

Summary of Planning Panels Survey

Eight Planning Panel Clerks responded to the questions set out below:

1. How many Panel Members do you have?

- Range is from 1 to 10

2. Are Panel members usually elected annually?

- 5 said yes
- 1 said their positions are confirmed as are newcomers
- 2 said No

3. Do all or some Panel members live in the Ward?

- 7 said yes
- 1 responded yes but with one exception

4. Have you been given a copy of the Terms of Reference?

- 5 said no
- 3 said yes

5. Do you get your expenses paid e.g. for postage?

- 4 said no
- No, not required
- No unaware of possibility
- 1 said they had no expenses
- 1 said yes, however they were not required as the Panel's consultation response is via e-mail

6. Do you claim an honorarium recognising the time you spend?

- 4 said no
- No, I have never attempted to claim but my understanding is that the honorarium was abolished as it did not meet minimum wage regulations
- No, it was mentioned 2 years ago. Did not happen
- No, wasn't aware of the possibility

- Clerk has never received honorarium or claimed expenses. Money is not what it's about, but small honorarium might make one feel appreciated

7. Have you been offered training in understanding and commenting on applications

- 6 said yes
- 1 said no
- Clerk is an architectural CAD technologist

8. Have all your Panel members undertaken such training

- 3 said no
- 1 said yes
- 1 said several but not all
- 1 said no, only a couple
- 1 said most
- 1 said no. No notification of sessions this year

9. Have any of your Panel members expressed a need for such training, as yet unmet?

- 4 said no
- 1 said not applicable
- 1 said yes
- 1 said Panel members are made aware of training opportunities as they arise
- 1 said we expressed a need for training regarding dealing with Change of Use applications from dwellings to HMOs, this request has never been acknowledged or addressed

10. Do you meet on a regular basis, if so how often?

- 2 said monthly
- 1 said when required
- 1 said usually once a month
- 1 said no
- 1 said every 3 weeks
- 1 said they meet 1 evening for a couple of hours every 3 weeks

- 1 said see question below

11. Or do you meet as demand requires, if so, on average how many times a year

- 1 said eight times a year
- 1 said yes
- 2 said see above
- 1 said see above answer but dependent on quantity of applications we need to discuss then more/less frequently as required
- 1 said meet 10 or 11 times a year but not in December and sometimes a gap of 5 weeks
- 1 said meet on demand, average is 4 to 5 times a year

12. Are all decisions taken by the whole Panel or does the Clerk make decisions alone on some 'basic' applications (perhaps because of length of meeting considerations?)

- 3 said made by the whole Panel
- 1 said all decisions are made by the whole Panel. If split opinions then a vote is cast and majority defines the response. If equal split then consultation returned with unable to come to a decision (this very rarely happens)
- 1 said no to part one of the questions and yes to part b
- 1 said members are made aware of all applications and most are discussed
- 1 said the Clerk consults by e-mail frequently for comments

13. Where do you hold your meetings?

- 2 said in their own homes
- 1 said usually in a Panel Member's house but sometimes in a pub
- 1 said at the Guildhall
- 1 said at Clementhorpe Community Centre
- 1 said at Tang Hall Library
- 1 said at Dringhouses Church Hall
- 1 said at Fothergill Homes

14. Who meets the cost of the meeting room?

- 4 said venues were free
- 1 said the Clerk
- 1 said Internal Council cost
- 1 said CYC

15. Does anyone take minutes or notes of discussions about any or all applications?

- 4 said no
- 1 said a full record of decision/recommendation on every application is kept.
- 1 said minutes are not taken, however occasional notes and reminders may be made
- 1 said, other than the comments to the Local Planning Authority, no
- 1 said yes

16. Are these recorded on the back of the feedback sheet, or in some other way?

- 1 said yes
- 2 said notes on rear of sheet
- 1 said not applicable
- 1 said sent to the Council via e-mail
- 1 said consultations are returned via e-mail, therefore an electronic copy is stored. The Panel also have a database listing the applications discussed, return comments and final decisions for the application made by the Council for our information which we refer to less often recently as we now view the majority of applications on-line on the planning portal which provides all the history of applications for the site in question or surrounding applications using the search command
- 1 said yes and noted on papers kept on file
- 1 said, not generally and if by e-mail

- 17. Do you simply record your agreement or otherwise to an application, using the choice selection on the front of the feedback sheet?**
- 4 said yes
 - 2 said we make comments as and when appropriate, usually on a fair number of applications
 - 1 said consultations are returned via e-mail using the feedback sheet as a base
 - 1 said for some applications
- 18. Do you ever make lengthy comments on the feedback sheet other than minuting your discussion?**
- 1 said yes as required
 - 3 said not usually
 - 1 said no
 - 1 said we sometimes make lengthy comments, but as indicated our agreed feedback effectively forms the minutes
 - 1 said, yes sometimes the response can include references to other applications, other comments or references to planning policies
- 19. When you suggest refusal of an application, do you keep a copy in case of appeal?**
- 3 said yes
 - 1 said keep a copy of the e-mail
 - 1 said sometimes
 - 1 said all electronic via planning portal and e-mail
 - 1 said have in the past
 - 1 said not at present
- 20. Have you ever requested to your Ward Council Members that an application decision be called in?**
- 4 said no
 - 2 said yes
 - 1 said not during my tenure
 - 1 said we invite our Ward Councillors to every Planning Panel meeting; occasionally they attend when they have no prior

engagement. Generally if the Panels response to applications is controversial and we feel we need to bring it to the Councillors attention then we will copy our consultation response via e-mail to the Ward Councillor

21. Have you ever attended a public Council planning meeting on any particular application?

- 2 said yes
- 4 said no
- 1 said not recently

22. Do you report your activities to the Ward Committee when it meets?

- 1 said sometimes
- 1 said no
- 1 said no one interested
- 2 said yes, on an annual basis
- 1 said yes
- 1 said we have decided to do so to raise awareness
- 1 said, verbally when asked

23. What is the name of the City of York Council officer to whom Panel Members' contact details are supplied?

- 1 said not known
- 1 said no details are supplied
- 1 said Matthew Ward
- 1 said previously we sent correspondence to Caroline Perry who has now left the Council
- 1 said Councillor Hodgson
- 1 said the Ward officer
- 1 said the neighbourhood Services Unit

24. Can you make site visit arrangements and if so how

- 2 said yes
- 2 said no
- 2 said with Councillors

- 1 said site visits could be made
- 1 said informal walkabout

25. Have you ever held a public meeting on an application?

- 6 said no
- 1 said yes
- once recently, on a major application

26. Do you publicise the dates of all your meetings?

- 6 said no
- 1 said only to members at present
- 1 additional comment saying that the Panel usually have a section in the Ward paper informing residents of our existence, contact details and the meeting details inviting them to join us.

27. Do you take space in your Ward newsletter to report on your work?

- 7 said no
- 1 said take space in Ward paper as above, but not to report on work

28. Is your meeting location open to the public?

- 4 said no
- 4 said yes

29. If you have meetings advertised and open to the public are the venues fully accessible?

- 2 said yes
- 1 said no
- 1 said yes, but no hearing loop

30. Do Panel Members declare interests in applications?

- 3 said yes
- 1 said no formal process
- 2 said never needed to
- 1 said would do so

31. If interests are declared, how is this dealt with?

- 2 said 'maintains silence'
- 2 said leave the room

32. Is a declared interest recorded on the feedback sheet?

- 4 said no

33. Have you ever met the Planning officers?

- 3 said no
- 2 said yes
- 1 said not formally
- 1 said at site meetings
- 1 said at a Ward meeting

34. Would you welcome an open meeting to meet these officers?

- 5 said yes
- 1 said possibly

35. If Planning Panels meetings are held in future in the new West Offices (which would seem to allow shared use of e-planning equipment, screens etc) would it be feasible for your Panel to meet there?

- 1 said I can read drawings at home on the computer
- 2 said yes
- 1 said this would be feasible, however the majority of the Panel would object due to distance of travel
- 2 said it would not be convenient and they would prefer to meet in a location closer to them
- 1 said maybe