

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PROTOCOL FOR  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (DMC)



June 2022

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Roles and Conduct of Members and Officers involved in the Planning Process</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Registration and Declaration of Interests of Councillors at DMC</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Hospitality and Gifts</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Training</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Lobbying</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Membership of Development Management Committee (DMC) and Substitutions</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Applications for Consideration at DMC</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>DMC Members' Applications</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Development Management Committee Meetings</b>	
<b>Decision Making at Planning Committee</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Moving the Motion</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Resolution as per officer recommendation</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Resolution as per officer recommendation with amendments</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Refusal of Planning Permission against Officer Advice</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Grant of Planning Permission against Officer Advice</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Deferral</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Voting</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Public Speaking at Development Management Committee</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Public Attendance</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Circulation of Additional Resources by the public/ applicants to DMC</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Other:</b>	
<b>Site Visit</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Chair's Pre-Meeting</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>DMC Briefings</b>	<b>12</b>

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 One of the key purposes of the planning system is to manage development in the public interest. In performing this role, planning necessarily affects personal interests such as land and property, particularly the financial value of landholdings and the quality of their settings. It is important, therefore, that the local planning authority, both planning officers and the planning committee, make planning decisions affecting these interests openly, impartially, with sound judgement and for justifiable reasons. The process should leave no grounds for suggesting that a decision has been partial, biased or not well founded in any way.
- 1.2 Planning decision making is a process of informed judgement taken within a firm policy context. Decisions can be highly controversial due to their capacity to affect amenity and well-being as well as land and property interests, more so because the system actively invites public opinion as part of the decision making process. It is important, therefore, that the planning processes are characterised by open and transparent decision-making.
- 1.3 Consequently this Protocol is intended as guidance and a statement of good practice. It is intended principally to advise officers, Councillors and members of the public on the processes and administration of the decisions associated with the Development Management Committee.

## **2. The Roles and Conduct of Members and Officers involved in the Planning Process**

- 2.1 Members and officers have different but complementary roles. Both serve the public but members are responsible to the electorate, whilst officers are responsible to the Council as a whole. Officers advise members and carry out the Council's work. They are employed by the Council, not by individual members. It follows that instructions may only be given to officers through a decision of the Council or one of its duly constituted Committees or Sub-Committees or by the Cabinet as a whole or one of its duly constituted Committees or by an individual Cabinet Member in exercise of individual executive decision-making powers. Any other system which develops is open to question.
- 2.2 Both members and officers are guided by codes of conduct. This is contained with Part 5, Section of the Council's Constitution ([here](#)), which identifies that the Code has been adopted under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 and is based on the following core principles of public life - selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. It also provides details governing the registration and declaration of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.
- 2.3 If a member fails to comply with any of the requirements of the Members Code of Conduct this may be regarded by the local ombudsman as maladministration and may be the subject of a complaint to the Standards Committee. This could result in disciplinary action against the member.
- 2.4 Whilst members have a special duty to their ward constituents their overriding duty is to the whole community. Consequently, members of the Development Management Committee serve the public interest and although they will be subject to intense lobbying on occasion and should take account of the views expressed, they should not favour any person, company, group or locality, nor put themselves in a position where they appear to do so. Councillors who do not feel that they can act in this way should decline to be appointed to the planning committee.

- 2.5 Part 5, section B of the Constitution details the Code of Conduct for Council Employees. If an Officer breaches the Officer Code of Conduct, they may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure. Moreover, an officer who is also a Chartered Town Planner will be subject to the Royal Town Planning Institute's Code of Professional Conduct, a breach of which may result in disciplinary action by the Institute.
- 2.6 A successful relationship between members and officers can only be based upon mutual trust and understanding of each other's positions. This relationship and the trust which underpins it must never be abused or compromised.

### **3. Registration and Declaration of Interests at DMC**

- 3.1 A member of DMC should declare any disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) or non DPI personal interests that would affect the well-being or financial position of the member or a 'relevant person' to a greater extent than the majority of the inhabitants of the ward affected by the application at Planning Committee. Declarations should be made as requested by the Chair during the course of the meeting but, in any case, no later than the hearing of the specific item to which an interest relates. For clarity, a 'relevant person' is very widely defined to include:
- the member's spouse/partner, family members, relatives and close associates, or employer, employees, business partners or fellow directors (if they are a remunerated company director);
  - any outside body to which a member has been nominated or appointed by the Council;
  - other bodies which exercise public functions or seek to influence public policy, if the member is a member or in a position of general control and management of that body.
- 3.2 A member who has a personal interest in a planning application must also consider whether that interest also constitutes a prejudicial interest. The test of this is whether it would be reasonable for a member of the public with knowledge of all the relevant facts to consider that the nature of the member's interest was likely to affect their judgement of the public interest - i.e. affect or influence their voting intentions.
- 3.3 If a member only has a personal interest to declare, which they do not consider to be prejudicial, they are entitled to remain in the meeting and speak and vote.
- 3.4 If a member decides that their personal interest is a prejudicial interest they must declare that fact in the usual way. They should leave the meeting for the discussion regarding that item unless exercising their public speaking rights, after which they should then leave the meeting for the remainder of the consideration of the item.
- 3.5 A member with a DPI should, subject to any dispensation, leave the meeting for the discussion regarding that item and not participate in the matter. If there is any doubt, further advice for Members is available in advance of the meeting from Legal Services.

### **4. Hospitality and Gifts**

- 4.1 Any offer of hospitality or offer of gifts to either Councillors or Officers should in the first instance be declined politely. If receipt of hospitality or acceptance of a gift with a value of £25 or more is unavoidable, declaration of its receipt should be made to the Monitoring

Officer within 28 days who will enter it in the Register of Members' Interests. Registration gives rise to a personal interest which has to be declared if less than two years old. Additional advice is available to DMC Members in advance of the Committee if required.

## **5. Training**

- 5.1 Development Management Committees are legally required to give preference to the nominations of the political party groups in order to achieve political balance. However, it is expected that all members of the Development Management Committee (including substitute members) must have relevant and appropriate training.

## **6. Lobbying**

- 6.1 Concerns on poor practices within local authorities have often been based on the issue of lobbying. Lobbying can lead to the impartiality and integrity of a councillor being called into question, unless care and common sense is exercised by all the parties involved. When being lobbied, councillors (members of the planning committee in particular) should take care about expressing an opinion that may be taken as indicating that they have already made up their mind on the issue before they have been exposed to all the evidence and arguments. In such situations, they should restrict themselves to giving procedural advice, including suggesting to those who are lobbying that they should speak or write to the relevant officer, in order that their opinions can be included in the officer's report to the committee. If they do express an opinion, they should make it clear that they will only be in a position to take a final decision after having heard all the relevant evidence and arguments at committee.
- 6.2 Problems should not arise if Councillors simply listen to a point of view about a planning proposal and provide procedural advice (in particular referring the person to Officers if he or she is a member of the public and not professionally represented). Those members of the public who have sought professional representation should be encouraged to make any points concerning their application through their professional advisor.
- 6.3 DMC members could find themselves in a difficult situation at a later date if they indicate or give the impression of support or opposition to a proposal or declare their voting intention before a decision is to be taken as this could be taken to be pre-determination of the outcome. It is important that all decisions should be made after all relevant information and views have been taken into consideration.
- 6.4 DMC Members who find themselves in a situation which is developing into lobbying should actively take steps to prevent this happening or at least explain that whilst they can listen to what is being said they are constrained from expressing their point of view or an intention to vote one way or another, otherwise they may well have to declare an interest and not take part in the subsequent Committee decision. In a case where this has actually happened the Member should declare accordingly.
- 6.5 Applicants, members of the public and other interested parties should be aware of the perceptions associated with making direct contact with DMC Members in advance of the consideration of an application due to go before them. This might be perceived as lobbying and Members might not review a submission made directly to them. Any representations intended to be taken into account in the decision-making process should be submitted through the Development Management service. This allows for transparency to the benefit of all parties.

- 6.6 Councillors who are unsure whether an interest should be declared or not should seek legal advice (which may be obtained from the Council's Monitoring Officer), although the ultimate decision rests with the individual councillor and nobody can make the decision on their behalf.

### **7. Membership of Development Management Committee (DMC) and Substitutions**

- 7.1 DMC consists of 12 members reflecting the representation that the party groups have on full Council. A system of substitution applies to DMC, meaning that a committee member who is unable to attend a meeting can appoint another member to attend the meeting in his or her place.
- 7.2 A political group may vary its representation on DMC by the temporary substitution of a member, who must have received relevant Development Management training. The group must give notice in writing to the Democratic Services Manager as soon as possible but before the start of the meeting at which the substitution will have effect. The substitute Member must be a member of the same group at the DMC that he/she is replacing. The arrangement which can be for a particular meeting (not part of a meeting) or for a period of time must be set out in the notice. Any such arrangement cannot be on a permanent basis. A permanent change to membership may only be agreed by the Council which will move to formally approve a change in membership at the next Council meeting.
- 7.3 Where the meeting is adjourned the substitute arrangement will remain in place when the meeting is re-convened.
- 7.4 A Member substituting shall have the same rights as other Members of the Committee including the right to vote.
- 7.5 At the end of the period stated in the notice, the substitute Member shall cease to be a Member of the Committee and the original Member will resume his/her representation on the Committee. A notice which has been duly served may be withdrawn at any time prior to the start of the meeting and the arrangements in place before the notice was served shall apply.
- 7.6 The Democratic Services Manager or his/her representative shall inform the Committee of any such arrangements which are in place for that meeting. Where the arrangement is for a period of time he/she will notify the Committee at subsequent meetings including any reconvened meeting following an adjournment.
- 7.7 The Democratic Services Manager or his/her representative will ensure that any substitute Member receives a copy of the Agenda for the meeting as soon as practicable after service of the notice. The substitute Member should ensure that they have read all relevant reports prior to the meeting.

### **8. Applications for Consideration at DMC**

- 8.1 As set out in the Constitution, the following matters are reserved to the Development Management Committee:-

*The following matters are reserved to the Development Management Committee:-*

*All decisions with respect to planning matters (including the granting of planning permissions and decisions with respect to enforcement of planning matters), and tree preservation orders; in the following circumstances:-*

*(a) Planning applications for development which are major\* development and have given rise to material planning objections received from ten persons or more at the end of the statutory consultation period and the Director of Growth is minded to recommend approval of planning permission.*

*\* Defined as development of 10 or more residential units or 1,000 sq.m or more of industrial, commercial or retail floor space. Where the number of units or floor space is not defined a site area of 1 hectare or more should be used;*

*(b) Any application for development which is significantly contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan and is recommended for approval;*

*(c) Any application for development where a notice in writing, and within 21 days of being notified by the Local Planning Authority (21 days is inclusive of weekends and bank/public holidays), has been given to the Director of Growth by a ward Councillor for the relevant ward within which the application site is located, requiring the Committee to decide the application and identifying, to the satisfaction of the Director of Growth, relevant planning reasons for the referral;*

*(d) Any application for development where a notice in writing, and within 21 days of being notified by the Local Planning Authority (21 days is inclusive of weekends and bank/public holidays), has been given to the Director of Growth by a Town or Parish Council, for the relevant ward within which the application site is located, which has expressed a view contrary to the officer recommendation and identifying, to the satisfaction of the Director of Growth, a relevant planning reason(s) for referral;*

*(e) Any application for development in which the Council has a significant interest in the proposal or the application relates to Council owned land or is submitted by a member of the senior leadership team or an officer employed within Development Management and Planning Policy or an elected member of the Council;*

*(f) Any application for development which as a consequence of the scale of objection or for any other reason the Director of Growth deems it to be appropriate or expedient for the matter to be referred to the Committee;*

*(g) Confirmation of a Tree Preservation Order where objection to the proposed order has been received and not been withdrawn;*

*(h) Determination of an enforcement matter where the Director of Environment and Transport considers it appropriate, particularly where there may be significant costs implications for the Council or where the action may have a significant personal or financial implication for those involved.*

*Note: For the avoidance of doubt the following applications are not applications for development as set out in the above terms of reference and are not delegated to the Development Management Committee: Non material amendment applications, Applications for the Discharge of Planning Conditions, Prior approval applications and Lawful Development Certificates. Section 73 (Variation of Condition) applications*

*may be referred to DMC when they meet with the above requirements and where the representations received (when this is the trigger for DMC) are materially specific to the proposed change to the satisfaction of the Director for Growth*

## **9. Members' Applications**

- 9.1 Members are requested to notify the Development Manager of their intention to make a planning application and are required to declare on the application form that they are a member of the Council.
- 9.2 A planning application by a Member will be determined by DMC, not by an officer.

### **Development Management Committee Meetings**

## **10. Decision Making at Planning Committee**

- 10.1 In advance of each meeting, the Committee will receive a written report from the Planning Officer on each planning application to be considered. The application report will include an assessment and recommendation from the Planning Officer.
- 10.2 An update note may also be provided to Members by officers on the day of DMC, detailing any relevant information including minor changes, variation to conditions or representations received after the publication of the agenda, which will be considered and responded to by officers in the note. Democratic Services shall circulate the update note electronically and provide paper copies for Members and the public at the meeting. The update note is a public document and will subsequently be uploaded to the Council's website with the agenda pack and minutes.
- 10.3 At DMC, a Development Management officer will present the report and the contents of any update note and will table any relevant consultation responses and representations received after the update note has been published. Public speaking will then take place as set out below. Members, via the Chair, can seek clarifications from officers. In particular circumstances the Chair may also seek clarifications from any speakers.
- 10.4 Following the speakers, the Chair will invite any queries from Members to officers. In some circumstances it may be appropriate for further responses to be invited from the speakers. This shall be administered through the Chair.
- 10.5 The Chair will then facilitate discussion of the application. Members are advised not to duplicate questions to officers and the Chair may seek to conclude the debate if it is clear that all relevant points have been made (and e.g. to avoid repetition).

## **11. Moving the Motion**

- 11.1 A motion to resolve the application shall follow substantive debate (proportional to the application). Chair can move the motion as deemed appropriate or it may come from any member of DMC.
- 11.2 DMC have a duty to consider all applications placed before them. There are 3 options available in relation to the decision:
- Resolve as per officer recommendation

- Alternative motion differing from officer recommendation
- Deferral of decision

### **12. Resolution as per officer recommendation**

- 12.1 In this instance a mover would move the motion and speak to it, this should then be seconded and the seconder would speak to it (or reserve the right to speak). There should then follow the option, if the Chair deems it necessary, for further short debate, which may result in amendments (see below), with the mover having a right to reply before being put to the vote. Any debate at this stage should be limited to 5 minutes and each member should only speak once unless on a point of order, personal explanation, right to reply or to move further amendment. The Chair may invite officer comments if further clarifications are required.

### **13. Resolution as per officer recommendation with amendments**

- 13.1 Where the motion under debate is to grant planning permission, a member may propose an amendment to vary or delete a proposed condition or to add an additional condition. Where the motion under debate is to refuse planning permission, a member may propose an amendment to vary or delete a ground of refusal or to add an additional ground of refusal. Any member proposing an amendment will be required to give planning based reasons for the amendment which will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. ‘Negativising’ amendments i.e. that propose the direct reverse of the motion under consideration, are not in accordance with the rules of debate.

### **14. Refusal of Planning Permission against Officer Advice**

- 14.1 Where DMC is minded to refuse planning permission against officer advice, the DMC is required to give adequate and intelligible reasons on good planning grounds for refusing to grant planning permission and these ground(s) of refusal must be in the minds of members of the Planning Committee at the point of refusal. This must be clearly articulated by Members for the purposes of the minutes. The precise wording of a reason for refusal, as it would appear on the decision notice, can be delegated to the Development Manager as part of the resolution in order to expedite the decision. Members should be mindful that the Council is at risk of having costs awarded against it, if, subsequently on appeal, it is unable to justify each ground of refusal.
- 14.2 A motion to refuse permission against officer advice can be put forward by any Member of DMC who should then speak to that motion. This should then be seconded and the seconder should speak to this (or reserve the right to speak). A short debate can then follow, usually limited to 5 minutes and each member should only speak once unless on a point of order, personal explanation, right to reply or to move further amendment. The Chair may invite officer comments if further clarifications are required.

### **15. Grant of Planning Permission against Officer Advice**

- 15.1 Where the Planning Committee is minded to grant planning permission against officer advice, the Planning Committee is required to give adequate and intelligible reasons for granting planning permission as well as considering what conditions should be imposed and the reasons for those conditions. In addition, where the grant of permission would constitute a departure from a policy or policies in the Development Plan, Members will need

to identify clear and substantial material considerations that justify departing from the Development Plan. Such reasons will be recorded in the official minutes.

- 15.2 A motion to grant permission against officer advice can be put forward by any Member of DMC who should then speak to that motion. This should then be seconded and the seconder should speak to this (or reserve the right to speak). A short debate can then follow, usually limited to 5 minutes and each member should only speak once unless on a point of order, personal explanation, right to reply or to move further amendment. The Chair may invite officer comments if further clarifications are required.

## **16. Deferral**

- 16.1 Members should only seek deferral of an application where it is absolutely necessary in order to make a defensible decision. Otherwise applications should be determined without delay. Deferral will by its nature lead to delay and, potentially, a risk of appeal against non-determination. In the absence of clear reasons for deferral, which have a clearly identified concluding point for the decision, it is considered that this risk would increase. Appeals against non-determination remove the decision-making responsibilities from the Council and give them to the Planning Inspectorate, who will act independently of the Council. For the purposes of that process it would still be the case that Members would need to provide a view to be taken in to account in the appeal process.
- 16.2 Examples of potential sound reasons for deferral are where material considerations not covered in the Planning Officer report are raised in public speaking, or in questions from Committee Members, or for a necessary site visit.
- 16.3 A motion to defer an application can be put forward by any Member of DMC who should then speak to that motion. This should then be seconded and the seconder should speak to this (or reserve the right to speak). A short debate can then follow, usually limited to 5 minutes and each member should only speak once unless on a point of order, personal explanation, or right to reply. The Chair may invite officer comments if further clarifications are required.

## **17. Voting**

- 17.1 At the conclusion of the consideration of the motion the Chair will call for a vote. Voting on any motion will be signified by a show of hands, which should be visible to members, officers and the public. In the event of an equality of votes the Chair may exercise a casting or second vote. No record shall be made at the time of voting of the votes of individual Members for the minutes unless, before a vote has been taken, a majority of the Members present have requested a recorded vote. After a vote has been taken, by affirmation or a show of hands a Member may also request that his or her vote is recorded in the minutes of the meeting. This request must be made immediately after the vote has been taken.

## **18. Public Speaking on Planning Applications**

- 18.1 The Council operates a system of limited public speaking at DMC, to allow the Committee to hear representations from a number of interested parties before the application is considered. Representations are limited to 3 minutes per speaker with 3 speakers allowed for an item and 3 speakers against. They are taken in the order of objectors and then applicant and/or supporters.

- 18.2 Each speaker must pre-register with the Development Management service no later than midday on the day before DMC, with registration opening on the publication of the agenda. Details of how to register to speak will be provided to the applicant and third parties who have made representations on the proposal on the publication of the agenda. Speakers are registered on a 'first come first served' basis, that is to say the first speakers to register will be successful. Ward and parish/town councillors are expected to adhere to the identified timeframes, and any exceptional circumstances that mean that this has not been possible may be considered by the Chair.
- 18.3 There shall be no transfer of time between registered individuals, or to others not registered, except in exceptional circumstances and with the prior approval of the Chair.
- 18.4 Speakers should arrive for the DMC no later than 15 minutes before the start of the Committee. A speaker arriving after the start of the meeting will not be recorded as present and may not be eligible to speak. Changes to the order of the agenda may be made at DMC and at the discretion of the Chair.

### **19. Public Attendance**

- 19.1 DMC is open for the general public to attend as observers without pre-registering. Public speaking will only be permitted to those pre-registered. DMC is a formal meeting; any anti-social behaviour may result in the adjournment of the meeting until the situation is rectified. For health and safety reasons the capacity of the venue may be limited, and members of the public asked to wait in another room for a particular application to be heard. Where number limitations are exceeded it may be necessary to refuse entry. This is likely to occur only in very exceptional circumstances.
- 19.2 Where meetings are broadcast live on the internet this may reduce numbers attending as observers. If a meeting is to be broadcast, this will be appropriately publicised.

### **20. Circulation of Additional Plans, Photos or Information at DMC**

- 20.1 Requests for the circulation of additional information or photographs directly to DMC before or during the meeting by the applicant, public or other interest parties will not normally be permitted. The opportunity is provided to all interested parties to submit any comments and additional information to the Development Management service through the publicity processes associated with the application well in advance of DMC. These representations are placed in the public domain and are summarised and responded to in the report to DMC. Circulation of additional information during the meeting does not allow sufficient opportunity for its proper consideration and would reduce the transparency of the process.
- 20.2 Exceptions to this may be made in exceptional circumstances and will be at the discretion of the Chair.

### **Other:**

### **21. Site Visits**

- 21.1 A site visit should only be necessary if the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from the plans and supporting material (including photographs taken by Officers). Site visits may cause delay and should only be used where the expected benefit is substantial. For this reason Members of DMC should try to attend site visits so that all Members have access to the same level of information. Site Visits will normally take place

only when the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from the plans and supporting material *and*:

- there is considerable local concern about a proposal allied to planning reasons for carrying out the visit (e.g. the physical relationship of the site to other sites in the neighbourhood); or
- the proposal is particularly contentious; or
- the proposal is contrary to specific policy or raises wider policy issues.

21.2 Those applications that may trigger the necessity for a site visit will be identified by officers at the earliest opportunity. A decision on whether to make a site visit will be made by the Chair on publication of the agenda and will take place in advance of DMC. Rarely, members may seek deferral of consideration of an application if any of the conditions above arise during consideration of the item, and this would be put as a motion to the meeting.

21.3 A site visit is a fact finding exercise and should consist simply of an inspection by viewing Members with Officer assistance and should generally be unaccompanied (without applicant or objector present) unless necessary for the purposes of access, as the main purpose of a site visit is to see the subject matter of the application. Each site visit will be chaired by the Chair of DMC or in his or her absence by the Deputy Chair. If the Chair and Deputy Chair are absent, the members present will elect a Chair from among their number and a record of attendees should be kept.

21.4 It will be the responsibility of the Site Visit Chair (i) to conduct the site visit in accordance with this protocol and (ii) decide whether to accede to a request to observe the site from a particular vantage point.

21.5 An officer will read a note to members before the commencement of a site visit, making it clear what the purpose of the visit is, and the limitations that exist on the business that can be transacted during that visit. The Site Visit Chair will then ask the Planning Officer to explain the proposal and outline the main issues.

21.6 In the interests of fact finding, members of the Committee may ask questions at any time provided such questions are directed through the Site Visit Chair. Members should not engage individually in discussion with applicants or objectors or their professional representatives as this could be construed as lobbying.

## **22. Chair's Conference**

22.1 After the publication of the agenda but before the start of DMC, the Chair may hold a conference, normally attended only by the Chair, Deputy Chair and Officers, so that Officers can inform the Chair and Deputy Chair of any additional matters since publication of the agenda that do not appear in the reports.

22.2 Such conferences enable notification of concerns or amendments to any application and enable the Chair and Deputy Chair to consider if such amendments constitute a material change, or whether a verbal report from the Officers to the Committee is acceptable.

## **23. DMC Briefing**

23.1 DMC members have a series of internal monthly briefing sessions identified for training and presentations on schemes which are in the pipe-line to be considered at DMC. Wherever possible schemes presented to DMC Briefings will take place at pre-application stage. These meetings are non-statutory but are good practice in supporting quality decision making; they

do not constitute part of the formal DMC process although minutes may be taken and referenced in future reports for transparency. Members can ask questions on pipeline schemes but should take care in expressing a view to avoid the perception of pre-determination.

- 23.2 DMC briefing sessions in relation to specific development proposals shall be led by Development Management in the presence of Legal Service. The applicant may also attend.
- 23.3 In the case of briefings on pre-application discussions, copies of officer and applicant/agent presentations are to be retained on file and will be shared on the Council website at such time when a proposal becomes a live application. Minutes will be taken and will include attendees and high level notes of the issues discussed. These should be agreed with the Chair and will be shared on the Council website at such time when a proposal becomes a live application. Unless specifically requested by the relevant Member, issues raised will not be attributed to any specific person.
- 23.4 In the case of briefings on current applications, copies of officer and applicant/agent presentations will be shared on the Council website within 1 week of the briefing. Minutes of the briefing will be taken and will include attendees and high level notes of the issues discussed. These should be agreed with the Chair and will be shared on the Council website at the earliest opportunity. Unless specifically requested by the relevant Member, issues raised will not be attributed to any specific person.