

Committee Model Review Group

Thursday 27th February 2025

Agenda item - Public Forum



Public Questions and Statements should be submitted via our webform:

www.bristol.gov.uk/publicforum

Up to 30 minutes is allowed for this item. When submitting a question or statement please indicate whether you are planning to attend the meeting to present your statement and/or ask your question.

Questions

Written public questions must be received by 5.00 pm, at least 3 clear working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting, this means that questions must be received at the latest by 5.00 pm on Friday 21st February 25. Any individual can submit up to 3 written questions.

Written replies to questions will be available on the Council's website at least one hour before the meeting. At the meeting, questioners will be permitted to ask up to 2 oral supplementary questions.

Statements

Written statements must be received at latest by 12.00 noon, at least 2 working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting, this means that statements must be received at the latest by 12.00 noon on Tuesday 25th February 25.

Petitions

Details of the wording of any petitions, and the number of signatories to petitions must be received at latest by 12.00 noon, at least 2 working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting, this means that petition details must be received at the latest by 12.00 noon on Tuesday 25th February 25. Please email petition details to democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk



Questions

Ref No	Name
PQ01	Chris McEvoy

Statements

Ref No	Name
PS01	Clive Stevens



QUESTIONS

QUESTION PQ 01

Question submitted by: Chris McEvoy

Why Are Meeting Attendance Details Not Being Updated?

I have built a site called "Bristol Uncovered" that takes publicly available data from Bristol City Council (and other sources) and publishes it in a form that is more easily consumable by residents (and Councillors).

Whilst building this site I can see that there are 18 Committee Meetings held since January 2024 where the Attendance Details have not been updated and the Attendance Details sheet shows the invitees as "Expected", even though the meeting has been held.

2 of the Committee Meetings were only held in the last week, so I can understand why these may have not been updated yet, but that does not explain the other 16 Meetings not being updated. One example would be the "Area Committee 06" Meeting held on 09/12/2024 which shows all of the invitees as "Expected".

The Council should provide accurate and up to date information if it is to keep residents informed and engaged in the democratic process. I would ask this Committee to ensure that all Meeting Information is accurate and updated in a timely manner.

Response

Thank you for your question. Please accept our apologies for the oversight in reporting the attendance of elected Members at our public meetings. We will ensure this information is updated as soon as possible.



STATEMENTS

STATEMENT PS01

Statement submitted by: Clive Stevens

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I do hope you decide to retain the Escalation Panel procedure broadly as described in Appendix/Annex 2.

The idea of a Panel was developed before the May 2024 elections by your predecessor Working Group and I understand some other councils have a similar appeals process.

Please forgive me a brief dip into political history. The Escalation Panel seems a way of avoiding something called “tyranny by majority”. That phrase was coined nearly 200 years ago and credited to political thinkers like Alexis de Toqueville and a little later by John Stuart Mill who were concerned about the 51% having absolute power over minorities. Democracy is, as we know, the worst system of government except for all the others, something that Winston Churchill apparently said. So, the reasoning behind appeal systems like an Escalation Panel comes from a strong pedigree of political thought – do please keep the Panel.

Back to the present: Apparently, Bristol’s Escalation Panel has only been used once so far, that seems a measure of success. It’s true value will be seen if ever Bristol returns to a one-party regime like it has been for many of the last 25 years.

I note it cannot be used if a decision is urgent. I can see the reasons for that but it could become a loophole.

So please consider leaving the Escalation Panel much as it is.

