

Pre-Planning Application Policy

This policy is to be followed when communicating with a landowner/land agent/developer regarding a potential development within the parish.

- The developer should provide information about the proposed development which is relevant to the Parish Council/ its area in writing.
- If the developer considers the information provided to a Parish Council is sensitive, this will not automatically require the Parish Council to treat it as confidential.
- Information held by a parish council is subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. From the outset the developer must identify information which the Parish Council cannot share or make public and give reasons for this. Confidentiality of communications about the development will rarely be justified even if the developer's interest is sensitive.
- Communications (including informal and formal meetings) between the developer with the Parish Council (or individual Councillors and staff) about a pre-planning application development will not bind the Parish Council to making a particular decision and any view expressed by the Parish Council at this stage are necessarily provisional. By the very nature of such meetings not all relevant information may be at hand, nor will formal consultations with interested parties have taken place.
- Informal meetings and telephone conversations between a developer and individual Councillors or staff will be documented in writing and are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Parish Council staff will make the arrangements for any meetings with Councillors, attend and write a follow-up letter. If there is a legitimate reason for confidentiality regarding the proposal, the Parish Council will keep a written record of the confidential and non-confidential issues.
- The meetings of a Parish Council and its committees are open to the public and the minutes of such meetings are available to all via the Parish Council's publication scheme. The Parish Council may invite developers to attend either a Parish Council or committee meeting at which the public are present to discuss their proposal because this will allow the developer's communications with the Parish Council to be transparent. The developer may not speak at it unless they are invited to address the meeting, or they have an opportunity to do so during the public participation session. If the developer does not wish to discuss the proposed development when the public are present, the meeting would need to ascertain why the developer considers that they need to communicate with the Parish Council/committee in closed session. A proposed development may be regarded by the developer as either confidential or 'sensitive' and in their view it may unsuitable for discussion at a meeting when the public is present but it is the Councillors at the Parish Council or committee meeting who will decide if there are grounds to exclude the public from the meeting when the proposed development is being considered. A Parish Council or committee meeting may exclude the public if publicity for agenda item(s) would prejudice the public interest due to its confidentiality or for other special reasons. (s.1(2) Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960).

- The Parish Council may invite developers to attend a meeting of the Parish Council meeting, which is open to the wider public, to present or discuss their proposals.
- It is an offence under s. 1 Bribery Act 2010 for a developer or his agent to promise or give a financial or other advantage to a Parish Council with the expectation of an improper consideration of the planning application. If the developer or their agent is an incorporated body, the Parish Council may request sight of their anti-bribery policy.

POLICY:	Pre-Planning Application Policy		
Establishment: 12 th April 2021	Assessment by:	Signed:	Date:
1st Review Date Due :	Clerk Approval:	Signed:	Date: