

## SPEAKING AT A TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

### Can I speak at the meeting?

As part of Honiton Town Council's aim to demonstrate openness of decision making to promote greater understanding and to ensure the Council listens to and engages with the wider community, you are allowed to present a petition or a written question to Honiton Town Council. You may then speak on your question for a maximum of three minutes.

### Are there any restrictions on what questions I may ask?

Provided the question is not frivolous or defamatory and does not concern a confidential issue which the Council would normally consider in private, you may ask any questions about any matter which relates to the responsibilities of the Town Council and which appear on the agenda.

### Do I need to give advance notice?

You are required to provide advance written notice of your wish to speak and the contents of your input, together with your contact details. This must be received by the Clerk at the Town Council office by noon on the day of the committee meeting.

### How much time is allowed for petitions and/or questions?

A maximum of 15 minutes in total at each Town Council meeting. If there are a lot of questions and yours cannot be dealt with in that time you will be sent a response by letter. If you cannot attend the meeting in person, the Clerk will ensure that a copy of the response will be sent to you in the post.

### May I ask a supplementary question?

It is not possible to ask supplementary questions or discuss the answer you have received. If your question raises issues that cannot be dealt with at the time, you will receive a full response in the post.

## WHERE DO I SEND MY QUESTIONS?

If submitting in writing please send to:

The Town Clerk  
Honiton Town Council  
The Beehive  
Dowell Street, Honiton  
Devon, EX14 1LZ

Public opening hours:  
9am to 1pm Monday to Friday

You may also send questions in by fax on  
01404 42957

or by email to [towncouncil@honiton.gov.uk](mailto:towncouncil@honiton.gov.uk)

When you submit a question it would be helpful if you would provide a telephone number so the Town Clerk is able to contact you to clarify any matters.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT INDIVIDUAL COUNCILLORS ARE ALWAYS WILLING TO PERSONALLY ANSWER ANY OF YOUR QUERIES IF YOU MAKE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THEM. A LIST OF THEIR CONTACT DETAILS CAN BE FOUND IN OUR QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER "TALK OF THE TOWN" OR ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE AND ON THE TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE, [www.honiton.gov.uk](http://www.honiton.gov.uk)

YOUR TOWN YOUR SAY  
PUBLIC QUESTIONS AT  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS  
-  
INFORMATION & ADVICE  
LEAFLET



HONITON TOWN COUNCIL

THIS LEAFLET IS ALSO  
AVAILABLE IN LARGE  
PRINT

## SPEAKING AT THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

### Introduction.

As part of Honiton Town Council's aim to demonstrate openness of decision making, to promote greater understanding and to ensure the Council listens to and engages with the wider community, the public have the opportunity to speak directly to the Planning Committee when it meets to discuss the applications before it, as part of its role.

(a) as consultee to East Devon District Council, the planning authority or  
(b) to decide applications for fascia boards and hanging signs (advertisements)

The purpose of this leaflet is to explain how you can have your say and illustrate how the committee process works.

### Do I need to give advance notice?

You are required to provide advance written notice of your wish to speak. This must be received by the Clerk at the Town Council office by noon on the day of the committee meeting.

### Can I speak at the meeting?

There is no general restriction as to who can speak at the planning committee meeting.

However, in order for the meeting to be kept moving, it is necessary to limit the number of speakers in the following way:

(a) Either the applicant (only one in the case of joint applicants) or their agent may speak but not both.

(b) Where there is a group of objectors or supporters (eg a residents' group) a spokesperson should be appointed to speak on behalf of the group - individual objectors are not affected by this.

(c) Only one representative from a neighbouring Parish Council may speak and only to represent the views of the impact of a planning application on their Council's area.

(d) Only one representative of an amenity or interest group may speak.

### When can I speak at the meeting?

You may make your statement just prior to the discussion on the application you are interested in. You may provide handouts of maps or photographs to support your case but not large sections of print as the Councillors will not have time to read such documents. Councillors may ask you questions, but they will not be able to discuss or debate the case with you. Once questions are over you may take no further part in the debate unless the Chairman asks for a point of clarification.

There is a pre-determined order of addressing the planning committee, which will apply in each case:

1. The applicant or agent.
2. Supporters including any amenity group.
3. Objectors, including any amenity groups.
4. Parish Councils that may be affected by the application.

### How long may I speak for?

You will be able to speak for up to 3 minutes. Please ensure you are organised so that this will be sufficient time for you to make your case. You will be timed to ensure everyone has an equal opportunity to make their case.

### What can I include in my contribution?

All speakers must confine themselves to the planning merits or otherwise of the proposal about to be debated. The procedure involved in bringing the application to the committee should not be discussed, nor should there be any defamatory remarks about any of the other parties involved. Please do not repeat points made by previous speakers. The Chairman may ask you to finish if you are adding nothing new to the case.

## **MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

Planning decisions are only able to be made taking into account the material planning considerations. For your information, these are as follows:

### **Material**

- Visual Impact
- Privacy/Overbearing
- Daylight/Sunlight
- Noise/Smell etc.
- Access/Traffic
- Health & Safety
- Ecology
- Crime (and fear of)
- Economic Impact
- Planning History
- Related Decisions
- Cumulative Impact
- Person Factors (but rarely)

### **Non Material**

- The Applicant
- Land Ownership
- Private Rights (eg Access)
- Restrictive Covenants
- Property Value
- Competition
- Loss of View
- "Better" site or "Better" Use
- Change from Previous Scheme
- NB "Need?"