

Requests by Interested Parties to participate in a further Open Floor Hearing.
Claudia Fisher 12 March 24

I attended the Preliminary Meeting on 27 Feb 24 and the Open Floor Hearing on 28 February 24 and spoke at both. At the PM I outlined my concern at the fact that many key issues such as Climate Change, Environment and Water were not included in the Issue Specific hearings.

I am a Green District councillor and the ExA will have noted that the only political party represented at these two hearings were Greens. So I am now registering my disappointment and dismay at the Climate Change hearing being scheduled for 1 May 24. Not only is it likely, given the enormity of the issues, that there will not be enough time to cover all of the issues on weds 1st May - it is also just one day before 28 local authorities go to the polls across the SE and there is a one in four year London Mayoral Election - in the SE there are around 57) local seats are up for election - and there is still a distinct possibility that a General Election will be called for 2 May also.

To schedule the Climate Change hearing on that day and a potential Open Floor hearing on 2nd May - local election day - in my view is nothing short of undemocratic. This should be moved if a General Election is called on that day, and in any case should be shifted as it clashes with local and mayoral elections.

The choice I am presented with is to continue to support Greens to be elected for the next four years to represent their residents and the environment OR to speak up for three vital minutes at an Issue Specific or Open Floor Hearing,

This incomprehensible scheduling decision puts me firmly between a rock and a hard place and I am very, very unhappy about it. Would leaving it for one week really have made such a difference to the running of the process? I would really appreciate it if you would consider delaying all hearings from the w/c 29 April to the following week or a later date in the process. If this isn't possible, and I will repeat that I find this decision not just undemocratic but actually anti-democratic, then I would like to register to speak remotely at both the Climate Hearing on 1st May and the Open Floor on 2nd May.

I would also like to ask for further Open Floor hearings, the duration for ISH7 on May 1st 2024 is likely not be sufficient to cover all environmental issues - there are very many. I am assuming this would be separate from time to follow up on issues covered already (e.g. transport, noise). I believe there should be time for follow-up Issue Specific Hearings on the topics covered from 29th February to 6th March. . I specifically request that the ExA schedule two further issue specific hearings at a later date - one on Biodiversity, Ecology and Arboriculture and another on Water Environment (my preference). - I have significant concerns about the potential damage caused if Gatwick's Northern Runway proceeds for both areas which I will outline in written submission.

Thank you. Claudia Fisher
Claudia Fisher, Councillor for Storrington and Washington (Horsham District Council)
and Parham Parish Councillor.