

HANDLING OF MEMBERS' CORRESPONDENCE PROCESS NOTE

Correspondence addressed to Members received at Aldern House is handled in the following ways:

Chair of the Authority

- All letters received at Aldern House addressed to the Chair of the Authority are passed directly to the Chief Executive's Executive Support Officer (ESO).
- The Chief Executive's ESO will open the letters, unless marked personal, private or confidential, scan in and send to the Chair.
- The Chief Executive will then decide how to respond to the letter
- The Chair of the Authority is updated with a note of any action taken.
- If a letter is marked 'Personal', 'Private' or 'Confidential' the ESO will either send straight to the Chair or contact the Chair and ask if it can be opened. If the ESO is allowed to open it the ESO will then follow the process above.
- In the absence of the Chief Executive's ESO the Customer and Democratic Support Team will ensure the process above is followed.

Chair of Planning Committee

- All letters received at Aldern House addressed to the Chair of Planning Committee to be opened (unless marked 'Personal' 'Private' or 'Confidential'), registered and then passed to the Customer and Democratic Support Team to acknowledge.
- Customer and Democratic Support will send an acknowledgement for the letter and inform the recipient that the letter is being forwarded to the Chair of Planning Committee.
- Customer and Democratic Support will copy the letter to the Head of Planning and send a note and the original letter to the Chair informing of this.
- The Chair will then decide how to respond to the letter, in conjunction with the Head of Planning as necessary.
- If a letter is marked urgent or considered urgent it is scanned and sent by email to the Chair immediately
- If a letter is marked 'Personal', 'Private' or 'Confidential' it will be sent unopened to the Chair, via Customer and Democratic Support Team, and the Chair will decide how to respond to the letter.

Chair of Programmes and Resources Committee

- All letters received at Aldern House addressed to the Chair of Programmes and Resources Committee (P&R) will be opened (unless marked 'Personal', 'Private' or 'Confidential'), registered and passed to Customer and Democratic Support Team.
- Customer and Democratic Support will send an acknowledgement for the letter and inform the recipient that the letter is being forwarded to the Chair of P&R Committee.
- Customer and Democratic Support will copy the letter to the Head of Planning and any other Authority officers as necessary. A note will then be sent with the original letter to the Chair informing of this.
- The Chair will then decide how to respond to the letter, in conjunction with the Head of Planning and other officers as necessary.
- If a letter is marked 'Personal', 'Private' or 'Confidential' it will be sent unopened to the Chair, via Customer and Democratic Support Team, and the Chair will decide how to respond to the letter in conjunction with the Head of Planning and other officers as necessary.

All Other Members

- All letters received at Aldern House addressed to Members, other than to Chair of Authority, Chair of Planning Committee and Chair of Programmes and Resources Committee, will not be opened, registered or acknowledged.
- All such letters will be forwarded, via Customer and Democratic Support Team, to the relevant Members unless they are recognised as lobbying letters (see below).

Emails

All Members have Peak District email addresses which are available to the public on our website www.peakdistrict.org.uk or on request from Aldern House. This means all emails sent to these addresses for Members are received direct by Members via their PDNPA email account. Members forward any relevant emails to officers as necessary for consultation or response.

Lobbying or Bundles of Duplicate Correspondence

Occasionally duplicate letters or bundles of correspondence for all Members are received at Aldern House either by post, by hand or email. These quite often refer to planning applications. It is not our policy to forward such correspondence to Members and this policy is explained in the Planning section of our website as 'it can slow down the planning process, duplicate work and in some cases may prejudice the processes. There may also be high postage costs'. In these instances, the following process is followed:

- **Correspondence received by post:** Unless marked 'Personal', 'Private' or 'Confidential' one letter will be opened by Customer and Democratic Support to check what it refers to. A copy of the letter will then be given to a relevant Authority officer. The sender of the correspondence would be notified that it was not being forwarded and a set of address labels and email addresses supplied for them to use if they wish to forward the correspondence themselves. The correspondence would be retained at Aldern House for the sender to collect back if desired.
- **Correspondence received by hand:** Either the Receptionist or a member of the Customer and Democratic Support Team will explain to the person delivering the letters that we do not forward lobbying letters to Members and offer them a set of address labels or details of email addresses for them to forward the correspondence themselves.
- **Correspondence received by email:** the sender will be directed to the Member email addresses on the Authority's website for them to resend to individual Members if wished.

Posting to Members from Aldern House

Members are expected to check and empty their trays at Aldern House when they attend meetings. However, all Members trays are checked by Customer and Democratic Support on Thursday afternoons (if Committee papers are being despatched) and Friday afternoons and any urgent contents are posted to Members by First Class post. Any bulky non-urgent items will not be posted and will remain in the Members tray for collection the next time they attend a meeting at Aldern House.

If Authority officers have any particular urgent posting requirements for Members they need to alert Customer and Democratic Support Team beforehand.