

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE

28 JANUARY 2016

**REFERENCE FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**1. CLARITY ON THE POSITION OF MEMBERS OF PUBLIC OR EXTERNAL
BODIES SPEAKING AT SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- 1.1 At their meetings of 6 October and 11 November 2015 the Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee considered the draft Neighbourhood Plans from North Loose Residents Association and Staplehurst Parish Council. Representatives from the North Loose Residents Association and Staplehurst Parish Council requested to speak to the Committee and respond to questions regarding their Neighbourhood Plans.
- 1.2 The Chairman of the Committee sought advice from the Head of Legal Services who advised not to allow external speakers at meetings as it would set a precedence to others wanting to speak on strategic planning matters in the future.
- 1.3 At the meeting of 11 November 2015 a point of order was raised under the minutes of the meeting for 6 October 2015. Although the minutes were a verbatim record of what was said regarding members of the public speaking at Committee meetings, it was suggested it was worded in such a way it may leave members of the public thinking they are not allowed to speak at Committee meetings. The Council's Constitution does say members of the public can speak at meetings at the discretion of the Chairman.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 That the Strategic Planning and Sustainable Transport Committee make reference to the Democracy Committee to clarify the position on members of the public or external bodies speaking at Service Committee meetings and whether or not the decision to allow this was at the discretion of the Chairman.