

FOI number: **HBC\_FOI\_20190579**  
Date FOI Received: **07/08/2019**  
Department: **Democratic Services**  
Title: **Public participation at Planning Committee**  
Description: **Details of the speaking time available for public participation at planning committees.**

**Request:** *(As Redacted sent by requestor)*

Dear Hertsmere Borough Council,

<REDACTED> is campaigning to put public participation at the heart of the planning system. With this in mind, I am writing to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. Can you confirm how long, in minutes, a community group such as a Civic Society is permitted to speak at your local council's Planning Committee? (By 'Planning Committee' we mean your local authority's committee of elected members which determines planning applications. It may be known by a different name in your local authority).
2. Is there a limit on the number of registered speakers permitted to speak at your Planning Committee? If yes, please specify the maximum number of speakers allowed.
3. Is there a limit on the total time allowed for registered speakers? If yes, please provide details of the time restriction.
4. Are your Planning Committee procedure rules publicly available online? If yes, please provide the weblink.

Yours faithfully,

**Response:** *(Response as Redacted sent by service)*

1. 3 minutes.
2. One public speaker for and one speaker against the application. One Community Advocate for and one against the application [Community Advocates are Councillors who are not on the Planning Committee and are speaking at the request, and on behalf of, constituents].
3. 16 minutes.
4. Procedure rules are included on every agenda published:  
<http://www5.hertsmere.gov.uk/democracy/documents/g10539/Agenda%20frontsheet%20Thursday%2015-Aug-2019%2018.00%20Planning%20Committee.pdf?T=0>

If you have any queries about the processing of your request then please do not hesitate to contact me. Further information explaining the Council's process for responding to information requests together with a complaints/appeals procedure is available in our reception or via our website at: <https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Your-Council/Official-Publications--Guides--Policies/Access-to-Information.aspx>

The Information Commissioner oversees the application of the Freedom of Information Act. You may contact the Information Commissioner at:  
Information Commissioners Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 01625 545700 Website: [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)

Please include the above reference number on all correspondence related to this request.

Thank you for your request.

Kind regards  
Information Services