Planning applications



Having your say at Bristol City Council's Planning Committees

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Listening to local people's views is a vital part of Bristol City Council's work. The Planning Committees welcome statements and/or petitions from local people about planning applications that affect them.

Speaking at the Committee

The Planning Committees decide the larger, complex or very controversial planning applications in the city.

The committee meetings usually take place on Wednesdays at 2.00 pm or 6.00 pm and will be in person. On the day of the meeting it can be viewed online via council meetings. It is not possible to say what time a case will be considered.

The public have a right to attend the meeting and may present a statement to the committee (subject to advance notice being received) if they wish.

Copies of statements are sent to committee members prior to the meeting so that they have all of the information to hand when making the decision and will have read all the statements.

It should be noted that comments and objections made in advance of the meeting carry just as much weight as those made at the meeting.

Who can speak?

Any member of the public, provided they give proper notice (see below) may speak directly at one of the Planning Committees.

Submitting a written statement

Public Questions and Statements should be submitted to Planning Committee via our webform: www.bristol.gov.uk/publicforum You should submit your written statement no later than 12 noon **two working days** before the meeting. For further information including submitting petitions see the DC Public Forum FAQ 2025

- Following this deadline the Clerk to the Committee will circulate all statements to the committee members in order that they have an opportunity to read them before the meeting.
- Give your name (which, along with your statement or petition, will be publicly available unless there are particular reasons for confidentiality). Statements will be made available to the public one hour before the meeting commences.
- Try to keep your statement short (about one side of A4 paper maximum) and the use of bullet points can be an effective way of getting your points across.

Contact details can be found at the end of this leaflet.

What can I say to the Committee?

Under planning law, we can only take into account comments on planning issues. For example, these include loss of light or privacy, highway safety, traffic and parking issues, noise, amenity, pollution, conservation, wildlife, design and appearance of the development.

Enquiries Line - 0117 922 3000
development.management@bristol.gov.uk
www.bristol.gov.uk/planning

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Issues, which cannot be taken into account, include loss of view, effect on property values, private rights, covenants, construction noise and boundary disputes.

Please bear in mind that the Committee is acting solely in the role of Local Planning Authority and cannot act on behalf of other council functions, such as its role as a landowner.

The council has also to take into account national and local policies and Government guidance, and you may wish to refer to these as well.

The written statement can be an opportunity to ask questions that you would like the committee members to consider.

You should not make statements that are personal, slanderous or abusive.

What happens at the meeting?

Statements or petitions are considered prior to the relevant item, and depending on the number of statements that are received you will have the chance to address the Committee.

Immediately before the item is to be considered, the Chair will call you to speak to the Committee.

As time for public forum is limited and others may also wish to speak, and as the Committee members will have already seen your statement, you should not read out your statement in its entirety.

Instead focus on the key points that you wish to get across to members or set out questions you would like members to consider.

The Committee Chair always has discretion as to whether or not a person speaks and for how long, and this may be as short as one minute. You should also not expect that someone else could read your statement on your behalf.

Late statements or petitions will not normally be accepted, although, in exceptional circumstances, they may be taken with the specific agreement of the Committee.

There would need to be significant justification to move away from these principles.

The Chair will then ask the Planning Officer to introduce the application and respond to any points raised. The Committee will then discuss the application and make a decision.

At the meeting you should not interrupt another speaker or the Committee debate.

After the meeting

To find out what happened at the committee meeting, you could telephone customer services on 0117 922 3000 from mid-day on the day following the meeting or you may visit the council's web site Planning Online.

If you have any questions about the procedures above or would like a copy of the full scheme, please contact the Democratic Services Team.

Contact details

Democratic Services Team
Tel: 0117 922 3707

e-mail: **democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk**

Translation/Special Requirements

If you would like this information in a different format, for example Braille, audiotape, large print or computer disc or community languages, please contact: Customer Services on 0117 922 3000.