

What happens at a Planning Meeting?

Planning Meetings are always open to the public, and residents are welcome to attend.

The agenda for a Planning Meeting always contains 6 standard items; others may be added depending on circumstances :

- **Apologies for Absence.**

We record which Committee members attend each meeting

- **Declarations of Interest.**

Committee recommendations must be impartial. We ask any Councillors to declare any interest in applications being considered. This might include, for example, that they know the applicant - perhaps a friend or the fact that the property is an immediate neighbour and the decision will impact their home. These are termed “non-pecuniary” interests. “Pecuniary interests” also have to be declared - where the Councillor has a financial interest (for example they own the property). Members who have expressed an interest do not take part in the debate or vote on any decision.

- **“Public Participation Session with Respect to Agenda Items”.**

A rather long title - but this is precisely what it is. Any member of the public can make a statement at this point, as long as the item being discussed is on the agenda. For example, you can make a justification or objection to a planning application on the agenda.

If you wish to address the Committee, please give your name and address to the Committee Clerk when you arrive. You may speak for up to 3 minutes. Please note that the Councillors will listen and take into account what you say, however, they will not respond to any questions.

- **Signing of the previous Planning Minutes.**

This is a short, formal stage to acknowledge that the minutes of the previous meeting are correct.

- **Planning Applications.**

Here we discuss each of the applications in turn. We look at the plans and documentation submitted, members may have previously visited the site and we discuss and make our recommendation according to prescribed rules. For details of the rules click [here](#).

- **Questions from the Press and Public.**

Any questions you have regarding issues that have been discussed in the meeting can be raised - for example, you might want to ask for clarifications on an objection. You can also ask any other questions on planning matters, even if they weren't on the agenda.

How do I find out about plans? Where can I see copies of plans?

All plans are held on Basildon Council's Planning Portal www.basildon.gov.uk/eplanning

Click on "View planning applications - Basic" to search. You can search on a reference number, postcode or a single line of an address.

Additionally any relating to Billericay that are being discussed at the next Town Council Planning Meeting can be viewed at the Town Council offices during office hours (0930 to 1230 Monday to Friday).

A notice is displayed on the Town Council notice board on the Thursday prior to each Town Council Planning Committee Meeting, giving details of plans which have been received to date which will be included on the next Agenda of the Planning Committee. A notice is also displayed on our website, on the notice board on the side of New Look in the High Street and at the Library. It is not the responsibility of the Town Council to notify residents of any applications which affect their property.

The Portal allows you to:

- search for planning applications,
- submit comments (registration is required)
- set up alerts (for example you can get an email whenever a planning application is lodged for your street).

Please see Basildon's website: <http://www.basildon.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1> for further details.

Who makes decisions on Planning Applications?

Basildon Council is the local Planning Authority, and considers planning applications relating to the Borough of Basildon at the Planning Committee meetings held at The Basildon Centre. Billericay Town Council is a consultee on planning matters affecting Billericay Town and any objections raised by the Town Council will be considered by the Planning Authority.

Planning applications are decided by officers of Basildon Council under their delegated powers but contentious planning applications are considered at a Planning Committee Meeting.

Included in the Borough Council Officer's report on each planning application will be the relevant Town Council's comments, if any. Local residents may attend the Planning Committee Meeting and ask questions at the meeting and write in beforehand. Copies of the Agenda for Basildon Planning Committee meetings are available from the Basildon Centre or can be viewed at the Town Council office.

Decisions made by officers and by members of Basildon Council on planning applications are available from the Basildon Council website: www.basildon.gov.uk

How can I comment on plans?

You can register comments with Basildon's Planning Committee by going to www.basildon.gov.uk/eplanning and selecting "How to submit comments". Comments can be made online through their planning system, by email or by letter

If you are affected by any planning applications, we would encourage you to send individual letters of objection (not petitions) to Planning Services, Basildon Council. After Basildon Council has come to a decision about the application, you can contact them for information regarding that decision.

What are the Planning Rules that Billericay Town Council follows?

This Planning Committee makes recommendations to Basildon Council (the Planning Authority). When making an objection, only the following can be considered:

- Contrary to Green Belt Policies
- Over-Development of the Site
- Objection on Highway Safety Grounds
- Lack of Car Parking Facilities
- Damage to Residential Amenity, due to:
 - over-looking neighbouring properties
 - over-dominance
 - increase in noise/pollution etc
- Damage to Visual Amenity, due to
 - excessive bulk/height
 - poor/awkward design
 - out of keeping with area or street scene
- Unsatisfactory Layout
- Contrary to Conservation Area guidelines

If you are affected by any planning applications, we would encourage you to send individual letters of objection to Planning Services, Basildon Council. Send individual letters from each adult in the household rather than joint letters and do not send petitions. After Basildon Council has come to a decision about the application, you can contact them for information regarding that decision.

LICENSING APPLICATIONS – GROUNDS FOR OBJECTION

The Planning Committee can only make representation regarding a Licensing Application if asked to by someone who is directly affected and only on the following grounds:

- Prevention of Crime and Disorder
- Public Safety
- Prevention of Public Nuisance
- Protection of Children from Harm