

SOMERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Planning Protocol

SUMMARY

This procedure sets out how Somerton Parish Council considers planning matters on which it is consulted by a Planning Authority. It takes into account that:

- the consultation period for planning applications is 21 days, which means that not all planning applications can be considered by Somerton Parish Council at its scheduled meetings;
- Somerton Parish Council believes parishioners are best served by the Parish Council responding to applications in a timely fashion;
- to ensure all consultations on planning applications are dealt with in time, the Parish Council has appointed the Clerk to facilitate the responses of the Council to planning matters.

Somerton Parish Council has therefore resolved that any substantive actions in respect of planning matters shall be taken by:

- the Parish Council as a whole; or
- by the Clerk acting on the outcome of an email consultation with Parish Councillors.

PLANNING PROTOCOL

Options For Responding To Planning Applications

One of the following options shall apply when notice of a planning application on which the Parish Council is invited to comment is received:

Option 1

If there is a scheduled Council meeting before the end of the consultation period then the Clerk will place the matter on the agenda for that meeting, and any decision will be taken at that meeting.

Option 2

If there is no scheduled Council meeting before the end of the consultation period, the Clerk will alert all members of the Parish Council to the application via email. Councillors will be asked to consider the application (as per agreed procedures at meetings of the Council, any councillor with a material interest in the application to be considered will be asked to declare such interests as required by the Somerton Parish Council Code of Conduct and will take no part in the discussion of the application or the resulting vote).

Councillors will be requested to respond to the Clerk's email within the deadline given. The deadline will be no less than five clear days from when the email was sent. Councillors shall respond to the Clerk's email in one of three ways: 'no objection', 'objection' or 'extraordinary meeting requested'. If the response is 'objection', the reasons for objection must be clearly stated. If the response is 'no objection', councillors may choose to include comments with their response.

If at least two members of the Parish Council (or the Chairman of the Council) request an extraordinary meeting to further discuss the planning application, then an extraordinary meeting will be arranged within the consultation period and any decision will be taken at that meeting.

If an extraordinary meeting is not duly requested before the Clerk's nominated deadline, then any response by the Council shall be deemed to have been delegated to the Clerk. The Clerk will consider all responses received from councillors to determine the outcome of the Council's 'vote' (as per the Council's Standing Orders, in the case of an equality of votes the Chairman of the Council will be asked to exercise his casting vote, whether or not he gave an original vote).

If the outcome of the Council's vote is 'no objection' the Clerk will respond to the planning consultation request with a simple 'no objection' (further comments may be included at the Clerk's discretion, based on any comments made by councillors).

If the outcome of the Council's vote is 'objection' the Clerk will submit this objection to the Planning Authority alongside the reasons for the Council's objection (to be compiled at the Clerk's discretion based on any reasons for objection stated by councillors).

The Clerk's written response to the planning application consultation will be duly noted at the next scheduled Parish Council meeting.

Procedures At Meetings Of The Council

- In those cases where a planning application comes before a full meeting of Soemrton Parish Council, then any residents will be able to speak at the meeting during public participation.
- If a request is received from the applicant to speak to the Parish Council then this will normally be permitted, unless the Parish Council (by a majority decision) determines otherwise.
- Any councillor with a material interest in an application to be considered will take no part in the debate, unless invited to speak by the Chairman, and will not be entitled to vote on any relevant motion.
- The Council shall consider the application in public session and will decide on what response, if any, shall be provided.

Adopted by Somerton Parish Council on 5th April 2022