



Policy: Meetings with Developers

Date of adoption by PC: 1st December 2025

Introduction

Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council (the 'Council') acknowledge that developers may wish to present proposals at different planning application stages to the Council to seek its views and that pre and post-application discussions play an important role in major developments.

The Council welcomes the desire of developers to consult both the Council and the local community more widely. However, the Council is also aware of the importance of public perception in planning and the critical need to avoid any appearance that the Council is conducting secretive negotiations or colluding with developers.

In order to avoid improper lobbying by a developer or creating a perception that the Council have a predetermined position about a proposed development, the Full Council shall discuss in an open meeting any approach to meet with an individual, developer, or their agent ('the Developer'), to discuss a pre-application development. Post-application engagement may also be undertaken under the same principles.

Where, for reasons of timing, confidentiality or concerning matters of detail, an Open meeting with the Full Council is inappropriate, the following procedure shall apply

1. The Developer shall confirm the level of confidentiality of the documents provided and the reason for the confidentiality
2. The Full Council shall offer to meet with the Developer, by default position, in Open session. Closed session meetings will only be granted by exception and with specific prior agreement of the Parish Council and only if the reason complies with the categories for exemption permitted
3. The Council can resolve to delegate the Planning Committee to meet with developers to ensure, for example, that site design, housing mix and community facilities funded by s106 contributions meet the needs of the community. In order for outcomes of the meeting to be reported to the Parish Council at the next Full Council meeting, if necessary under a Closed Session, the Clerk may be asked to attend any such meetings purely for the purpose of administration and accuracy. Whilst the notes taken would be shared with the other attendees their contents would be agreed only with the Parish Council members present, and subsequently circulated to the rest of the Council for information. The presence of the Clerk does not indicate that the meeting has any legal or statutory function. By agreement with the Council, other interested parties, such as representatives of the village halls, may be invited to participate
4. The Agenda item pertaining to the Closed Session shall identify the location of the proposed development
5. Councillors shall be provided, via the Clerk, with all documents provided by the Developer and these shall be deemed confidential within the categories for exemption permitted
6. A motion to exclude the public shall be moved by the Chair at the relevant Full Council meeting and this shall identify and clarify the reason for any confidentiality
7. The Minutes of the Closed Session shall state attendees and general description of the reason for the meeting



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8. No indication of a position shall be inferred by the Council's agreement to meet with a Developer and the Council shall not be bound to meet further with the Developer in Closed Session
9. No resolutions shall be passed in the Closed Session.