

## SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S LOCAL COMMITTEE (TANDRIDGE)

### Revised Local Protocol - September 2009

#### Informal Questions & Comments

For the purposes of Standing Orders, the committee is considered to have adjourned for the open question session at the beginning of each section of each committee meeting. However, the rules governing formal questions at 66 .1 (below) will still be held to apply, whereby members of the public may address the committee for no more than three minutes and, while any questioner may request a written response, they may not speak further, unless specifically invited by the chairman.

During the meeting the chairman may ask the committee's consent to adjourn the meeting to allow members of the public the opportunity to comment on the subject of a given report. The maximum time available for this will be 2 minutes in total (extended at the chairman's discretion.)

[Note: Amendments to the original text are highlighted in bold and most references to the Cabinet have been deleted.]

### PART 3 OF STANDING ORDERS CABINET AND COMMITTEES: MEETINGS AND PROCEDURE

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN CABINET/COMMITTEE BUSINESS

##### Petitions

- 65.1 At the start of any **Local Committee (Tandridge) meeting**, any member of the public who is an elector of the Surrey County Council area may present a petition, containing **signatures from a minimum of 10 households in the affected area**, relating to a matter within the terms of reference of **the Committee**. The presentation of a petition on the following business will not be allowed:
- (a) matters which are "confidential" or "exempt" under the Local Government Access to information Act 1985; and
  - (b) planning applications.
- 65.2 A spokesman for the petitioners may address the committee on the petition for no more than 3 minutes, but thereafter may not speak further, **unless invited specifically by the chairman to clarify a point**. The petition may be referred without discussion to the next appropriate meeting of the committee at the discretion of the chairman. **The committee will not preclude an immediate response where possible.**
- 65.3 Notice must be **received by the local committee and partnership officer by 12 noon five clear working days prior to the committee meeting.**
- 65.4 No more than three petitions may be presented at any one meeting of the committee.
- 65.5 The committee may amalgamate within the first received petition other petitions of like effect on the same subject.

- 65.6 The presentation of a petition on the same or similar topic as one presented in the last six months, **but not in the same terms, will be allowed.**

**Public Question Time**

- 66.1 At the start of any ordinary meeting of the **Local Committee (Tandridge)** any member of the public who is an elector of the Surrey County Council area may ask one question relating to a matter within the committee's terms of reference. Questions will not be allowed on matters which are "confidential" or "exempt" under the Local Government Access to Information Act 1985 or on planning applications. ~~Questions should relate to general policy and not to detail.~~
- 66.2 Notice of **formal public questions** must be given in writing or by e-mail to the **local committee & partnership officer** at least 7 days before the meeting.
- 66.3 **The local committee & partnership officer** may, having consulted the questioner, reword any question received to bring it into proper form and to secure reasonable brevity. Copies will be circulated to **members of the committee** as appropriate.
- 66.4 Questions will be taken in the order in which they are received by the **local committee & partnership officer** and directed to the committee chairman. Questions will be asked and answered without discussion. Any member may decline to answer a question, provide a written reply or nominate another member to answer it on his/her behalf.
- 66.5 Following the initial reply by the committee chairman, one supplementary question may be asked by the questioner. The committee chairman may decline to answer a supplementary question.
- 66.6 The number of questions which may be asked at any one meeting may not exceed six and the chairman may exercise his/her discretion to regard a single question which has been divided into a number of sub-questions as several different questions within the allowable total number which may be asked at the meeting. The chairman may also disallow questions which are repetitious
- 66.7 Questions which are received after the first six to be received will be held over to the following meeting or dealt with in writing at the chairman's discretion.

**[NOTE: Since April 2009 the following paragraphs relating to Public Speaking at meetings of the Planning and Regulatory Committee also apply to local committees but only in relation to Public Rights of Way.]**

- 67.1 Members of the public and their representatives may address the Planning and Regulatory Committee on any planning applications and all applications relating to public rights of way. This Standing Order (67.1) also applies to applications relating to public rights of way being considered by local committees.

- 67.2 Speakers must first register their wish to speak by telephone or in writing to the **local committee and partnership officer** by 12 noon one working day before a meeting stating on which items(s) they wish to speak.
- 67.3 Only those people who have previously made written representations in response to a Rights of Way application will be entitled to speak.
- 67.4 Speakers must declare any financial or personal interest they may have in the application.
- 67.5 Registration of speakers will be on a first come first served basis and speakers will be taken in the order in which they are registered, with the first five registered being entitled to speak. Where more than one person has registered an interest to speak, the subsequent speakers will be entitled to speak first if the first named speaker is not in attendance five minutes before the start of the meeting. Representations can be combined if necessary. A reserve list will also be maintained if necessary.
- 67.6 The time allowed for public speaking will be limited to 15 minutes for objectors and 15 minutes for supporters per item, and to 3 minutes per speaker.
- 67.7 Only if a member of the public or their representative speaks objecting will the applicant/agent be allowed to speak and then only to respond to the points raised by the objectors, and will be limited to 3 minutes for each objector who has spoken.
- 67.8 No additional information may be circulated by speakers at the meeting and they will have no right to speak or question Members or officers once they have made their submission.
- 67.9 Speeches will precede the Committee's formal discussion on each application requiring the Committee's attention.
- 67.10 The right to speak will only be exercised at the first meeting at which the application is considered and will not normally be the subject of further presentations at any subsequent meeting unless significant changes have taken place after a deferral by the committee.

Janet Johnson  
Local Committee & Partnership Officer  
September 2009