

Blunham Parish Council

Terms of Reference Planning Committee

The Council may elect a Planning Committee to act on its behalf at the Annual Meeting. Members of the committee must be Parish Councillors and the committee has the delegated authority of the Council within its terms of reference.

Purpose of the Committee

Blunham Parish Council is an advisory body to the Planning Authorities (Central Bedfordshire) for all planning applications that directly relate to the Parish Area.

The Planning Committee is constituted to consider and respond on behalf of the Council to all applications for planning permission and planning appeals referred to the Council by the Planning Authorities.

Membership

Membership shall consist of all Members of the Full Council elected to serve on the committee at the Annual Meeting of Blunham Parish Council. All members so elected are voting members of the Planning Committee. The quorum of the Planning Committee shall be one third of the elected members (rounded up).

A Chair is to be elected annually by the Committee at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council; and shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council. If the numbers of Councillors not present (not including those debarred by reason of a declared interest) falls below the quorum the meeting shall be adjourned and any business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or such other day as the Chair may fix.

Areas of Responsibility

The Planning Committee has the delegated authority from Blunham Parish Council:

- a) To make representations to the Local Planning Authority on applications for planning permission which have been notified to the Council;
- b) To make representations in respect of appeals against the refusal of planning permission;
- c) To identify and make representations to the relevant authorities in respect of enforcement action or any matters considered to be breaches of planning regulations;
- d) To monitor, review and where necessary make recommendations to the Council for amendments to the planning consultation procedure;
- e) To deal with any other planning related matter that a meeting of the Full Council considers appropriate to be referred to the Planning Committee;
- f) To consider development plans (eg Structural Plans and Local Plans) and other developmental related consultation documents and to respond on the Parish Council's behalf as appropriate.
- g) To comment upon and monitor Tree Preservation Orders and to seek approval for further TPOs if deemed necessary.

All powers shall be exercised in accordance with Standing Orders, policy adopted or directions given by the Parish Council.

All power and duties of the Council in respect of the powers conferred upon it from time to time under the Town and Country Planning Acts and the Orders and Regulations including developmental control and the local plan process remain with the full Council of Blunham Parish Council.

Planning Applications

Planning applications shall be circulated by email to Planning Committee members as soon as possible after receipt by the Parish Council from the Planning Authority.

On site meetings may be arranged by the Chair prior to the Planning Committee meeting. Where an on site meeting is arranged all members of the committee must be notified but not all have to be in attendance.

Discussions should be based on the planning grounds outlined in Appendix A.

Meetings

Meetings are only held if responses to planning applications are required prior to the next Full Council meeting. The Parish Clerk or the Chair of the Planning Committee will call Planning Committee meetings as and when necessary to ensure that all planning applications received can be discussed and replied to within the timescales.

If a meeting is held an Agenda will be published and 3 days' notice will be given. The meeting will be held in a public place.

If any two Councillors consider an application to be of importance to the Parish they may ask the Planning Committee for a deferral to pass the decision either to the next full Parish Council meeting or if a time regulated decision is required arrange for an extraordinary meeting to decide the response.

The Planning Committee has an obligation to ensure that any comments received, prior to the meeting, from any relevant parties, applicants and objectors, for planning applications (not including enforcement notices) are considered at the meeting.

Minutes of all meetings will be recorded by the Clerk or by any member nominated at the meeting and circulated at the Full Council meeting.

Responses

The Clerk will communicate to the Local Planning Authority the Committee's decision in respect of applications considered.

Where an application is subject to an appeal, the Committee is authorised to make written representation or to elect a member of the Committee to attend the hearing.

Wherever possible, a member of the Planning Committee is to be nominated to attend Planning Authority's meeting, as necessary.

All correspondence should be conducted through the Clerk wherever possible.

Review

These terms of reference are to be reviewed annually.

Appendix A

Decisions of the Planning Committee should be based on the following planning grounds:

1. Compliance with current planning policy guidance at both national and local level.
2. Protection of the conservation area.
3. Effect on neighbours.
4. Effect on amenity.
5. Effect on traffic and highway safety.
6. Prevention of overdevelopment.
7. Effect on street scene and landscape.
8. Acceptable high standard of design.
9. Effect on sustainment of services.

Adopted July 2022