

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY ON 1 NOVEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: Public Speaking Rules for the Planning Committee

REPORT AUTHOR: Neil Crowther, Group Head of Planning
DATE: October 2021
EXTN: 01903 737839
AREA: Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In re-writing the Constitution, it has become apparent that an error in re-drafting has occurred in respect of the Public Speaking Rules for the Planning Committee in Part 8, Section 3. This report seeks to correct this error and it makes a request to change the deadlines in place for those wishing to register to speak.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Working Party is requested to recommend to Full Council:

That the Public Speaking Rules for the Planning Committee as set out in Part 8, Section 3 of the Constitution at Paragraphs 11 – Public Speaking at Planning Committees are amended as set out below – deletions have been shown using ~~striketrough~~ and additions are shown using **bold**:

11.3 Any person who has made a written representation on an application and wishes to speak must register their request by 5.00 pm on the ~~Monday~~**Friday** before the meeting, by phoning 01903 737512 or by email. It is the responsibility of the individual to check whether the application is to be considered by the Planning Committee [one should be able to register to be automatically notified when the agenda for the Committee is published].

11.4 There is a time limit of 3 minutes for each ~~group of~~ speaker i.e. Ward Members, Parish Councils, objectors, applicants/agents or supporters. Objectors & supporters include residents groups, community groups or interest groups. A supporter must be an independent third party such as a local resident, not a relative of the applicant or the applicant themselves if their appointed agent is already speaking.

~~11.5 A lead speaker can be nominated, or agreement reached between speakers about splitting speak for up to the 3 minutes between them, otherwise the 3 minutes will be equally divided between all the registered speakers in each group. The order of speaking will be as follows:~~ **The categories in the table in the Constitution to be remain unchanged**

11.7 In the event that more than two speakers have registered to speak in categories 2, 3, or 4, the first two registered persons appearing on the register only will be allowed to speak. ~~If one or both of the persons entitled to speak does not attend or confirms that they agree to the next registered person speaking in their place, then the next registered person will be allowed to speak in their place.~~ Prior to the commencement of the meeting, attendance of those who have registered to speak will be listed. The Chair's discretion shall apply in the event of any dispute in the matter of which persons may speak.

1 BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 In re-writing the Constitution, it has become apparent that an error in re-drafting has occurred in respect of public speaking rules for the Planning Committee in Part 8, Section 3. This report seeks to correct this error. Paragraph 11.4 now refers to 'each group of speakers' and Paragraph 11.5 refers to public speaking being a maximum of three minutes for each group of speakers and that time would need to be divided up. This is a change from the previously adopted public speaking rules.
- 1.2 At the meeting of Planning Committee on 21 July 2021, the Committee expressed its strong view that this re-drafting was not agreed and that the public speaking rules be amended to allow for 3 minutes for each speaker. The Constitution sets out that a maximum of two supporters/objectors are allowed.
- 1.3 Also, within this section, Paragraph 11.3 asks the Working Party to consider changing the deadline currently in place for those registering to speak at the Committee from the Monday before the meeting to the Friday before the meeting. When the Council temporarily changed its Meeting Procedure Rules for virtual meetings this slightly earlier deadline was put into place [5.00 pm on the Friday] as this provided speakers and Officers more time to collate speakers and to sort the submission of their statements. As there are still an element of public speakers still not wishing to physically attend meetings and continue to request to have their statements read out on their behalf, this earlier deadline has proved to work well and so the request is being made to have this earlier deadline retained.
- 1.4 In order to rectify this error and the public speaking registration deadline as they currently appear in the public speaking rules, the following minor changes are required:

*11.3 Any person who has made a written representation on an application and wishes to speak must register their request by 5.00 pm on the ~~Monday~~ **Friday** before the meeting, by phoning 01903 737512 or by email. It is the responsibility of the individual to check whether the application is to be considered by the Planning Committee [one should be able to register to be automatically notified when the agenda for the Committee is published].*

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11.7 In the event that more than two speakers have registered to speak in categories 2, 3, or 4, the first two registered persons appearing on the register only will be allowed to speak. ~~If one or both of the persons entitled to speak does not attend or confirms that they agree to the next registered person speaking in their place, then the next registered person will be allowed to speak in their place.~~ Prior to the commencement of the meeting, attendance of those who have registered to speak will be listed. The Chair's discretion shall apply in the event of any dispute in the matter of which persons may speak.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

To amend the public speaking rules within the Constitution in line with the wording in this report.

3. OPTIONS:

To leave the Constitution as worded and only allow a maximum of 3 minutes for each group of speakers.

To not permit the change in deadline for public speakers wishing to speak at the Planning Committee.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		x
Relevant District Ward Councillors		x
Other groups/persons (please specify)		x
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal		x
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		x
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		x

Sustainability		x
Asset Management/Property/Land		x
Technology		x
Other (please explain)		

6. IMPLICATIONS:

To not accept the recommendations may lead to confusion at future meetings of the Planning Committee.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To correct an error in the Constitution at Part 8 – Section 3 – Planning Protocol in respect of Paragraphs 11.0 – Public Speaking at Planning Committee.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Minutes from Planning Committee 21 July 2021

[Printed minutes 21st-Jul-2021 14.00 Planning Committee.pdf \(arun.gov.uk\)](#)