

For further information, or to register for public speaking, please contact: Customer Services, Bracknell Forest Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ

Telephone:  
01344 352000

Email:  
customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Car parking is usually available at Easthampstead House in the evenings.

## What will happen at the Commission or Panel meeting?

1 Registered speakers must arrive at the meeting venue (usually the Council Chamber at Easthampstead House) at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the Commission or Panel meeting and report to the Democratic Services officer who will be present. If you fail to do this, you may not be permitted to speak.

2 Copies of questions or statements received will be circulated to members of the O&S Commission or Panel concerned, and will be made available to members of the public who attend the meeting.

3 Once the meeting has reached the agenda item on public participation, the Chairman will invite each registered speaker in turn to speak for 3 minutes to outline his/her views. This time limit will be strictly enforced and you must cease speaking whenever instructed to do so by the Chairman, who

may allow a discussion and questions to be raised on your statement. The Councillors and officers present will treat members of the public with courtesy and respect and you must reciprocate by behaving appropriately for a meeting of a local authority, and not make any remarks which are insulting, offensive, defamatory or inflammatory. All reasonable help and support will be made available to those who wish to use this scheme, including allowing you to use the PA system in the Council Chamber.

- 4 The speaker will not be allowed to ask supplementary questions of Councillors, officers or others at the meeting.
- 5 The Members of the Commission or Panel may ask the speaker, through the Chairman, for clarification of any points raised.
- 6 The Chairman may choose to ask Council officers to comment on any points raised before the Commission or Panel proceeds with its deliberations.

## What happens after the meeting?

The members of the O&S Commission or Panel concerned, or officers, may contact you afterwards to seek your further input. You will be informed of any action taken.

# Speaking at Overview and Scrutiny meetings



This leaflet explains the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) public participation scheme which allows members of the public to speak at meetings of the O&S Commission and Panels. O&S is the principal means of ensuring transparent democratic accountability for the running of the Council.

The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Public Participation Scheme gives members of the public the opportunity to tell Councillors directly about the things that concern them. All issues raised by the public under this scheme will be given careful consideration.

## When is public speaking permitted?

### Speaking is only permitted when:

- 1 Notification (including by telephone or e-mail) of a request to speak at the O&S Commission or Panel meeting is received by Customer Services by 12 noon at least 3 clear working days prior to the day of the meeting;
- 2 The notification indicates the subject to be raised and the name of the person who intends to speak;
- 3 The subject is judged by the Council to fall within the Scheme (see over). Subjects will be excluded only in exceptional circumstances, and the reasons for rejection will be explained.
- 4 The time provided for public speaking has not been over-subscribed for the meeting in question. If it has, the Chairman will decide whether to curtail or defer questions to the following meeting, or exceptionally to lengthen the time for public speaking.

## What falls outside the scheme?

**Some matters fall outside the scope of this scheme. These are:**

- 1 Personal circumstances where it would not be appropriate for details to be aired openly in public.
- 2 Individual complaints. The Council has a complaints procedure which must be accessed instead.
- 3 Matters appropriate to one of the Council's regulatory or decision making bodies.
- 4 Other issues of any kind which have been formally published and where specific arrangements are made for the public to express their views.
- 5 Matters unrelated to the remit of the relevant O&S Commission or Panel.
- 6 The Chairman may also reject a submission if it:
  - is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
  - is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
  - is substantially the same as a submission which has been put to and considered by a meeting of the O&S Commission or an O&S Panel in the past six months;
  - is about the subject of an appeal or review procedure that has not yet been concluded; or
  - requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

## How do I arrange to speak at the meeting?

Only residents of the Borough of Bracknell Forest or representatives of a business

operating in the Borough may speak at an O&S meeting. To speak you must register with the Council's Customer Services section by 12 noon at least 3 clear working days before the day of the meeting (the contact details are overleaf). You must give your name, address, contact telephone number(s), and your agreement that your name and a summary of the subject to be raised can be published. Only one person may speak about each submission at the meeting.

In the case of a statement on behalf of an organisation or more than one person, you must identify the organisation and others who are party to the submission.

Speakers are registered on a "first-come" basis and the Chairman will decide on the maximum number of speakers in the light of time available at the meeting (usually a maximum of 20 minutes).

Consequently, it cannot be guaranteed that everyone who applies will be allowed to speak at a particular meeting.

If you have any special needs, please advise Customer Services at least one working day before the meeting.

## Where is the meeting?

The O&S Commission and Panels usually meet at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber at Easthampstead House, Bracknell.

View information about O&S on the Council's website: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)