



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)

LOCAL COMMITTEE PROTOCOL

16 JUNE 2008

KEY ISSUE

To agree the Local Committee Protocol on public engagement.

SUMMARY

The Local Committee has previously agreed their Local Protocol on 11 June 2007, which provided for some minor variations from the Council's Constitution to improve public engagement at the Local Committee. The Protocol needs to be formally agreed by the Local Committee annually at the first meeting of the municipal year. The Local Protocol has been amended to include a guillotine limiting the duration of the Local Committee meetings.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Elmbridge) is asked to agree that:

- (i) The Protocol set out in Annex A be approved.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 According to the Council's Constitution:

“Local Committees shall comply fully with these Standing Orders (parts 2 and 3) except where they draw up local protocols allowing them discretion to make minor valuations to working practices which may only relate to arrangements for public engagement, including arrangements for the presentation of petitions, public questions time etc. and monitoring service performance locally.”

2 OPTIONS

2.1 The Committee can decide not to adopt the Local Protocol and work according to the Standing Orders on public engagement as set out in the Council's Constitution.

3 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The purpose of the Protocol is to ensure that the Local Committee is able to engage effectively with all residents in Elmbridge.

4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 That the Local Committee approve the Local Protocol.

5 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 To ensure the Local Committee is able to engage with all residents in Elmbridge flexibly.

6 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

6.1 The Local Protocol will continue to regulate the rules relating to public engagement in Elmbridge.

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LOCAL PROTOCOL FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN ELMBRIDGE

1. Standing Order 65 sets out the arrangements for presenting a petition to a meeting of Surrey County Council and states that 100 or more signatures are required to constitute a petition.
2. The Elmbridge Local Committee have agreed that if a group of local residents wish to bring a written request to the Elmbridge Local Committee, but do not have the 100 signatures necessary to meet the agreed definition of a petition, they can (at the discretion of the Chairman), present this as a representation to the Local Committee.
3. All other conditions set out in Standing Order 65 will still apply to representations made to the Elmbridge Local Committee except that notice must be given to the Area Director rather than the Chief Executive.
4. Standing Order 66 sets out the arrangements for the public to ask questions on matters being considered by the Committee. Standing Order 66.2 states that all questions should be submitted at least 7 days before the meeting
5. The Elmbridge Local Committee have agreed that recognised representatives of local organisations or elected Borough or Parish Councillors shall (at the discretion of the Chairman) be allowed to speak for up to three minutes from the public gallery on reports being considered by the Elmbridge Local Committee relevant to their constituency of interest.
6. Meetings will normally last no longer than two and a half hours, for example meetings commencing at 4pm would be expected to end at 6.30pm. If the business on the agenda is not concluded within this time, any outstanding items will be automatically deferred to the next meeting. The meetings may continue beyond two and a half hours at the Chairman's discretion.