

Protocol for Informal Presentations to Councillors relating to Development

A protocol to clarify the role of third-party informal presentations to the Council and to provide guidance to third parties and councillors on attending such informal presentations that **do not form part of any formal planning application, and which do not fall within the formal Application process and Pre-Application process.**

In the event of conflict between this protocol and the Councillor Code of Conduct or the Councillors' Handbook, (**the Codes**) the Code/Handbook shall take precedence.

PROTOCOL

Scope

1. This protocol covers any request made by a third party to make an **informal presentation** to councillors. A third party may also include the Council when acting as a developer, and/or landowner.
2. This Protocol seeks to establish clear guidance to third parties and the Council in respect of requests for and the presentation of third-party informal presentations to councillors, and to promote an environment of openness and transparency.

Informal Presentation Request

3. A request by a third party to make an informal presentation of information shall be made in writing to the relevant director setting out the reason(s) for the proposed presentation, the subject matter, and any other relevant information.
4. The director may agree or refuse the request or may agree to elements of the proposed presentation. Alternatively, the director may refer the request to the Executive or lead councillor (as appropriate to the proposal) together with any advice from the Monitoring Officer, to agree or to refuse the request or to agree to elements of it.

Refusal of Request

5. When a request is refused, the relevant director taking that decision will set out the reasons for the refusal, and provide the decision and reasons to the third party

Acceptance of Request

6. The relevant director shall provide a copy of this protocol to the third party with the decision that the informal presentation may proceed.

The Presentation

7. When a request is agreed the informal presentation shall proceed in accordance with the following rules:

The third party

- 7.1 The third party will:
 - a. arrange the platform/venue and time of the meeting, at no cost to the Council. The date and time to be agreed by the relevant director.

- Presentations will, generally, be convened in the evening and recorded wherever possible for those councillors that are unable to attend.
- b. provide any presentation materials to the relevant director at least **5 working days** in advance
 - c. invite all councillors via email: councillors@guildford.gov.uk
 - d. keep a record of attendance at the presentation.
 - e. ensure notes of what is said at the presentation are taken and circulated to the relevant director for comment within 5 days of the presentation and once agreed will share them with all councillors.
 - f. ensure that the presentation is for information purposes only and will not lobby any councillor(s) for support.

The Council

- 7.2 The Council will:
- a. distribute any presentation materials to Councillors at least **2 working days** in advance of the informal presentation.
 - b. ensure that at least one planning officer and one senior officer, from the Joint Management Team, shall be present during the informal presentation.
 - c. ensure that no councillor will be involved in making a presentation as a representative of the third party or otherwise.
 - d. require all councillors to disclose any interests in the matter, in accordance with the Councillors' Code of Conduct, before the presentation starts, and all disclosures made will be recorded as part of the notes referred to in (7.1 (e)) above.

All parties

- 7.3 All Parties will:
- a. ensure that all those present understand that the presentation does not form part of the Council's decision-making process and that the process of debate and determination of any matter arising will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's normal procedures.
 - b. ensure that those present understand that Councillors may ask questions for clarification purposes. Should any view(s) be expressed by any councillor(s) at the informal presentation, it will not bind them, nor the Council, to any decision in respect of any subsequent planning application that may be submitted in respect of the development proposal.

This Protocol is to be reviewed on or before two years of the date of its adoption.