



Predetermination, Predisposition and Bias

Case Studies

1. The Council has received a planning application for a new development within the High Street comprising retail and residential accommodation. Councillor X is on the Planning Committee. He has campaigned strongly over a long period of time for no further development in that area, including recent statements in the local press. His opposition is therefore well known.

He has gone on record that he does not want the application to be approved and will argue against it at the Planning Committee. It's likely to be a very close vote. You want to ensure that Councillor X conducts himself appropriately to ensure the discussion and the vote is not compromised.

What would your advice to him be as to what he should and should not say or do?

2. Councillor Y is a member of a wildlife group who have applied for a council grant. He is on the panel which considers such applications. A councillor from another party phones you and says that Councillor Y couldn't possibly take part in the panel meeting on the grounds of bias. Councillor Y says that he is one of many people within the wildlife group, he's not an active member and that he will consider the application with an open mind. He will however listen to your advice.

What issues do you need to consider and what would your advice be?