

Climate and Ecological Emergencies Advisory Committee procedure rules (South only)

Purpose of the committee

1. The committee is an advisory committee with no delegated decision making.
2. To advise Cabinet on matters relating to the climate emergency and ecological crisis including, but not limited to:
 - (a) Providing community leadership on the climate emergency and sustainability, facilitating and engaging public sector partners, businesses, community groups and the public.
 - (b) Advising on how the council can contribute to the delivery of:
 - national legally-binding targets on the climate emergency
 - countywide targets on the climate emergency through the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership (OEP)
 - the council's own targets on the climate emergency
 - the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy Delivery Plan
 - (c) Reviewing and making recommendations on ways in which the council can reduce damage to the global and local environment through its policies and practices.
 - (d) Reviewing the internal operations of the council with a view to promoting sustainability, adopting best practice and strengthening the council's environmental performance.
 - (e) Making recommendations on bids for external funding relating to the climate emergency.

Membership

3. The committee will comprise 12 councillors appointed annually by Council and will be politically balanced. The Council will appoint substitutes with an equivalent political balance. The chair or the vice-chair of Council shall not act as chair or vice-chair of the committee.

Time and place of meetings

4. The time and place of meetings will be notified in the agenda for each meeting. The committee meetings will take place in accordance with an agreed programme. In addition, extra meetings may be scheduled as required.

Notice of, and agenda for, meetings

5. The head of legal and democratic will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting. At least five clear working days before a meeting, the head of legal and democratic will publish the agenda on the council's website and make it available for public inspection at the council's offices, except where the matter under

consideration contains confidential or exempt information. The agenda will set out the date, time and location of the meeting, and will specify the business to be transacted. The agenda may contain reports about matters for the committee's consideration. Where not all reports are available with the agenda they will be published as soon as they become available. Committee agendas will also be available for six years after a meeting.

Chairing meetings

6. The chair (or vice-chair in their absence), appointed by Annual Council each year, or by the committee if a vacancy arises, will preside over meetings and lead and guide the work of the committee. The chair may choose to indicate how they wish to be addressed, according to personal preference.

Substitutes

7. The council will appoint the same number of preferred substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seats on the committee. Each political group will be entitled to up to a maximum of three named substitutes where it has fewer than three members on the committee. A political group need not appoint to all available substitute places.
8. Substitute members will have all the powers and duties of any ordinary member of the committee but will not be able to exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the person they are substituting. These powers and duties will only be attained by the substitute members from the start until the close of the meeting at which they are substituting.
9. Substitute members may attend meetings:
 - (a) to take the place of the ordinary member for whom they are the substitute;
 - (b) where the ordinary member will be absent for the whole of the meeting; and
 - (c) after notifying the head of legal and democratic before the start of the meeting.
10. Where possible, absent members must be substituted by a preferred substitute who has been named, but where this is not possible any member of the same political group may act as a substitutes.

Quorum

11. A quarter of the members of the committee must be present for a legally valid committee meeting to be held. During any meeting, if the chair counts the number of councillors present and declares there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn immediately. Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the chair. If he/she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next meeting.
12. If there is no quorum at the published start time for the meeting, a period of 15 minutes will be allowed. If there remains no quorum at the expiry of this period, the meeting shall be declared null and void. The business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the chair. If he/she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next meeting.

Duration of meetings

13. No meeting shall exceed two and a half hours in duration unless the committee, prior to the expiry of the period, vote for the meeting to continue for a further period not exceeding 30 minutes. Remaining business will be considered at the next meeting.

Meeting procedure

14. The committee shall consider the following business:
 - (a) To receive any apologies and notifications of substitutes;
 - (b) Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests;
 - (c) Minutes of the previous meeting; and
 - (d) The business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting.

Voting

MAJORITY

15. Any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those councillors voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

CHAIR'S CASTING VOTE

16. If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the chair will have a second or casting vote. There will be no restriction on how the chair chooses to exercise a casting vote. If the chair does not exercise his/her casting vote, the motion being considered will be deemed to be lost.

SHOW OF HANDS

17. Unless a recorded vote is requested under rule 18, the chair will take the vote by show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

RECORDED VOTE

18. If three councillors present at the meeting request it, the names of those voting for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the minutes. If a recorded vote is requested, the vote shall be taken alphabetically.

RIGHT TO REQUIRE AN INDIVIDUAL VOTE TO BE RECORDED

19. Where any councillor requests it immediately after the vote is taken, their vote will be so recorded in the minutes to show whether they voted for or against the motion or abstained from voting.

Attendance by others

20. The committee or the chair of the committee may invite people to address them, discuss issues and/or answer questions. They may for example wish to hear from residents, stakeholders and councillors and officers and may invite such people to attend.

Public participation

21. The public may address a committee meeting by asking a question, making a statement or presenting a petition. Every question, statement or petition must relate to an agenda item for that meeting. Public questions, statements or petitions will only be accepted at a special meeting of the committee if they relate to the item due to be discussed at that meeting.
22. An application to speak must be made in writing or by email to democratic services democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk by 5.00 pm on the last working day before the day of the meeting. Persons who have registered to speak may appoint someone to speak on their behalf provided that written authority from the person who has registered to speak is given to democratic services before the meeting commences.
23. The public address session will be limited to 15 minutes. No address shall exceed three minutes. Where the number of speakers exceeds the time available, each speaker's time will be reduced.
24. Questions or statements will be considered by the meeting in the order that they are registered with democratic services. Where multiple questions or statements are received from different people on the same subject, the chair may group these together. There is no provision to ask a supplementary question.
25. If an answer cannot be given to a question at a meeting, a written answer will be provided.
26. The chair of the meeting may suspend the operation of speaking rules at any time if he/she considers it necessary for the purpose of maintaining order.

Minutes

27. The chair will sign the minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting. The chair will move that the minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record. Only the accuracy of the minutes may be discussed.

Record of attendance

28. All councillors present must sign the attendance list provided at the meeting.

Exclusion of the public

29. The public and press may only be excluded from attending a committee meeting for the consideration of confidential or exempt business or under rule 34 and 35 (disturbance by the public).

Councillors' conduct

30. If more than one councillor speaks, the chair will ask one to speak. Other councillors must remain silent whilst a councillor is speaking unless they wish to make a point of order or a point of personal explanation.

CHAIR SPEAKING

31. When the chair speaks during a debate, any councillor speaking at the time must stop.

COUNCILLOR NOT TO BE HEARD FURTHER

32. If a councillor persistently disregards the ruling of the chair by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs business, the chair may move that the councillor be not heard further. If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

COUNCILLOR TO LEAVE THE MEETING

33. If the councillor continues to behave improperly after such a motion is carried, the chair may move that either the councillor leaves the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period. If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

GENERAL DISTURBANCE

34. If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the chair may adjourn the meeting for as long as he/she thinks necessary.

Disturbance by the public

REMOVAL OF MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

35. If a member of the public interrupts the meeting, the chair will invite the person to stop. If they continue to interrupt, the chair will order their removal from the meeting room.

CLEARANCE OF PART OF MEETING ROOM

36. If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the chair may call for that part to be cleared and if necessary, adjourn the meeting for as long as he/she thinks necessary.

Attendance by other district councillors at meetings

37. Any councillor may attend a meeting of the committee. With the consent of the chair he/she may speak, but not vote, on any item on the agenda for the meeting.