

Provisions Relating to Public Participation at Meetings

For the purposes of this Schedule "participation" and "participate" shall mean the asking of any question, the making of any presentation or statement, or the submission of any petition.

1 Public Participation at Meetings of the Authority

- 1.1 Subject to certain limitations and exceptions as set out below, Parish Councils (including Parish Meetings), members of the public and representatives of organisations shall have an opportunity to participate at meetings of the Authority.
- 1.2 The agenda for a meeting of the Authority, save the Annual Meeting, shall include an agenda item to receive public participation
- 1.3 Any member of the public or representative of an organisation who wishes to take this opportunity of participation at a meeting of the Authority shall notify the Member Services Officer at least 24 hours before the commencement of the meeting.
- 1.4 The notification under 1.3 above shall include the name of the person to address the meeting and a brief summary of the matter or matters to be raised, in the case of a Parish Council or Meeting, written confirmation that the person is authorised to speak on behalf of the Parish Council or Meeting.
- 1.5 For the avoidance of doubt, participation may be exercised with regard to any matter within the remit of the Authority and shall not be limited to matters on the agenda for that meeting.
- 1.6 Subject to Standing Order 5, the Chair~~man~~ will invite each speaker who has given prior notice in accordance with 1.3 (above) to address the meeting. The speaker may address the meeting for up to three minutes, or such longer period as the Chair~~man~~ in his absolute discretion may permit. Any statements, questions or petitions shall be heard and received without debate. Members may ask questions for clarification but shall not respond on any matter or enter into any debate.
- 1.7 Every person asking a question or making a statement requiring a response shall receive a written response from an Officer of the Authority within 14 days, unless additional time for investigation and/or consideration is required. If additional time is required a response shall be sent giving reasons and the date by which it is anticipated that a final response will be provided.
- 1.8 Members of the Authority shall be informed of the response in due course.
- 1.9 Where there are a number of people wishing to participate, who in the opinion of the Chair~~man~~ appear to be concerned with the same subject matter, the Chair~~man~~ may indicate that the number of individual speakers cannot be accommodated and may ask those concerned to nominate a spokesperson to address the meeting. In these circumstances the Chair~~man~~ may allow a brief adjournment to enable a spokesperson to be appointed and may indicate that a speaking time in excess of three minutes will be permitted.
- 1.10 A member of the public not giving advance notice of their wish to participate in a meeting may speak for up to one minute at the invitation and at the absolute discretion of the Chair~~man~~. A Member or officer of the Authority may respond to points raised for up to two

minutes. Any further response will be provided in writing within 14 days, unless additional time for investigation and/or consideration is required. If additional time is required a response shall be sent giving reasons and the date by which it is anticipated that a final response will be provided.

1.11 The total time allowed for all public participation at any meeting under these Standing Orders shall not normally exceed 20 minutes.

1.12 Upon the conclusion of the time for public participation the Chair~~man~~ shall move to the next item of business and from that point no further public participation shall be permitted at that meeting.

1.13 For the avoidance of doubt "Chair~~man~~" shall mean the person presiding at the meeting of the Authority in accordance with Standing Order 2.

2 Public Participation at Meetings of the Standards and Audit Committee ~~and the Resources and Performance Committee, and Standards Committee~~

2.1 Subject to certain limitations and exceptions as set out below, members of the public and representatives of organisations shall have an opportunity to participate at meetings of the Standards and Audit Committee ~~and the Resources and Performance Committee, and Standards Committee.~~

2.2 The agenda for a meeting of the Committees, save any extraordinary meeting, shall include an agenda item to receive public participation

2.3 Any member of the public or representative of an organisation who wishes to take this opportunity of participation at a meeting of the Committee shall notify the Member Services Officer at least 24 hours before the commencement of the meeting.

2.4 The notification under 2.3 above shall include the name of the person to address the meeting and a brief summary of the matter or matters to be raised.

2.5 For the avoidance of doubt, participation may be exercised with regard to any matter within the purview of the Committee and shall not be limited to matters on the agenda for that meeting.

2.6 Subject to Standing Order 5, the Chairman will invite each speaker who has given prior notice in accordance with 2.3 and 2.4 (above) to address the meeting. The speaker may address the meeting for up to three minutes, or such longer period as the Chairman in his absolute discretion may permit.

2.7 The total time allowed for all public participation at any meeting under these Standing Orders shall not normally exceed 20 minutes.

2.8 Any statements, questions or petitions shall be heard and received without debate. Members may ask questions for clarification but shall not respond on any matter or enter into any debate.

2.9 Every person asking a question or making a statement requiring a response shall receive a written response from an Officer of the Authority within 14 days, unless additional time for investigation and/or consideration is required. If additional time is required a response shall be sent giving reasons and the date by which it is anticipated that a final response will be provided.

2.10 Members of the Committee shall be informed of the response in due course.

2.11 Upon the conclusion of the time for public participation the Chair~~man~~ shall move to the next item on the agenda and from that point no further public participation shall be permitted at that meeting.

2.12 For the avoidance of doubt "Chair~~man~~" shall mean the person presiding at the meeting of the Authority in accordance with Standing Order 2.

3 Public Participation at Meetings of the Planning Committee (~~Protocol~~)

The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) is the planning authority for the South Downs National Park (SDNP) from 1 April 2011. While the great majority of planning decisions will be made by the 15 Local Authorities in the South Downs National Park (SDNP), some of the more significant decisions will also be made by the SDNPA Planning Committee.

This protocol provides an opportunity for public representations to be made to the Planning Committee from 1 April 2011 in relation to those planning matters that it determines itself. Decisions on other applications will be made by the constituent Local Authorities and all 15 SDNP Local Authorities have their own public speaking schemes. You may, therefore, wish to make representations to the appropriate LPA on such applications. The SDNPA can provide advice on the appropriate determining authority on a case by case basis.

What is Public Speaking at the Planning Committee?

The SDNPA Planning Committee is a meeting held in public. The purpose of the committee is for the committee members to debate and decide the matters on the agenda. The SDNPA's invitation to speak at its Planning Committee provides an opportunity for members of the public to directly address the committee with issues of concern to them.

A maximum of six people is invited to speak on each planning application or related matter, (three in support and three against). This number includes the applicants or their agents. Each speaker will be allowed up to three minutes to speak. All aspects of public speaking at SDNPA Planning Committee meetings are subject to the discretion of the Planning Committee Chair.

What matters can I speak on?

You can ask to speak on any planning application that the SDNPA is proposing to determine and on any other planning matters that are being considered by the Committee. This might include its views on any potential enforcement action or matters relating to the development of planning policy or related supplementary advice.

You can only speak on items that are on the agenda of the meeting at which you ask to speak. You should not attempt to surprise the Committee with new information, photographs or additional written material. This should have already been given to the planning officers in time for them to evaluate it professionally. Where possible, this should be at least 7 days before the meeting so that officers and Members have adequate time to properly consider it.

Who can speak at the Planning Committee?

To speak at an SDNPA Planning Committee you should normally have made written representations on the planning matter in question and you should notify the SDNPA beforehand, so please let the SDNPA know that you wish to speak, as soon as possible. A local Parish, Town, District, Unitary or

County Councillor can speak on your behalf, if you prefer.

The people who can speak at the Planning Committee, and the order in which they will be invited to speak, are:

- Up to three individuals or group representatives, including any County, Unitary, District, Town or Parish Council representatives, [and Member of the South Downs National Park Authority](#), who are opposing the application.
- Up to three individuals or group representatives, including any County, Unitary, District, Town or Parish Council representatives, who are supporting the application. This includes the applicant or agents, who have the right of reply to any points made.
- Any [other](#) Member of the South Downs National Park Authority (not time limited)

If more than three individuals or representatives wish to raise similar points, then they will be asked to agree amongst themselves who should speak on their behalf. If necessary, the Chair of the Planning Committee will make any final decision on which members of the public may speak on an issue. The Chair may use his/her discretion to increase the number of people who may speak.

How will I know if and when the item I am interested in is going to Committee?

If you are interested in a planning matter within the SDNP and you are considering making representations to the SDNPA about it, you should first approach the relevant Local Planning Authority, and establish whether it has been referred to the SDNPA for determination. If it has, you should then contact the SDNPA to establish whether the matter is being reported to a SDNPA Planning Committee, and if so, when it is to be considered.

The Member Services Team has details of all future Planning Committee dates and 8 days before the Committee will know which items are to be included on the agenda. Details of forthcoming meeting dates and agenda and minutes can be found on our website, as follows:
www.southdowns.gov.uk

Copies of reports are normally available on our website at least 7 days before the meeting or they can be obtained from the Member Services Officer. In addition, a copy of the agenda for the meeting can be posted to speakers, on written request.

How do I register my interest in speaking?

You will need to telephone or email the Member Services Officer on 01730 811144 no later than 12 noon, 3 working days before the meeting. (if the meeting is held on a Monday, this would be 12 noon the previous Wednesday), The email address is as follows:
member.services@southdowns.gov.uk

When you call or email, please be ready to provide:

- your name, address and daytime telephone number (and email address, if available)
- the application number and details of the proposed development to which it refers or details of the other matters that you wish to speak about
- confirmation of whether you wish to speak in support or against an application or other matter
- confirmation of whether you are representing yourself or anyone else
- confirmation that we can provide your details to other people also wishing to speak so that you can agree who will speak, in the event of their being more than 3 potential speakers.

- details of any special access or other arrangements that you may require.

What if I am unable to turn up on the day?

You may nominate a substitute, giving details to the Member Services Officer by no later than 4.00pm on the last working day before the Planning Committee meeting.

Arriving at the Planning Committee meeting

If you are invited to speak to the Planning Committee, then you should arrive at the appropriate venue at least 15 minutes before the meeting begins. A member of the SDNPA staff will be there to meet you and to explain the procedures.

What will happen in the meeting?

The Chair will ask the appropriate officer to introduce and, if necessary, update the report. Each speaker will then be allowed up to three minutes to address the Committee about the proposal or matter in question.

Good practice on speaking at Planning Committee

Please read the appropriate report carefully before deciding what you want to say. The Committee Members will have read the report and you do not need to repeat report contents at the meeting. What you can add is information on points you have submitted that you may feel are missing from or are not adequately covered in the report - or you might wish to make a particular emphasis that you feel is not being adequately made. Some points to consider are:

- the Committee will listen to what you say, **but will not debate your opinions with you**
- the Chair will invite you to start speaking and your three minutes will be timed by the Member Services Officer
- concentrate on explaining the points that you (or the group you are representing) have already made in writing and what the most important of those are.
- you should not attempt to surprise the Committee with new information, photographs or additional written material. This should have already been given to the SDNPA planning officers in time for them to evaluate it professionally. Where possible, this should be at least 7 days before the meeting.
- the Planning Committee can and will only consider a planning application or other planning matters on what are sound and proper planning grounds.
- You should not discuss the applicant's past behaviour, nor speculate about what you think their possible future intentions may be.
- You may not discuss boundary disputes, covenants, reduction in property values or matters dealt with by other law (e.g. licensing).

What happens after I have spoken?

After public speaking is complete, the Planning Committee will consider the application or other matter. This will normally be debated in public **and there will be no further opportunities for non committee members to speak.**

For further information and advice about the public speaking arrangements, please contact:

The Member Services Officer,
South Downs National Park Authority
Rosemary's Parlour
North Street,
Midhurst,
West Sussex GU29 9SB
Telephone - 01730 811144