

Delegation of Planning

In order to reduce the pressure of additional meetings and ensure that planning consultation deadlines can be met efficiently, I would like the Council to consider delegating authority to the Clerk to submit consultation responses on planning applications.

Under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, a parish council may arrange for the discharge of its functions by an officer of the Council unless legislation specifically requires a matter to be determined by Full Council. As parish councils are consultees and do not determine planning applications, it is lawful and common practice for planning consultation responses to be delegated to the Clerk.

Should the Council agree to such a delegation, the proposed process would be:

- All planning applications received from the Local Planning Authority will be circulated electronically to all councillors for information and comment.
- Councillors will be invited to provide any observations, concerns or objections to the Clerk within a specified timeframe.
- The Clerk will consider all comments received and submit a consultation response under delegated authority, taking into account the views expressed by councillors.
- Where no comments are received, the Clerk may submit a response of "No Objection" on behalf of the Council.
- Where significant concerns are raised, councillor views differ substantially, or the application is considered particularly sensitive or controversial, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, may arrange for the matter to be considered at a Council meeting or an extraordinary meeting if timescales require.

This approach enables the Council to meet consultation deadlines without the need for frequent additional meetings, whilst ensuring that all councillors have the opportunity to review applications and provide their views.

It should be noted that councillors would not be making decisions by email. Rather, the Council would have delegated authority to the Clerk, who would exercise that authority having regard to the comments received from councillors and any adopted planning policies of the Council.

If members are supportive of this approach, a formal resolution can be made and incorporated within the Council's Scheme of Delegation.