

SOUTH HEIGHTON PARISH COUNCIL PROTOCOL FOR REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

1. Introduction

1.1 South Heighton Parish Council has representatives on a variety of outside bodies within the local area.

Representation may be for a number of reasons such as:

- The work of the outside body or group directly affecting council business, services, land or property
- The body or group specifically requesting a council representative
- It being considered key that the council is aware of the work the body or group is undertaking due to its impact on the town / village, its residents or visitors
- The body or group being an opportunity to liaise with other external companies or authorities in the interests of the town / village, its residents or visitors
- The council having a financial interest or commitment with the body or group and/or its function

1.2 The outside bodies generally fall into one of the following categories:

- A local voluntary community group or organisation
- A local charity
- A larger association that has an impact on the business of the council or town / village
- A liaison meeting with other companies or local authorities
- A management committee/society managing either council owned land or property, or that the council is in some way financially connected with
- A body that can offer town / village improvements

2. The role of the council representative

2.1 A council representative represents the council as a whole, rather than acting in a personal capacity. This means that the representative must always act in accordance with council policies and procedures; the Member's Code of Conduct and bear in mind the limitations of the council as a corporate body.

2.2 The representative allows its outside body to gain access to the expertise and knowledge of the council and also ensure the council is kept up to date with the actions and future plans of the body. The aim is that all interested parties are working together and communicating effectively for the benefit of the town / village, its residents and visitors.

2.3 The representative should attend as many meetings of an outside body as they are reasonably able and send apologies if they are not able to attend. They may ask another councillor to substitute for them in their absence if the outside body is willing.

2.4 Council representatives will be appointed at each annual meeting of the council, usually held in May.

3. Limitations

3.1 It is vital that the representative and the body itself understand the limitations of the council representative.

3.2 A council representative cannot commit the council resources or support, whether financial or 'in kind' to an outside body. If anything of this nature is requested it should be bought back to the council, through the Clerk, for consideration.

4. Reporting

4.1 In order for both the outside body and council to benefit from the representation it is important that regular updates are reported back to council by the representative. The methods considered most effective for reporting back are:

- Minutes of meetings – any minutes of meetings received by a representative should be sent to the Clerk for forwarding on to all councillors, unless they are considered confidential
- Updates to council and/or committee meetings – if the representative feels there is a matter that needs to be considered by council or a committee then a report should be prepared and sent to the Clerk to circulate with the agenda for the appropriate meeting.
- Email updates – representatives should forward the Clerk any email updates from the outside body, for forwarding to all councillors.

5. Change of representation

5.1 An outside body is free to request an alternate council representative on the understanding that the replacement will be chosen by the council, not by the outside body. Repeated non-attendance at meetings without good reason offers valid grounds for an outside body to request an alternate council representative.

5.2 An outside body is free to inform the council at any time that council representation is no longer required, if its constitution allows it to do so.

5.3 A representative wishing to stand down from their role should first inform the outside body itself and then the Clerk. Where possible, the Clerk will invite another councillor to substitute on the outside body until a representative can be formally appointed by the council.