

Our Planning Process – further information

In our latest Newsletter the Chair provides an update on the planning process adopted by Wellow Parish Council. Unfortunately, due to a lack of space, a large section of the article had to be cut. However, the Parish Council is keen that residents are kept informed about what happens at the Parish Council, so we thought it would be helpful to post this additional information on the website.

When a Planning Application is received by the Parish Council it is allocated to a Councillor on the Planning Committee, to investigate and report back at the next Parish Planning Meeting. The Parish is roughly 'split' into areas for this purpose so that the workload is spread evenly, although this is in no way set in stone. Should a Councillor be too busy or away from home, then another member will take it on in their place. Parish Councillors are volunteers, who give up their time freely to carry out their roles, free of charge. In relation to Planning they cover all their own expenses and it's very much a team effort to cover the large number of applications received.

When an Application comes before the Parish Planning Committee, it is presented by the named Councillor who will outline the application and report his/her findings, which are judged against a set of criteria called Material Planning Considerations. Each application can only be judged against these criteria and personal views or opinions cannot be taken into account. For example, the Material Planning Considerations for TVBC are:

- Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)
- Government Planning Policies/Guidance including National Planning Policy Framework
- Previous Planning decisions (including existing uses)
- Amenity considerations – Overlooking/Over-development/Character of area/Scale and bulk resulting in loss of light/Trees/Noise/Smell
- Traffic generation, parking and safety
- Design
- Materials
- Crime and community safety
- Need (e.g. Agricultural Workers Dwelling)

Therefore, even though Councillors, residents or members of the public may have strong personal views or opinions, these cannot be used as a reason to object to or indeed support any particular application in a response sent by the Parish Council. Residents can make their own representations to the Planning Authorities by writing to them direct. Hopefully this helps to clarify our somewhat complicated planning process.