



1. Site Visits

If a councillor/co-opted member of the Planning Committee feels it will benefit them in coming to a determination in forming an opinion in relationship to a planning application, they may make arrangements for a site visit. However, in any such visit there must be a minimum of two councillors present.

The Clerk, if not arranging the visit, must be informed as soon as possible and any visit arranged circulated to the other members of the Committee who may also attend if they wish.

Any Member conducting a site visit must carry out a health and safety risk assessment prior to going on the site. If it is considered dangerous, the site visit will be cancelled. Members should consider appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE) before attending the visit, an example may be sturdy footwear.

2. Planning Advice: discussions with applicants or objectors

The person seeking advice should be left in a clear understanding that the decision of a planning application is made by the local planning authority (LPA), in our case Chichester District Council. Or in mineral and waste applications, West Sussex County Council.

If an applicant seeks advice from a member of the Parish Council's Planning Committee, they must be told it is the opinion of that councillor/co-opted member and discussions are made without prejudice for which the consultee must be made fully aware they cannot be considered as binding. The consultation/discussion will purely be given in the understanding that it may encourage the Parish Council's Planning Committee to support the application as a statutory consultee to the LPA.

Such discussions may identify areas of the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan and Village Design Statement which may lend support or objection for a particular development. In this instance the member of the planning committee will be offering their interpretation of those documents for which the LPA may take a different view.

The Member may also offer advice on where to find particular information, such as sections of the National Planning Policy Framework or the Chichester Local Plan.

It should be pointed out to any person, making or considering making an application, that they can also seek pre-application advice from the LPA. However that advice is also not binding and is given on a non-prejudicial basis.