



Local Code of Practice on Planning Decisions

September 2015

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1 Introduction

Planning can be complex and is not an exact science. It relies on sound and reasoned judgement within a firm policy context. It can also be highly contentious because its decisions affect the daily lives of everyone and the private lives of individuals, landowners and developers.

The key purpose of planning is to manage development in the public interest. A Member of the Planning Committee should make decisions openly, impartially, and for reasons that are justified. The Code will apply at all times when involved in the planning process.

Everything you need to know about conduct and procedures relating to planning decisions is included in this Code. The Code aims to provide clear guidance when making planning decisions. Whilst this is a guidance document, it should be given full consideration by Members and Officers when discharging their duties and responsibilities in relation to planning matters on behalf of the Council.

The main objectives of the Code are:

- To promote good practice to ensure the integrity of the planning process and to ensure that a decision is properly reasoned and justified
- To provide guidance to both Members and Officers of the Council when dealing with planning related matters
- To inform potential developers, and members of the public generally, of the standards adopted by the Council in the discharge of its planning functions
- To assist Members in dealing with approaches from developers, objectors and third party interests to ensure that the integrity of the decision making process is preserved

This Code of Conduct has been prepared having regard for the recommendations and guidance of the 'Probity in Planning' document as updated November 2013, published by the Local Government Association, together with the Council's own Constitution.

If any Member has any doubts about the application of this Code they should seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer, preferably well before any meeting takes place.

2 Relationship to the Members Code of Conduct

- 2.1 A Member should always apply the rules in the [Members Code of Conduct](#) first, which must always be complied with.
- 2.2 When involved in the planning process a Member should apply this Code as well.
- 2.3 If for any reason the Codes are not complied with then the Council is at risk of proceedings on the legality of a related decision or maladministration.

3 Notification of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality

- 3.1 Members are reminded that they must act in accordance with the requirements as set out in the [Members Code of Conduct](#).

4 Role and Conduct of Members and Officers

- 4.1 Members and Officers have different but complementary roles. Both serve the public but Members are responsible to the electorate, whilst Officers are responsible to the Council as a whole. Officers advise Members and the Council and carry out the Council's work.
- 4.2 In terms of Planning Committee, Officers make the recommendations and advise on material planning considerations and the appropriate courses of action to be taken into account. Members of Planning Committee then make the appropriate decisions.
- 4.3 All Members are elected to represent the interests of the whole community. In meeting this requirement, it is important that Members of Planning Committee take planning decisions based on sound material planning considerations and are not influenced by any other matters.
- 4.4 Any decisions delegated to Officers are publicised in the [Members Digest](#).
- 4.5 The officers' primary responsibility when making planning decisions is to organise the administration of the planning system and to process planning and related applications in accordance with relevant legislation. In doing so, they have prime responsibility for carrying out consultations, site visits, preparing reports and making recommendations and delegated decisions.
- 4.6 Those Officers that are Chartered Town Planners are guided by the Royal Town Planning Institute's ([RTPI](#)) Code of Professional Conduct. Breaches of the RTPI Code may be subject to disciplinary action by the Institute. Not all Officers are members of the RTPI, although they are still expected to carry out their duties to the same standards as required of their colleagues who are members.

- 4.7 In addition, The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 enables restrictions to be set on Officers' outside activities, such as political activity.

5 Relationship Between Members and Officers

- 5.1 Good administration is dependent upon a successful relationship between Members and Officers, which can only be based on mutual trust and an understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. This relationship, and trust that underpins it should not be abused or compromised.
- 5.2 All Members and Officers must ensure that contact between them in connection with planning focusses on the planning issues despite possible personal and professional differences of opinion on particular issues. Any contact between them should not undermine working relationships which are crucial to the success of the Council and effective Local Government.
- 5.3 Officers have a duty to give impartial advice to Members and the Council on planning applications and other planning matters and to make recommendations to Committee in the light of the Council's adopted planning policies and national policies using their professional judgement.
- 5.4 The Council, as Local Planning Authority, is expected to make a decision on all applications as soon as possible. The Council's target is to determine major applications within 13 weeks and other applications within 8 weeks. Applications that are reported to Committee are always included on the agenda of the first available meeting after completion of the Case Officer's report when all statutory obligations have been fulfilled and all necessary information is available so that a decision can be taken in the shortest possible time. Late representations received in advance of the meeting will be summarised verbally to Committee where new issues are raised.
- 5.5 Any issues of concern between Members and Officers and vice versa, which can't be resolved informally, in relation to the handling of planning applications or other planning matters, should be made in writing to either the Head of Planning and Regeneration or the Head of Law and Administration and not to the Officer or Member concerned, or the local media.

6 Responsibilities Relating to the Planning Committee and Procedure Rules

6.1 The Planning Committee comprises 13 Members including a Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The conduct of the business of the Committee is the responsibility of the Chairman, or the Vice-Chairman in his/her absence.

6.2 The Procedure Rules are as follows:

6.2.1 Order of Business

At ordinary planning meetings, the order is as set out in the agenda.

The reports from the Officers will normally be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda but the Chairman may at his or her discretion alter the order in which the reports are taken.

6.2.2 Rules of Debate (ordinary and additional meetings)

The rules of debate are contained within the Regulatory Committee Procedure Rules in Section 6 of the Constitution.

6.2.3 Rules of Debate (Large Scale Major 'Special Committee' meetings)

The rules of debate differ slightly for applications classed as Large Scale Major (as defined by the Department for Communities and Local Government). The rules are contained within the Regulatory Committee Procedure Rules in Section 6 of the Constitution.

6.2.4 Taking the Vote

When the Chairman concludes the debate, the vote is taken. Only Members of the Committee, or their substitutes, are allowed to vote, not visiting Members. If the votes are equal, the Chairman has a second casting vote. A note will be taken of the numbers voting for, against, or abstaining from the proposition, and the resolution recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Members may also have their vote individually recorded in the minutes but must request this immediately after the vote is taken.

6.3 General Points of Conduct

6.3.1 Copies of the agenda are circulated to Members 5 working days in advance of the meeting. Members must have read the agenda papers in advance of the meeting.

Members are encouraged to raise any questions with the relevant Officer prior to the meeting.

- 6.3.2 Members and Officers should be aware that all meetings are recorded and copies of the recordings are available on the Council website. Confidential agenda items are not recorded.
- 6.3.3 Members of Planning Committee should not converse in the Committee room with non-members of the Committee during its sitting. This includes entering into debate with members of the public.
- 6.3.4 Members should conduct themselves in a proper manner paying due regard to the Chairman and Officers present.
- 6.3.5 Members of Planning Committee should be present for the whole of the presentation and consideration of an item they vote on. This includes being present at the site visit, or at a meeting where an item has previously been deferred. Only those Members present for all stages of consideration of the application are eligible to vote.
- 6.3.6 If the decision of the Members of Planning Committee is not to follow the Officers' recommendation or to add or amend Conditions the Head of Law and Administration, or his or her representative will ask the Chairman for the reasons for the Committee's decision which will be minuted. The reasons for refusal or need for additional/amended Conditions will be agreed at the meeting.
- 6.3.7 Members of the public and media are allowed to attend the Committee. However, members of the public are only allowed to address the Committee if they have registered to speak in accordance with the Council's [Protocol on Making Representations Direct to Planning Committee](#) in the Constitution (as set out in **Appendix 4**). The media are not entitled to speak on any of the items on the agenda. Members of the public and media are not allowed to remain where a confidential item (in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972) is to be determined.
- 6.3.8 If it is appropriate to do so, in the opinion of the Chairman, the Committee may be adjourned for a short time.
- 6.3.9 In considering applications the Committee can resolve to conditionally Approve, Approve with amended conditions, Refuse, Refuse with amended refusal reasons, Defer for a Site Visit or Defer for further information. The Committee are required to give reasons for their decisions including a decision to defer for a site visit, or to approve against Officer recommendation, the Head of Law and Administration, or his or her representative, will ask the Chairman for the Committee's reasons for its decision. For further information on Site Visits see part 12 below.

7 Determination of Planning and Related Applications

- 7.1 Following validation, planning and related applications are entered in the planning register. They are publicised either by site notices, notification letters, newspaper advert, or a combination of all three. Consultations are undertaken with various statutory and non-statutory bodies. All responses and comments received are considered as part of the application process and are made available to view on our website.
- 7.2 The Officers undertake a site visit, make notes and carry out a full assessment of the proposal. Amendments may be sought from the applicant, although wherever possible the Officers will seek to resolve issues at the pre-application stage. Further publicity and consultation will be carried out where necessary in relation to amended details.
- 7.3 Officers then prepare a report and recommendation. If the application falls within the delegation criteria set out in the [Scheme of Delegation](#), (as set out in **Appendix 1**) officers will determine the application. If not, the application proceeds to the next available Planning Committee for determination.
- 7.4 The call-in procedure, which is a written request for consideration by the Planning Committee, is explained in more detail in the Weekly List and Calling In Planning Applications note (as set out in **Appendix 2**).
- 7.5 The agenda for the Planning Committee is published at least 5 clear working days before the Committee. In a normal cycle it is available on our website on the Tuesday evening in the week preceding the Wednesday Committee meeting. Agendas are sent out by post on the Tuesday before the meeting to Committee Members and Members who have called an application in and also to other Members who have requested a copy.
- 7.6 The Agenda will include the following:
 - 7.6.1 Minutes of previous meeting(s)
 - 7.6.2 Apologies
 - 7.6.3 Declarations of Members' Interests/Lobbying
 - 7.6.4 Delegated Applications (reference to relevant Digest publication)
 - 7.6.5 List of Planning Applications for determination (including call-in reason and Officer contact details)
 - 7.6.6 Any Other Applications (such as protected tree and hedgerow issues)

- 7.6.7 Appendix Items (Planning Appeals (newly notified and recently decided), new guidance and advice, new policy documents)
- 7.6.8 Enforcement Matters
- 7.6.9 Confidential Appendix Items
- 7.7 Each application or enforcement item on the agenda is accompanied by a clear Officer Recommendation and report together with a plan showing the site location. Where relevant the reports include consultation responses and representations, relevant policy and guidance and the Officer's assessment of the case.
- 7.8 At the Committee Meeting an Officer from Planning and Regeneration will make a short presentation to the Committee to outline the proposal, any key issues and to summarise any changes or updates that may have occurred since publication of the agenda. Such information is not normally read out or circulated at Committee meetings but is made available on the Council website as soon as possible.
- 7.9 The presentation includes some images of plans and photographs which are made available for Members of Planning Committee online the Friday before the meeting. Ward Members are entitled to submit up to 3 of their own photographs for consideration at Committee so long as Planning and Regeneration are notified of this no later than 2 working days before the Committee date.
- 7.10 Other useful procedural information is contained within the [Planning Customer Service Charter](#) (as set out in **Appendix 3**).

8 Pre Application Discussions

- 8.1 Applicants and their agents are encouraged to discuss proposals with Officers before making their planning applications. This is to address as many potential issues with a scheme at the earliest opportunity to avoid delay later in the process.
- 8.2 Members of Planning Committee should, wherever possible, avoid taking part in discussions or meetings with potential applicants or their agents concerning specific development proposals.
- 8.3 Should there be occasions where Members of Planning Committee are involved in discussion or meetings, they should always be accompanied by an Officer.
- 8.4 Officers may give an indication of the recommendation which is likely to be made to Planning Committee, particularly in respect of the Plan for Stafford Borough where there is a fundamental policy conflict. It should be made clear however that the recommendation does not bind the Council into making a particular decision.

8.5 Officers should record details of any conversations containing material planning considerations.

9 Development Proposals Submitted by Members, Employees and the Borough Council

9.1 The Council must ensure that applications from Members, employees and the Council itself are handled in a way that offers no grounds for accusations of favouritism.

9.2 Serving Members or Employees who submit applications or act as agents should play no part in the decision making process for that application and should register their interest with the Council. They should not take part in the processing of the application, nor should they lobby other Officers or Members either directly or indirectly.

9.3 [The Council's Constitution](#) (as set out in **Appendix 1**) sets out which applications should not be dealt with under the delegated procedure and should be reported to Committee as main items.

9.4 A Member or Officer has a pecuniary interest in their own application and is therefore required to withdraw from consideration of the matter.

10 Officer Reports to Committee

10.1 Reports should include the substance of any objections, statements of support and other responses received to the consultation.

10.2 Relevant information should include a clear assessment against the relevant development plan policies, relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), any local finance considerations, and any other material planning considerations.

10.3 Reports should have a written recommendation for a decision to be made and should contain technical appraisals which clearly justify the recommendation.

10.4 If the report's recommendation is contrary to the provisions of the development plan, the material considerations which justify the departure must be clearly stated.

10.5 Any verbal updates or changes to the report should be recorded.

11 Decision Making

11.1 General

- 11.1.1 The Planning Committee meetings are open to the public and they are often well attended, particularly when there is a contentious application on the agenda.
- 11.1.2 It is also important to remember that these meetings are attended by the applicants/agents, other parties supporting an application and objectors against an application. It is essential that decisions are made in the correct manner. Both applicants and objectors may be seeking to challenge a decision.
- 11.1.3 Consequently any debate should be confined to the planning merits of the matter and decisions should be reached in a fair and reasonable manner in an open and transparent way.
- 11.1.4 If an application is deferred then the reasons for deferral should be clearly stated and minuted.
- 11.1.5 [The Council's Constitution](#) (as set out in **Appendix 1**) sets out the Terms of Reference and Delegation for Planning Committee.

11.2 Pre-Determination

- 11.2.1 If a Member is considered to have pre-determined an application that Member cannot take part in the debate or vote on the application, but can remain in the room.

11.3 Decisions Contrary to Officer Recommendation

- 11.3.1 Decisions on planning proposals shall be taken in accordance with the Plan for Stafford Borough unless material considerations indicate otherwise. These material considerations should relate to the use of the land and the application, and not to non-planning considerations such as the number of objections or the personal circumstances of the applicant. It is the content of representations which is to be considered, not the quantity.
- 11.3.2 In determining planning applications the Committee is entitled to apportion the weight to be attached to the various planning criteria which are relevant to the application. This could lead to a decision contrary to the recommendation of the Officers.
- 11.3.3 Where the Committee wish to refuse an application contrary to an Officer recommendation in accordance with the rules of debate, the reasons for refusal should be clearly stated and a detailed minute made.

- 11.3.4 Where the Committee wish to grant planning permission contrary to an Officer recommendation, in accordance with the rules of debate the reasons for permitting the application should be clearly stated and a detailed minute made. Committee should indicate whether there are any specific conditions which they wish to be imposed. Such conditions need to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 11.3.5 The drafting of appropriate conditions, including any specifically identified by Committee, will normally be delegated to the Development Manager in consultation with the Chairman, unless the Committee indicate otherwise.
- 11.3.6 Where Members wish to add extra planning conditions, or delete or amend recommended conditions in accordance with the rules of debate, the reasons should be clearly stated and a detailed minute will be taken.
- 11.3.7 In the cases of decisions made contrary to Officer recommendation, the Officer attending the meeting should be given the opportunity to explain the implications of the decision, including (but not limited to) issues relating to appeals.
- 11.3.8 Where an appeal to the Secretary of State is subsequently lodged against a decision made contrary to Officer recommendation, Planning Officers will act as a professional witness at the Public Inquiry or Informal Hearing unless there is reason to suggest that this would prejudice the outcome. It should be noted that where the Planning Officer giving evidence is the Officer that recommended approval, then their role is of advocate for the Council's case.
- 11.3.9 It is advisable for the Committee to consider identifying a Member or Members to support the case at the Inquiry or Hearing should this be considered to be necessary.

11.4 Decisions Delegated to Officers

- 11.4.1 Delegated decisions are published in the [Members' Digest](#).

12 Site Visits

12.1 Committee Site Visits

- 12.1.1 Where a Large Scale Major Application is to be considered by a Special Committee, as set out in [the Constitution](#), a site visit will automatically be arranged prior to the Committee meeting.
- 12.1.2 On all other applications, the Committee may resolve to visit a site before reaching a decision on an application. A site visit can cause delay and additional costs; a site visit should only be used where there is a clear benefit.

12.1.3 A site visit may be necessary where the proposed development is difficult to visualise or the proposal is particularly contentious.

12.1.4 Where the need for a site visit can be foreseen, the Head of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Chairman, can use their discretion to arrange a site visit in advance of consideration at Committee, providing reasons for the site visit are given.

12.2 Site Visit Protocol

12.2.1 Following the approval of a recommendation to defer consideration for a site visit the Committee will provide reasons for the site visit.

12.2.2 Applicants or their agents are notified in writing of the date and approximate time of the site visit, which will normally be approximately 10 days following the main Committee meeting.

12.2.3 The site visit is under the control of the Chairman of the Planning Committee. Accompanying Officers, other Members of the Committee and any visiting Members may only speak at the discretion of the Chairman.

12.2.4 Members can ask the Officers at the site visit questions or seek clarification from them on matters which are relevant from the site inspection at the Chairman's discretion.

12.2.5 The purpose of the visit is to examine the site in relation to the proposal and not to enter into a debate concerning the merits of the proposal because this is done at the meeting afterwards. Members should ensure that they do not express opinions or views to anyone during the site visit.

12.2.6 The Committee undertakes the site visit as a formal group and will enter and leave the site as such. Members should not enter into discussions with applicants, agents or third parties. A clear analogy can be drawn with the procedure followed by a Planning Inspector on an appeal site visit.

12.2.7 A meeting of the Committee will follow the site visit. This will take place at the Council offices and will follow the normal Committee protocol. Only those who attended the site visit can vote on the item.

12.3 Site Visits by Individual Members of Committee

12.3.1 Members of the Committee wishing to individually visit sites prior to Planning Committee meeting should conduct such visits unannounced, from a public vantage point and should not discuss any matter likely to be considered by Planning Committee with any applicant/agent, objector or other third party.

- 12.3.2 If a Member is approached on site by an applicant/agent or third party interest the rules relating to Lobbying (see Section 13) should apply and the Member should report this to the Committee meeting. Under no circumstances should any indication of the views of the Member or the likely decision of Committee be given.
- 12.3.3 Under no circumstances should Members of Planning Committee arrange to meet applicants/agents or third parties for the purpose of a site visit.
- 12.3.4 Members of the Planning Committee should avoid entering any premises not normally open to the public which are either:
- a) the subject of, or affected by, a current planning application, or
 - b) known by the Member to be likely to become the subject of, or affected by, a planning application for any purpose in connection with such an application, save in the course of a Committee Site Visit. This also applies to any Planning Enforcement items.

13 Lobbying

- 13.1 It is important to recognise that lobbying by applicants and objectors is a normal part of the political process. Those affected by a planning application will often seek to influence it by approaching their Ward Member or a Member of the Planning Committee.
- 13.2 Such lobbying could however lead to the impartiality and integrity of an individual Member being called into question. The following advice should govern the behaviour of Members with respect to lobbying and should provide some protection from undue pressure.
- 13.3 A Member of Planning Committee should explain to those lobbying him or her that, whilst they can listen to what is said, to express an intention to vote one way or another, or express such a firm point of view that it amounts to the same thing, would prejudice their impartiality. This would therefore also prejudice their ability to participate in the Committee's decision making.
- 13.4 It is important to remember that a Planning Committee Member's overriding duty is to the whole community and not just those people in the Member's ward or local area and, taking account of the need to make decisions impartially, that a Member should not improperly favour, or appear to improperly favour, any person, company, group or locality.
- 13.5 It therefore goes without saying that Members of Planning Committee should take care about expressing an opinion which may be taken as indicating that they have

already made up their mind on an issue before they are familiar with all of the evidence and arguments.

- 13.6 Members should confine themselves to procedural advice and suggest that the lobbyist speak or write to the relevant Officer so that their views may be fully considered. The Member must remain mindful of the potential for pre-determining the application.
- 13.7 Members may be asked to represent the views of constituents who are unwilling for whatever reason to make their own representations. Where the matters raised are material planning considerations Members may make these representations either in writing or orally at Committee and should make the nature of the representation clear. Where time permits Members should make the Officers aware before Committee of any lobbying.
- 13.8 If a Member of Planning Committee decides in advance of the Committee consideration to support a particular outcome or to campaign actively for it, then the proper course of action is to make this clear at the Committee meeting and to abstain from voting.
- 13.9 If a Member receives correspondence relating to an application it should be passed to the relevant Officer as soon as possible and in any event before Committee consideration of the matter and preferably in advance of the date of the meeting if this is possible.
- 13.10 A Member should refer to Officers any offers made of planning gain or constraint of development, through a proposed Section 106 Agreement, Unilateral Undertaking or otherwise.
- 13.11 A Member should inform the Monitoring Officer where they feel that they have been exposed to undue or excessive lobbying or approaches.
- 13.12 Members should avoid lobbying other Members.
- 13.13 It is clearly very difficult to convey every possible situation that may face a Member and which gets the balance right. It cannot be stressed too strongly that the striking of this balance is the responsibility of the individual Member.

14 Public Speaking at Planning Committee

- 14.1 Further information on public speaking can be found in the [Protocol on Making Representations to Planning Committee](#) (as set out in **Appendix 4**).

15 Planning Appeals

- 15.1 Further information on Planning Appeals can be found on the [Planning Portal](#).

16 Planning Conditions, Obligations and Agreements

- 16.1 Further information on Planning Obligations and Agreements can be found on the [Planning Portal](#).

17 Planning Enforcement

- 17.1 Further information on Planning Enforcement can be found on the Council [website](#).

18 Members Training

- 18.1 It is important that all Members involved in the planning process are aware of this Code and of relevant legislation, guidance and advice. The following will therefore be undertaken as a minimum.
- 18.2 After each election all new Members of the Planning Committee will be provided with full training relating to the planning decision process.
- 18.3 A mandatory annual course will be held for all Members of the Planning Committee following the appointment of the Committee in May. Attendance of all Members not on Planning Committee is encouraged.
- 18.4 Members, including previous Members of Planning Committee will not be permitted to sit on the Planning Committee unless they have undertaken the available training. This is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

19 Press Comments

- 19.1 All Members and Officers should ensure that any contact they have with the press should accord with the principles of this Code and should not affect the integrity of the planning system.
- 19.2 All Members and Officers should refer all media enquiries to the [Communication Team](#).

20 Sanctions

- 20.1 The application of, and adherence to this Code is intended to build public confidence in the Council's planning system and to produce a strong platform for decision making on planning and other applications. The Code does not remove the right and responsibility of Members to exercise their discretion on the merits of individual applications and or/proposals.
- 20.2 A failure to adhere to this Code may give rise to a range of potential consequences to the Council, and individual Members, especially if this results in a pattern of inconsistency. Consistency and fairness are important qualities in the public eye and

they are vital to the conduct of the Committee's dealing with planning matters. Beyond the normal democratic process, a number of specific consequences can be identified.

- 20.3 Issues relating to Officers may be dealt with under the Council's [Disciplinary Procedure](#).

20.2.1 The Local Government Ombudsman

The Local Government Ombudsman may agree to investigate a planning complaint if it concerns the manner in which a decision was taken. If it is found that an injustice has been caused by maladministration in the light of statutory or established Council procedures, the Ombudsman may recommend redress which may take the form of compensation. They may also name the individual Member and give particulars of the breach. The Ombudsman will not make judgement on the planning decision that was made, only the process that was followed in reaching the decision.

20.2.2 Appeals to the Secretary of State

An applicant who has been refused planning permission or where permission has been granted subject to conditions with which he/she is not satisfied has a right of appeal to the Secretary of State within 12 weeks for householder applications, 8 weeks for advertisement consent or 6 months for other types of applications. The time period begins from the date of the decision. If an appeal is successful and it is shown that the Council's conduct in dealing with the matter was unreasonable, the appellant's costs may be awarded against the Council.

20.2.3 Judicial Review

If objectors are convinced that the Council, in determining to grant an application, did not observe its statutory obligations to carry out all necessary procedures, base its decision on the Plan for Stafford Borough and take into account all material considerations/representations, they may apply for judicial review of the decision, which might result in it being quashed. In such circumstances, it would be normal for the costs of the Court to be awarded against the Council.

20.2.4 Powers of the Secretary of State

The Secretary of State possesses a range of powers which could be exercised where a local planning authority appears to be making inconsistent decisions, or decisions which are seriously in conflict with national and local plan policies. This could involve a greater use of the power to 'call-in' applications, whereby an application would be determined by the Secretary of State following a public inquiry. Where permission has already been granted by the Council, powers exist to revoke or

modify permissions, or to require discontinuance of a land use, which if exercised would give rise to a liability to compensation on the part of the Council.

20.2.5 Standards Committee

Where a complaint is made that an individual Member has breached the Code of Conduct for Members then there is a risk of a complaint being made to the Standards Committee.

21 Complaints

21.1 Further information on the Council's complaints procedure can be found on the Council [website](#).

22 Other Relevant Policies and Guidance

22.1 [The Plan for Stafford Borough](#)

[Part 2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough](#)

[Probity in Planning](#)

23 Contacting the Council

23.1 **The Civic Centre main reception is open:**

Monday - Thursday between 8.30am and 5pm
Friday between 8.30am and 4.30pm

Our address is:

Stafford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Riverside
Stafford
ST16 3AQ

The customer contact telephone line is:

01785 619000
Monday - Thursday between 8.30am and 5pm
Friday between 8.30am and 4.30pm

You can email us at:

info@staffordbc.gov.uk

You can follow us on Twitter:

@staffordbc