbour impact, heritage, highways safety).

11. The Planning Committee must fairly determine all applications and has an obligation to ensure that relevant parties [both supporters and objectors] are given an adequate hearing and will have the opportunity to speak at meetings in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council.
- ~~12. Members of the public who wish to make representation may speak for four [4] minutes. Only one representative for each view [for or against] may speak on an application. Having spoken, they may not speak again unless the Chair asks a question for clarification. The Chair has discretion to increase the speaking time so long as both representatives get equal time.~~
13. Public speaking arrangements, time limits, and meeting conduct follow the Council's adopted practice (including ensuring fair hearing where representations are received).
14. Decisions can only be based on material planning considerations.
15. Councillors to notify the clerk of any highways issues that it wants put on the agenda, to be received 7 days before the meeting.

Responses

1. The Clerk will communicate to the Local Planning Authority the Committee's decision in respect to the applications considered and will ensure that these letters arrive within the timescale for each application.
2. Where an application is subject to an appeal, the Committee is authorised to make written representations or to elect a member of the Committee to attend the hearing.
3. Wherever possible, for contentious applications, a member of the Planning & Highways Committee [excluding twin-hatters who already sit on the Waverley Western Area Planning Committee] be nominated to attend Waverley Borough Council Planning meetings.

Review

These terms of reference are to be reviewed every four years by the Planning & Highways Committee and any amendments to be approved by full Council.