

Dear Town and Parish Councillors and Clerks

As some of you heard at our recent Town and Parish Forums, East Suffolk has introduced a further route for Planning Applications to be determined by the Planning Committees. This is known as the **'Planning Committee Member Call-In' process**. It follows a recommendation from the East Suffolk Scrutiny Committee in March 2023, followed by a proposed process being approved by the Strategic Planning Committee and finally, last week by Full Council. (Links to those reports at the bottom of this email)

In simplest terms, this will further enhance the influence of your contributions to planning decision making, but **it doesn't change anything which Town and Parishes are expected to do in the planning application process**. You should continue to respond in same way you do already.

You will receive a copy of the 'Call-in' email at a later stage in the application process, if an application is to proceed to Planning Committee.

We still strongly encourage Town and Parish Council attendance at Planning Committee if it has reached that route of determination.

Please also continue to monitor the Public Access notifications you should already have set up, making you aware when a Planning Committee date is confirmed and added to public access.

The proposed 'Planning Committee Member Call In' process is summarised below, and it is also illustrated alongside other determination routes in the attached diagram:

Stage 1 – The consultation period for Town and Parish Councils and District Ward Members

Within the 21-day consultation period of a planning application – which includes up to the Expiry Date found on Public Access – a response must be received on the application. This period can include within an extension of time for comments agreed with the case officer.

Stage 2 – The call-in notification process is triggered

Once the case officer has considered all consultation responses and they have decided what their recommendation will be they will commence a notification to the relevant North or South Planning Committee Members **if:**

The case officer is recommending approval and the Town/Parish Council objects **and** the Ward Member objects or has asked for a committee determination, **or**

The case officer is recommending refusal and the Town/Parish Council supports **and** the Ward Member supports or has asked for a committee determination.

The Notification email shall be sent to all Planning Committee North or Planning Committee South members by the case officer and shall include:

- The case reference number, the description of development and the address
- A link to Public Access to view the application and documents
- A copy of Town or Parish Council response

- A copy of the Ward Member response
- A sentence setting out the likely officer recommendation
- The deadline for a call-in response
- Details of who must be copied in to the response.

Stage 3 – The Committee Member Call-in

After the notification has been sent, any member of the relevant North or South Planning Committee must respond within 5 working days if they wish to confirm that it should be considered by the Planning Committee.

Any Planning Committee member calling the application in must 'reply to all' (including all members of the relevant Planning Committee) and the first response received will be taken as the call-in request. They must also copy in the Town/Parish Council and the Ward Member(s).

A call-in request from a Planning Committee member must set out how they consider it meets the expectation that: "The proposal would be of significant public interest; would have a significant impact on the environment; or should otherwise be referred to Members due to its significance in some other respect".

When a Committee Member Call-in has been received, the case officer will proceed to place the case on a Planning Committee agenda in either the next available month or at the earliest opportunity available after having completed the report and obtained all necessary information for the committee to consider.

If no Stage 3 Committee Member Call-in is received, then the application will be presented to the next available Referral Panel. This process will provide a 2nd opportunity for the four Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Planning Committee to consider whether the application should be referred to the Planning Committee or be a delegated decision.

If you have any questions about how this process may affect a current application in your Town/Parish, please do contact the case officer. If you have any general questions about the process, please send them to Emma Cankovic and Abbie Blowers, who will compile any questions for us to answer.

For background reading on this introduction, reports can be found here:

Full Council report – 24/01/24 [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](#)

Strategic Planning Committee report – 03/07/23 [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](#)

Scrutiny Committee report - 02/03/23 [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](#)

Please can I also remind you of past guidance in the attached email and link below on ways to optimise your use of Public Access, ensuring that you receive all necessary notifications on applications in your Town or Parish:

[How-to-be-notified-of-all-planning-applications-in-a-Parish.pdf \(eastsuffolk.gov.uk\)](#)