



Media Release

Deputations Procedure agreed by Council

Community groups and organisations will now have the chance to speak at Council meetings following the approval of a new Deputations Procedure.

Councillors gave the new process their full support at Thursday's Full Council meeting, describing the move as a further step towards improved transparency and engagement with the public.

Stirling Council Leader, Cllr Scott Farmer, said: "This is another example of 'you said, we did' from this Council and I'm really pleased this procedure is being introduced so quickly.

"We're giving members of the public direct access to local democracy and a chance to speak to decision-makers first-hand about proposals which come before our committees. It's a positive step forward and I'm looking forward to seeing it in action."

A deputation procedure grants a group or organisation the power to speak at a committee or council meeting if they have a strong view on a proposed outcome recommended in a report.

Council officers prepare a broad range of reports for committee and panel meetings, with recommendations for the Council to agree a certain course of action, such as approve funding for a project or introduce a new policy, for example.

The new Deputations Procedure allows members of the public to:

- Speak against/in support of a proposal
- Offer alternative ideas
- Provide information intended to influence the decision.

The Procedure means Councillors will be able to hear at first-hand the views of people who may be affected by a decision they are about to make.

Depute Leader, Cllr Chris Kane, said: "This is an important step in opening up local democracy. The public asked for this and we've delivered with a quick turnaround.

"Over the past year we've made our Council meetings accessible online, reaching new audiences, and hopefully communities will continue to engage in the process and enjoy the benefits of increased access to Council business and the decisions taken in the chamber that affect all of our lives."

The process was first considered in June following a public petition, which urged the Council to offer "a much more straight forward and accessible pathway for local democratic engagement" by introducing a Deputations Procedure.

The move comes a year after the launch of Engage Stirling, which provided the public with a dedicated online engagement platform for all Council consultations, and the option to petition the Council on matters of business through digital means while offices were shut during lockdown.

Around 3,500 users have signed up to the platform, with more than 25 consultations published in the past 12 months.

Details of the new Procedure are also now available on the Stirling Council website and will be subject to a 12-month review.