

INFORMAL TECHNICAL BRIEFINGS/PRESENTATIONS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Operating Guidelines

For certain complex and/or major applications, where there are difficult or technical issues such as to consider, it may be appropriate to hold informal briefings for members before an application comes before a committee for formal consideration and determination.

Following publication of the agenda containing the report and Officer recommendation on the particular application, the Director of Service Delivery will decide whether an informal briefing is required to be held, provided the following guidelines are adhered to:-

- Members should understand that an informal briefing is distinct from the committee meeting and therefore no decisions will be taken at the briefing
- The informal briefing is to provide an opportunity for Members to receive information and ask questions to help them understand more about the proposal before formal consideration of the applications at the Committee meeting.
- The informal briefing is not a forum for debate or for stating opinions about the development and certainly not for Members to indicate how they will vote at the Committee meeting.
- Whilst Members can begin to form views about the proposed, it is important that they seek to avoid reaching a firm view or decide how they will vote in advance of the Committee meeting since this will mean that they have pre-determined the application. In that event, they will have compromised their involvement in the subsequent Committee meeting. It is essential that an open mind is kept in order to hear all the information presented, and discussion held, at the Committee meeting itself
- The informal briefing will not be held in public, and only those Members of the determining Committee and relevant Officers will be present. Although attendance by Members will be encouraged, non-attendance at informal briefings will not prevent their subsequent participation in deciding an application when it comes before the Committee. Nothing less than is presented to the briefing will be presented to the Committee meeting.
- A record will be kept of the fact that the meeting took place and who attended the meeting but formal minutes or notes of the meeting will not be made or published.