

## Major Development Proposals – Planning Communication Protocol

### a) Officers and Elected Members

It is important for elected members to be informed of major development proposals that will affect their communities and constituents.

This protocol has been produced to assist both elected members and officers by setting out clear communication principles for the major development process. This document forms part of a series of Communication Protocols set out by the Development Management and Compliance team designed to encourage transparency in the development process and to manage expectations.

There are a number of stages through the development process and these are set out below.

### Before a Planning Application is submitted – Pre-Application

A developer can seek input on his/her major development proposal prior to submitting a formal planning application.

#### **Informal Process**

Occasionally applicants will seek to have informal pre-application discussions with Planning and other Officers prior to the **formal** pre-application process. These discussions are often at a very early stage in the development process where plans may not have been fully thought through. Developers may also wish to keep their plans confidential at this stage. Through discussions with the developers Officers will establish the most appropriate way of communicating relevant information to elected members. (see Quick Guide Table below)

#### **Formal Process**

In March 2016 Welsh Government made it mandatory for all major development proposals to follow a statutory **pre-application consultation (PAC)** process.

This obliges a developer to undertake their own (not through the Council) consultation process prior to submitting a planning application. This can include consulting local residents, the local city/town/community council, specialist bodies such as Natural Resources Wales and local **elected member(s)**.

**Note** – *There is no requirement for developers to consult with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) as part of this process. Therefore, there is the potential for local members to be made aware of proposals prior to officers.*

- At this stage should elected members require general assistance from Officers they should contact the Development Management and Compliance team by emailing [planning@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning@denbighshire.gov.uk) or calling 01824 706727.

If elected members have particular comments or observations to make on the major development proposals at this stage (remembering not to give any indication of support or otherwise for the scheme) they should be provided **directly to the applicant**. Within the consultation documents produced by the applicant details of where to send comments to will be published.

### Once a Planning Application has been submitted

All Elected Members will receive a weekly e-mail containing a list of all planning applications received by the Local Planning Authority. It is important that all members check this list and go on

line and **view the application documents** by inputting the relevant reference number, if they wish to become familiar with the proposals.

Where a **major application** has been received local Members will receive a specific e-mail containing a description of the proposal, the expiry date of the application and details of how to contact the case Officer. The case Officer will be the single point of contact for the Members during the course of the planning application. Members should avoid making contact with other Officers in the team, Service or Council before they have spoken to the case Officer.

If the **formal** pre-application process described above has worked the local Members should already be aware of the submitted scheme.

Should a local Member wish to arrange an initial meeting with the case Officer to discuss the application they can do so, however, the benefit of such an early meeting will need to be established.

A **First Member Update** will be provided by the case Officer to the relevant Member(s) within **4 weeks** of them receiving the initial e-mail alert. (See Quick Guide Table)

If required, a **Second Member Update** will be provided by the case Officer to the relevant Member(s) should the scheme have been amended.

**Note** - *The Planning Scheme of Delegation gives local members the right to 'call in' any application to Planning Committee. Please see attached current Scheme of Delegation.*

### Strategic Planning Group

For applications where there are wider than local implications, it may be appropriate to discuss the proposals at the Strategic Planning Group. Requests for particular items to be discussed in this forum can be made by either members or officers. It will at the discretion of the chair of the group as to whether an application is discussed.

### Potential List Released

3 weeks prior to Planning Committee a list of potential applications to be presented to Planning Committee is sent via an e-mail to all members. If there are any queries about potential items that have not been dealt with in the previous stages, the case officer should be contacted or an e-mail sent to [planning@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning@denbighshire.gov.uk).

### Planning Committee

On the day of Planning Committee officers are available in County Hall from approximately 8.30 to provide advice on the agenda items immediately prior to the meeting. This is an opportunity to seek clarification on specific issues to save Members and Officers time at the meeting. Officers would promote using this forum as it can often represent an opportunity to address issues prior to the formal start of the meeting.

### Quick Guide

Stage	Member Action	Officer Action
Informal Pre-Application	If contacted direct by developer contact <a href="mailto:planning@denbighshire.gov.uk">planning@denbighshire.gov.uk</a>	Invite relevant members to attend pre-application meetings where appropriate/necessary

	or tel. 01824 706727 should assistance be required.	
Formal Pre-Application	Contact <a href="mailto:planning@denbighshire.gov.uk">planning@denbighshire.gov.uk</a> should assistance be required. Submit comments in relation to proposals directly to the applicant via their contact details.	Provide relevant advice to members where requested
Application submitted	<p>Receive initial e-mail from planning, check documents on line.</p> <p>Contact case Officer for initial discussion/meeting and to set out agreed communication protocol.</p> <p>Where minded to 'call in' application to Planning Committee make request on receipt of First Member Update* or before 6 weeks from date of initial e-mail.</p> <p>Where minded to "call-In" application to Strategic Planning Group make request within 3 weeks of date of next Group Meeting.</p>	<p>Send out initial e-mail notification with case Officer and application details.</p> <p>Hold initial discussion/meeting with local Member(s).</p> <p>Send out First Member Update* within 4 weeks of initial notification.</p> <p>Clarify any "call-in" request with Member(s).</p> <p>Where minded to "call-In" application to Strategic Planning Group make request within 3 weeks of date of next Group Meeting.</p>
Strategic Planning Group**	Attend Strategic Planning Group if required	Prepare factual report to Strategic Planning Group and attend where necessary.
Potential List for Planning Committee Released	Contact case Officer to further discuss case, if required.	Offer advice to members as appropriate
Planning Committee	Raise any last minute issues on agenda items with Senior Officer/Chair from 8.30am in County Hall on day of Committee	Be available from 8.30 in County Hall to take queries
Planning Appeals	See Separate "Member Involvement in Planning Appeals" Protocol	
Amendments to Approved Scheme	Receive e-mail from case officer on NMA application***	Alert local Member(s) to any NMA application and discuss approach

**\*First Member Update will contain summary list of consultation responses and representations on application received to date, initial Officer assessment of material planning considerations and likely recommendation, if this can be confirmed at this stage.**

**\*\*Strategic Planning Group – details to be confirmed**

**\*\*\*NMA Application – these are formal applications seeking minor amendments to previously approved schemes.**