



Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council

Planning Executive Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Principles

- 1.1. To make meaningful comments and observations on all Planning Applications affecting the Parish of Mayfield and Five Ashes. To note and comment on the Wealden District Council decisions and to take into account residents' concerns.

2. Membership

- 2.1. The Committee is of Executive Status.
- 2.2. It will meet every three weeks or as summoned by the Clerk.
- 2.3. It will consist of up to seven elected Councillors and one appointed Lay Member. The Chairman of the Full Council will be a member in an ex-officio role.
- 2.4. Any member of the Committee can be elected as Chairman of the Committee at its first meeting. This will be ratified at the subsequent Parish Council meeting.
- 2.5. A quorum will be three Members.
- 2.6. Any Member of the Parish Council can be called upon to be a Substitute Member for a meeting should it not be possible to form a quorum or if a conflict of interest results in the meeting becoming inquorate.
- 2.7. Members of the Planning Executive will inform the Clerk a minimum of three clear days prior to a meeting should they be unable to attend and secure a Substitute Member to ensure the meeting is quorate.

3. Duties

- 3.1. The Committee will make observations and comments on Planning Applications taking into account the relevant planning rules and regulations.
- 3.2. The Committee will make comments in support or otherwise to aid the decision-making process of Wealden District Council on Planning Applications.
- 3.3. The Committee will outline policy and actions to enable the Clerk or an appointed Member to administrate the functions outlined below.
- 3.4. It will be accountable to the Full Council and for finance issues to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

4. Functions

- 4.1. The functions of Planning Committee are:
 - To Publicise Planning Applications.
 - To give notice of Planning Applications to be considered by each meeting of the Committee through the publication of the agenda.
 - To examine each Planning Application (excluding the Parish Council's own approved applications) against a set of criteria and to make observations and

comment in support or otherwise to assist Wealden District Council in the planning process.

- To consider public comment.
- To maintain a statistical record of Planning Applications handled.
- To take account of the special needs of listed buildings.
- To take account of location when in the Conservation Area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- To take into account the policies and action plans within the Parish Plan
- To make representations on Planning Applications and Tree Works applications to Wealden District Council on behalf of the Parish Council when requested to do so.
- To make representations on Planning Appeals to the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Parish Council when requested to do so.
- To make site visits as necessary following the correct Site Visit Protocol (see annex A).
- To respond to planning policy consultations should the Committee wish to do so.

5. Relations

- 5.1. An audio recording of Planning Executive meetings will be taken by the Clerk at the discretion of the Committee Chairman.
- 5.2. The Clerk will attend all meetings of the Planning Committee and will advise on any matters that the Committee may need to discuss.
- 5.3. The Clerk or an appointed Committee Member will carry out actions of the Committee and report progress on a regular basis.

6. Public Attendance

- 6.1. The public is invited to attend all meetings of the committee and are advised that meetings may be recorded at the Chairman's discretion.
- 6.2. Ten minutes will be available for public questions on relevant matters on the meeting agenda. This can be extended to a maximum of 30 minutes at the Chairman's discretion.
- 6.3. For contentious consultations that attract a high number of meeting attendees, a maximum of two representatives in favour and two against the application will each be permitted to speak for five minutes during Public Questions and Comments.

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Annex A

Planning Site Visit Protocol

- 1 All applications will be allocated to individual Members of the Planning Executive (the recipient) by the Chair or appointed deputy.
- 2 For all major applications or developments of more than one new dwelling, all committee members will be invited to attend a site visit that has been arranged by the recipient.
- 3 The recipient can refuse if he/she: -
 - Does not want to attend
 - Has a personal relationship with the applicant or pecuniary interest in the application.
 - Will not be attending the Planning Executive meeting when the application will be considered.
- 4 The presumption will be that all application sites are visited unless, in the recipient's opinion, they are so minor as to not require it
- 5 If it becomes apparent that the recipient will be unable to attend the meeting in which the application will be discussed, they should inform the Chairman as soon as possible for it to be reallocated.
- 6 The recipient or Clerk will contact the agent/ architect (if there is one) to arrange a visit or contact the applicant directly.
- 7 The applicant should be made aware when arranging the visit that it is for the opportunity to seek information and observe the site only.
- 8 It will be the recipient's decision as to whether to visit alone or accompanied by another Committee member. Should it be the latter then the recipient will arrange directly. This will depend both on the wishes of the recipient and the size/ complexity/ sensitivity of the application.
- 9 If permission for a site visit has been refused, or if it has not been possible to contact the applicant, the recipient should attempt to view the site from publicly accessible vantage points.
- 10 The recipient must ensure that they treat the site visit only as an opportunity to seek information and to observe the site.
- 11 The recipient cannot, in any circumstances, express a view or make comments to indicate support or otherwise but can ask questions to acquaint themselves with the site and the proposed development.
- 12 On the visit the recipient should:
 - Remind the applicant/ representative, if present, that they will make no comments to indicate support or otherwise on the application and that they are only present to acquaint themselves with the site and proposal and ask any relevant questions.
 - Be aware of the suitability of accepting minor refreshments (tea, coffee or similar) and that no other hospitality should be accepted.
- 13 Committee Members will remain impartial at all times in dealing with planning applications and should avoid discussing the planning application with either the applicant or an objector, other than for asking clarification as to the siting of development within the application site.
- 14 Site visits are informal occasions and are not deemed to be formal meetings of which minutes are taken.