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**Your Ref:**

**Our Ref:** JH/EH

**Date:**

12<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**By e-mail to Michael Brown: [m.brown@zoo.co.uk](mailto:m.brown@zoo.co.uk)**

Dear Mr Brown,

Thank you for your email dated 29 April asking for information on the operation of the planning service in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Council is following government guidance which can be found here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/875045/Chief\\_Planners\\_Newsletter\\_-\\_March\\_2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/875045/Chief_Planners_Newsletter_-_March_2020.pdf).

The government's guidance to local planning authorities during the pandemic has been clear: "It is important that authorities continue to provide the best service possible in these stretching times and prioritise decision-making to ensure the planning system continues to function, especially where this will support the local economy."

The provisions set out in the Coronavirus Act 2020 allow for virtual committee meetings including planning meetings.

To date there has been no business for the planning committees so none have been held. However, the Council has been working on a protocol for 'virtual' planning meetings in line with government guidance and emerging best practice to ensure probity and transparency. Meetings will be live streamed and current speaking rights will remain. The protocol for planning meetings will be made public on the Mid Sussex web pages. Publicity regarding meetings is already clearly set out on the Council's web pages here: <http://midsussex.moderngov.co.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>. This does not need to change in the light of Covid - 19.

The Council has not made changes to its Constitution regarding decision taking over planning applications. Therefore, those planning applications which should be decided by a committee will continue to be so.

There is no legal reason to extend deadlines for either the submission of representations or the extension of deadlines regarding the determination of planning applications.

The decision to approve the Regulation 19 version of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document is a decision for the full Council, the date of this meeting is yet to be agreed.

The Council's approach and principles of transparency regarding consultation are already set out in the approved Statement of Consultation which can be found here:

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/3951/statement-of-community-involvement.pdf>

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*Working together for a better Mid Sussex*

Judy Holmes  
Assistant Chief Executive



I trust this helps answer your questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judy Holmes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Judy Holmes  
Assistant Chief Executive