

# Chalford Parish Council Planning Protocol for Councillors

## Background

1. Councillors, particularly members of the Plans Assessment Committee, are sometimes lobbied by individuals and groups and / or asked for informal advice or their views on potential planning proposals.
2. Councillors will use their judgement when responding to such requests, following the guidance set out in this Protocol, and taking into account the Chalford Parish Design Statement, which commits the Parish Council to:
  - provide any potential applicant with a single point of contact (the Parish Clerk);
  - agree who needs to be consulted and provide help in contacting them; and
  - provide any further background information to the Design Statement relevant to a particular site, and any other relevant information as appropriate.

## Guidance for Responding to Requests

3. If you are approached to discuss a planning proposal, you should:
  - inform the Parish Clerk. Arrangements for meetings or site visits should be made through, and recorded by, the Clerk. If this is not possible, you should make the Clerk aware of the approach as soon as possible afterwards and the Clerk will make a record of it. Any subsequent correspondence should go through the Clerk;
  - explain that Stroud District Council is responsible for providing technical advice and making decisions on planning applications, and that the Parish Council is simply a consultee in the planning process;
  - explain the Parish Council's responsibilities as set out in the Design Statement and make it clear that Councillors are not able to offer advice on how to proceed or discuss the merits of a proposal;
  - if providing relevant information, offer help in understanding how the Design Statement should be interpreted and / or explain how the Parish Council has dealt with any similar proposals;
  - explain the opportunity to attend Plans Assessment Committee and present their case (for or against a proposal);
  - explain that any personal opinions expressed are not binding on the Parish Council;
  - act with discretion and impartiality;
  - act in accordance with the Parish Council Code of Conduct.

You should not:

- make any comments that could bind yourself or the Parish Council, or prejudice the ability to bring an open mind to any subsequent formal decision on the proposal;
- accept any form of hospitality;
- place yourself in a situation where your or the Parish Council's honesty or integrity could be questioned.

If you have any doubts or concerns about an approach, speak to the Parish Clerk.

4. Once approved and adopted by Full Council, the Plans Assessment Committee will review this protocol annually.

Amended by PAC 16.03.23

Approved by Full Council 06.04.23