

Standards Committee Observations of Council Meetings

Meeting Attended: Development Management Meeting

Date: 20 December 2010

Venue: Ballroom, Oldway

Agenda Item	Chair's Action	Members Action(s)	Remarks
New members, Apologies, Minutes of last meeting.	Appropriate	As required	Started on time
Declarations of interest	Appropriate	As required	Chair and others declared an interest in certain items
T6. Stoodley Green Children's' Play Area	Proper control of speakers, including timing. Controlled questions and debate.	Sensible questions and debate with no discernable party politics	As observed previously, an articulate and balanced presentation on the part of the Planning Officer – stating both sides of the case. He also provided prompt and clear responses to councillors' questions. Approved 7:2
T3. "Viewpoint" Dwelling planning permission	As for T6	As for T6	As for T6. Approved 8:1
P1 – P7. Miscellaneous conditions concerning block of flats Marine Drive Paignton	Vice Chair assumes role of Chair. Immediately slapped councillors for not listening.	Dealt with rapidly with no problems	Chair left room having declared an interest. Item deferred for S106 issues.
T1. Hollicombe Gas Works Development	An unenviable task for the Vice Chair in dealing with this one, but very well handled. Explained new speaking rule i.e. each side 15 minutes each – anti had 5X3minutes and pro had 3X5 minutes. Controlled timing, questions and debate well and took a strong line with what	Some understandable concern about not having received all the documentation on time due to adverse weather. Very uneasy about their legal liability if they approved something which ultimately proved hazardous to health and safety.	Again an excellent introduction on the part of the planning officer, but full marks to the Head of Spatial Planning who gave the clearest possible explanations during the Q&A session. Item ultimately deferred for a Quantitative Risk Analysis to be undertaken.

	might have been a very noisy public gallery.		
Subsequent items not observed.			

General Comments:

1. From a purely standards point of view the meeting was well conducted by both Chair and Vice Chair in front of a very large, partisan and potentially noisy audience. There were no observed breaches of the Code of Conduct on the part of any member.
2. The excellent sound and visual aids were essential in helping everyone present to understand the issues.
3. The members' reluctance to decide on an issue without the full information is understandable and fully supported in respect of the late delivery of key documents. The application was a complex and sensitive subject and councillors are entitled to the best information available in timely fashion if they are to make an informed decision.
4. Somewhat less convincing was the members' apparent inability to understand the relationship between "Quantitative Risk Assessment" and "Qualitative Remediation". This relationship was clearly explained by the Head of Spatial Planning, but possibly less clearly defined by the Council's consultants.