

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No.6
22 JANUARY 2013	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Hiller – Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning	
Contact Officer(s):	Simon Machen - Head of Planning Transport and Engineering Services	Tel. 453475

EXTENSION OF SPEAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION OF SOLAR FARM PLANNING APPLICATIONS (App Ref: 12/01904/R3FUL, 12/01905/R3FUL and 12/01906/R3FUL)

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM: Head of Planning Transport and Engineering Services	TIMESCALE: N/A
That the Committee consider alternative time allowances for speaking at the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee meeting at which the three solar farm planning applications are to be considered.	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 The City Council’s constitution sets out at paragraphs 9.2 and 9.3 (under Part 4, Section 3) how much time is allocated for ‘speaking’ on planning applications that are considered by the Planning & Environmental Protection (PEP) Committee. At Committee’s discretion, the time allowed may be extended.
- 1.2 The Committee is due to consider three solar farm applications (App Ref: 12/01904/R3FUL, 12/01905/R3FUL and 12/01906/R3FUL) as these applications have already generated a high volume of interest at other Council meetings it is Officers opinion that this will be the case when coming before PEP Committee.
- 1.3 As with other high profile applications considered by PEP Committee in the past (e.g. wind farm applications) Officers have sought PEP Committee’s thoughts on extending the timings for addressing the Committee to ensure that applications are considered in full. Officers are (in the interests of planning the meeting effectively), seeking Committee’s thoughts regarding how much extra speaking time should be allowed, if any, in respect of the above applications. This would be without prejudice to the decision of the Committee on the day the applications are considered. However, this would allow officers to arrange, manage and liaise with interested parties prior to the meeting more effectively and efficiently.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain the view of the Committee on allowing an extension to the speaking scheme timings when the Committee considers the three solar farm applications and agree in principle any revised timings.
- 2.2 This report is for the Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.5.1.1 “To exercise the functions of the Council as listed in Schedule 2.5.3”.

3. **TIMESCALE**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	N/A
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4. **EXISTING SPEAKING ARRANGEMENTS**

4.1 The existing speaking scheme is as follows:

- i) 5 minutes (total) is allowed for each of the following
 - (a) objectors;
 - (b) applicant or agent and their supporters
- ii) 10 minutes (total) is allowed for speeches from Ward Councillors and Parish Councillors.
- ii) MPs are allowed to speak for 5 minutes.

5. **SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVE SPEAKING ARRANGEMENTS**

5.1 Officers ask that that Committee debate the following alternative suggested time allowances:

- i) 30 minutes (total) be allowed for each of the following*
 - (a) objectors;
 - (b) applicant or agent and their supporters
- ii) 45 minutes (total) be allowed for speeches from Ward Councillors and Parish Councillors.
- iii) MPs be allowed to speak for 15 minutes.

6. **CONSULTATION**

6.1 No consultation has been undertaken regarding the content of this report, neither is it required.

7. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES**

7.1 That, without prejudice to the decision that the Committee may make on the day that the applications are considered, Committee give an indication of the speaking time allowances that it may consider appropriate.

8. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 Committee cannot make a binding decision on an alternative amount of time to be allocated to speaking at meeting as the constitution (*paragraphs 9.2. and 9.3 (under Part 4, Section 3)*) states that such a decision can only be made on the day of the meeting when the alternative will be applied. However, in the interest of planning for the meeting it would be helpful for officers to be aware of Member's views.

9. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

9.1 Do not debate this report as the Committee cannot make a binding decision.

10. **IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Legal Implications

As no binding decision is being sought, this report is in compliance with the constitution.

10.2 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

10.3 Corporate Priorities

Speaking at committee is in line with the City Council's desire to create strong and supportive communities.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 Peterborough City Council Constitution.

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