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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

SCHEME OF OPERATION

The aim of the scheme is to ensure that the views of the public are known to the Authority and its Committees and Sub-Committees when making its decisions.

At any meeting of the Authority its Committees and Sub Committees people are welcome to make representations, ask a question, make a statement and present deputations or petitions. The procedures are set out below for guidance but the Chair of the meeting has discretion to vary the procedures (as indicated in the detailed paragraphs below) if necessary for the effective running of the meeting.

Representations made to Authority meetings, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings (including questions, statements, deputations and petitions)

1. Representations, including questions, statements, deputations and petitions, may be made by any person on matters relating to the published reports on the public part of the Agenda. They must be confined to the subject of the relevant report on which a decision is being taken.
2. A question to the Chair of the Authority, Committee or Sub-Committee, or a statement to a meeting must be submitted in writing (See paragraphs 9 to 12 below), and signed by the person wishing to ask the question or make the statement. All questions and statements received will be subject to the limits set out in paragraphs 13 to 18 below.
3. Following adaptations made to this scheme during the Covid-19 pandemic anyone may give notice to make representations to a meeting using any one of the following methods:
 - a) Written representations of not more than 400 words
 - b) An audio recording no longer than 3 minutes
 - c) A video file no longer than 3 minutes
 - d) Attend and speak in person, subject to Covid-19 guidance, for no longer than 3 minutes
4. Deputations and petitions prepared on behalf of a group of three or more people may be received at a meeting, given the notice required in paragraphs 13 to 18 below. As confirmed speakers are not able to make presentations, present additional photographs or 3D models or introduce/circulate written statements at the meeting the subject matter of the deputation or petition and any related documents must be submitted before the end of the notice period. One speaker, or their agent, may speak on behalf of the group subject to the limits set out in paragraphs 13 to 18 below.

5. The Chair of a meeting has the right to exclude a question, statement, deputation or petition on a topic or related matter, which has been the subject of a question or statement at an earlier meeting.
6. Any matter contained in a question, statement, deputation or petition that is deemed by the Head of Law to be defamatory or to relate to a specific Officer or Member will not be included on the Agenda and the speaker or parties will be informed accordingly.
7. Part B Items (These are items considered in private to avoid disclosure of exempt and confidential information), items for information, items not for discussion and agenda items without supporting reports will not be subject to this Public Participation Scheme.
8. Employees of the Peak District National Park Authority may not use the Public Participation Scheme to raise issues relating to their employment. Their trades union and/or Staff Committee can use the scheme to make representations on Part A (non confidential) items only.

Notice

9. Notice must be given to the Head of Law by 12 noon two working days before the meeting by the person who wishes to speak. Notice can be given by telephone, in writing or by e-mail. See paragraph 30 below.
10. The notice must give details of the meeting, identify the subject and include a contact name, address and telephone number. In giving notice, speakers should indicate whether they support or object to the recommendation in the report.
11. As the scheme is subject to the limits set out in paragraph 13 to 18, giving notice in accordance with these deadlines does not automatically guarantee the opportunity to address the meeting.
12. We are not able to give potential speakers an idea of the time at which an item will be considered by the meeting. Democratic Services will contact speakers after the close of the notice period to give an indicative time, but this will only be an estimate. On the day of the meeting speakers should time their arrival to take account of this and be prepared to wait. The meeting will not delay consideration of an item if a speaker is not present.

Limits

13. The maximum time available for public participation on any one agenda item is one hour including questions to speakers. Therefore the maximum number of speakers on any one item is 15. Where the number of people giving notice exceeds this 15, places will be allocated as set out below.
14. The written views of statutory consultees will be reported to the meeting as usual, However, providing they give the required notice statutory consultees are also allowed to make a representation in person to the meeting. For the purposes of this paragraph, a statutory consultee is defined as the relevant Local Authority, District Councils, Parish Councils, Highway Authorities or other relevant Agencies as determined by the Chair of the meeting. The number of consultees giving notice to speak will be deducted from the overall limit of 15 speakers.
15. Subject to giving notice, County, District and Parish Councillors (or Chair of a Parish Meeting) may speak on matters impacting upon their Division, Ward or Parish. The number of Councillors giving notice to speak will be deducted from the

overall limit of 15 speakers and limited to one Councillor/Parish Meeting Chair per item from each relevant Council.

16. For planning applications, subject to giving notice, the applicant or their agent will be given the opportunity to speak.
17. Once places are allocated to statutory consultees, councillors and, where applicable, applicants, the remaining places will be allocated to those who have given notice by drawing lots. If it is clear from the list of those giving notice to speak that there are some in support and some against the proposals, places will be allocated to make sure that each view is represented by at least one speaker. However no attempt will be made to equalise the numbers of speakers holding a particular view.
18. As a result of these limits there will be occasions when, despite having given the required notice, groups and individuals will not be able to address the Committee. In these circumstances, using the contact details provided when giving notice, the Democratic Services Team will try to make contact or leave a message for those concerned to advise them they will not be invited to speak. We will make every effort to make contact as soon as possible after the end of the notice period but there may be occasions when we may be unable to make contact. Potential speakers should therefore contact Democratic Services before attending a meeting if they have not received confirmation.

Operation

19. Each confirmed representation will be allowed to make their representations according to the following limits:
 - a) Written representations of not more than 400 words
 - b) An audio recording no longer than 3 minutes
 - c) A video file no longer than 3 minutes
 - d) Attend and speak in person, subject to Covid-19 guidance, for no longer than 3 minutes
20. Where there is more than one person wishing to make similar points, they will be advised that the Chair has discretion to intervene if they repeat other speakers. Therefore they may wish to endorse the points made by other speakers but they should avoid repeating them.
21. Written representations will be read out by a member of the Democratic and Legal Support Team.
22. Those making audio, video or telephone representations should also note that by participating in the meeting, they are giving consent to their contributions being recorded, published¹ and retained in accordance with the Authority's policy².
23. Any speakers attending in person must use the microphone provided to amplify their voice. Speakers should also note that by participating in the meeting, they are giving consent to their contributions being recorded, published¹ and retained in accordance with the Authority's policy².
24. The Chair of the meeting has discretion to allow a speaker to answer questions or clarify points raised by Members following the representation and during the debate.

25. Confirmed speakers will not be able to make presentations or present additional photographs or 3D models or introduce/circulate written statements at the meeting.
26. The Chair of the meeting will respond to questions, statements, deputations and petitions on behalf of the Authority.
27. If a speaker is unable to attend the meeting to present a question or statement, submitted in accordance with paragraph 2, the question or statement and answer will be read out and a written answer provided to the speaker in the week following the meeting.

Site Visits

28. The Public Participation Scheme does not apply to site visits carried out by Members of the Planning or Programmes and Resources Committees.
29. Anyone invited to attend a site visit e.g. applicant, agent, statutory consultees is only allowed to answer questions of fact from officers or Members. They can, if they wish, apply to speak at the subsequent Committee meeting under the Public Participation Scheme, but not on a site visit.

Giving Notice

30. Notice under this scheme must be received by 12 noon two working days before the meeting. Notice can be given in the following ways:
 - (i) In writing to Head of Law at Aldern House at the above address.
 - (ii) By telephone to the Democratic Services Team (01629 816362 or 01629 816382). A voice mail system is in operation where messages can be left outside office hours or if the telephone is engaged.
 - (iii) By e-mail addressed to democraticandlegalsupport@peakdistrict.gov.uk.

Further help or clarification about the operation of the scheme can be obtained from the Democratic Services Team on 01629 816362 or 816352.

NOTES

¹ In this context “published” includes includes blogging or tweeting, posts on social media sites or publishing on audio and video sharing sites. It also includes the Authority’s audio and/or video webcasting. Please note that under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 any member of the public may record and report on open meetings of the Authority and its Committees using text, sound, video, film, or photographs without the prior consent of the Authority.

² The current retention policy is set out in Standing Order 1.5(8). Usually recordings, including the listen again facility for webcasts, will only be held by the Monitoring Officer for a period of three years from the date of the meeting and then deleted (with effect from 3 February 2017). However the Chair of the meeting or the Monitoring Officer may agree that recordings may be retained for a longer period if required.