



Hamilton

ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROCEDURAL HANDBOOK

An advisory body Council established to advise on specific areas of interest, with members of the public making up more than fifty (50) percent of the membership and Council members making up the rest.

**Prepared By:
Office of the City Clerk, Legislative Section
Updated: September 2018**

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Meeting Procedures

The rules of procedure as set out in By-law 18-[REDACTED], A By-Law To Govern the Proceedings of Council and Committees of Council, shall be observed in all proceedings and apply to all Committees. Rules of procedure are intended to help the group conduct its business fairly and efficiently.

Rules for a meeting are designed to achieve the following basic meeting principles:

1. Every member has rights equal to every other member.
2. The will of the majority must be carried out.
3. Only one topic will be considered at a time.

The Role of the Committee and its members is to provide “advice” to Council through the appropriate Standing Committee on matters that are related to the specific mandate of the Committee (not for purposes of lobbying for special causes on behalf of the City or themselves).

Rules of Procedures at a Glance

1. Sequence of steps in having a motion voted on:

- Moved – a proposal from the floor.
- Seconded – another member feels the proposal is worth discussing.
- Stated – by the Chair or Secretary. Wording is recorded properly and everyone understands the intent of the proposal.
- Discussed – every member who wishes to speak addresses the chair and must speak only to the motion/amendment on the floor.
- Amended – if required, changing the wording of the motion by: adding or deleting words, replacing with different words.
- Called – after sufficient discussion, either a motion to end debate or a vote (if amended, the amendment first and then the main motion as amended) is called at the discretion of the Chair.
- Restated (if necessary) – ensures everyone understands what is being voted on.
- Voted – Chair calls each option: “All in favour”, “opposed”?
- Declared – results of the vote are announced by the Chair “carried” or “defeated”.

2. Amending a motion

- An amendment cannot convert a motion to its direct negative (cannot change the intent of the original motion).
- An amendment must be pertinent or relevant to the topic in the main motion i.e. a motion to “commend the President for his work with the Chapter” may not be amended by striking the word “commend” with “condemn”.

Agenda Preparation

An agenda is a step-by-step outline of the issues to be covered at a meeting.

The following agenda outline is often used:

1. Changes to the Agenda
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
4. Consent Items
5. Presentations
6. Discussion Items
7. Notices of Motion
8. Motions
9. Other Business
10. Adjournment

Feel free to be flexible with the agenda planning. Keep the following points in mind:

- The early part of the meeting is usually the most lively and creative – items requiring mental energy, bright ideas and clear heads should appear early on the agenda.
- Put time limits on agenda items to help focus discussion and encourage decision making.

A sample template for an agenda is attached as Appendix “A”, for your reference.

Minute Preparation

The purpose of the minutes is to:

- Provide a permanent record of the proceedings of a meeting.
- Keep track of progress.
- Inform absent members.
- Provide a useful guide for evaluating a committee’s work.
- Minutes should be as brief as possible, yet maintain their accuracy.

Basic set of minutes should include:

1. Name of the Committee.
2. When (date and time) and where the committee met.
3. Who was present/absent.
4. Adoption of last meeting’s minutes.
5. Matters discussed and any decisions made:
 - Record motions, the mover (who) made the motion, who seconded it, and whether it was carried or defeated, and any members who wished to be recorded as opposed to the motion.
 - General discussion (briefly).

After the Committee minutes are approved by the Committee, the minutes are submitted to the appropriate Standing Committee for receipt. The approved minutes are to be submitted each month to the respective Legislative Coordinator to the Standing Committee that the Committee reports to.

A sample template for the minutes is attached as Appendix “B”, for your reference.

Report Preparation

If the Committee is making a recommendation that requires the approval of the Standing Committee, then a Citizen Committee Report is prepared for the Standing Committee’s consideration. The respective Legislative Coordinator and the Staff Liaison to the Committee can assist in the preparation of the Report.

A sample template for the Committee report is attached as Appendix “C”, for your reference.

Common Procedural Questions

1. How can a meeting start without a quorum?

A quorum is the minimum number of eligible voters that must be present at a meeting to conduct business. This number is half of the membership rounded up to the nearest whole number.

If no quorum is present, then:

- The Chair may dismiss the group 30 minutes after the time appointed for the meeting, or
- The group may agree to proceed informally with the agenda, awaiting ratification of any decisions at a future meeting, or
- The group may discuss any items of interest, but make no decisions.
- The Committee Secretary shall record the names of the Committee members present in the minutes of the meeting.

2. After considerable debate, we still are not ready to vote on the motion. What can we do?

- A Motion to defer the matter until the next meeting may be in order, so that more information can be gathered.
- A Motion to defer temporarily allows a motion to be set aside until later in the meeting, allowing more urgent business to be dealt with, permitting amendments to be drafted, or allowing time for implications of the motion to be checked.
- The Motion may be withdrawn at the request of its mover, at any time before decision or amendment.

3. Closing debate on a Motion.

Someone “calling the question” from the floor indicates that they want the motion put to a vote, which needs to be seconded and cannot interrupt the list of first time speakers. Only if the Chair feels that the motion has had reasonable debate and most members are ready to vote, can they call the question (ie: “All those in favour?”, “Opposed?”, etc.)

4. Encouraging an alternative motion.

Sometimes while one motion is being considered, an alternative motion might be the better one. How can it be presented?

- (a) The movers of the original motion are asked if they will withdraw their motion, with the consent of a majority of the members.
- (b) If the original motion is withdrawn, then the alternative motion can be put forward.
- (c) If the original motion is not withdrawn, then the movers of the alternative motion inform the Committee that their motion will be moved if the original is defeated. They thus urge the members to vote against the original motion.

The Consensus Method of Decision Making in Groups

The following process can be used throughout the meeting for every issue the group needs to discuss.

Step 1

Describe the issue before the Committee:

- State the issue clearly and concisely. If it is complex, then write it out.

Step 2

Gather all information relevant to the issue:

- All pertinent facts and ideas about the issue need to be heard in order to make an informed decision.
- Distinguish between facts and opinions.

A decision can often be made right away. However, action may need to be deferred so that additional information can be gathered.

Step 3

List all possible solutions or actions:

- Explore alternatives.
- Be creative. Use brainstorming techniques to generate new ideas, from every member.

Step 4

Choose the best possible solution:

Use a process of elimination; refine and combine parts of your list in Step 3.

Step 5

Make a decision:

- Formulate a statement of general agreement or consensus, or
- Develop a motion and vote on it.
- Then, record the results in the minutes.

Roles and Responsibilities of Committee Members

Members of the Committee are encouraged to make themselves familiar with the Terms of Reference, the Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations of New Members and mandated activities of the Committee(s) to which they are making application to.

Members of the Committee:

- (i) are required to attend and participate fully in the meetings;
- (ii) who miss more than three meetings during their term without Committee approval, may be subject to replacement on the Committee and may not be eligible for re-appointment; and
- (iii) upon appointment, are required to sign a Committee Member Acknowledgement Form (attached hereto as Appendix “E”), provided by the City Clerk’s Office, **prior to attending the first meeting** of the Committee to which they are appointed. Such declaration will remain on file in the Office of the City Clerk for the duration of the citizen’s appointment.

Members of the Committee are bound by the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* found at the following link: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m50>.

Members of the Committee are to comply with the Hamilton Advisory Committee/Task Force Code of Conduct (attached hereto as Appendix “G”).

Role of the Chair

As the Chair of a meeting, you have several important roles: knowing the group, helping members get started, planning ahead, preparing for meetings, and presiding at meetings.

Helpful tips:

Know your group – find out what your members’ skills are and what they can do. Make sure all members understand their roles and responsibilities;

Help Members get started – involve and motivate your group members. Be sure your members understand their purpose, responsibilities, timelines and budgetary constraints;

Prepare for meetings – plan your agenda. Check on all pre-meeting arrangements; and,

Preside at meetings – establish your guidelines or rules of order. Follow your agenda; involve the members; manage the discussion.

Role of the Secretary

- Providing relevant information, ideas and opinions as a participant in the meeting;
- Record without note or comment all resolutions, decisions and other proceedings at the meeting (as per the *Municipal Act*, 2001).
- Keeping an accurate set of minutes of each meeting;
- Keeping an up-to-date membership/contact list;
- Distributing minutes to members and notifying them of upcoming meetings;
- Keeping a list of all advisory committees and members;
- Helping the Chair with preparing the agenda, advice on meeting procedure, reference materials and information retrieved from the records; and,

- Making meeting and physical set-up arrangements (*Note: room bookings with City Facilities will be co-ordinated through the Committee's Staff Liaison.*)

Role of the Staff Liaison

- Coordinate; develop and deliver the Orientation Session for the Committee;
- Liaise with the Committee providing technical advice from the host department for the preparation of reports; correspondence, etc.;
- Submission of the Committee's reports, correspondence, etc. to the Director of the host department prior to finalization for review;
- Liaise with all City staff for advice and information required by the Committee, including procedural advice from Legislative Coordinator in the Office of the City Clerk;
- Arrange for printing of agendas, minutes, reference material and distribution required by the Committee;
- Arrange for the booking of the meeting room;
- Coordinate the annual review of the Committee's Terms of Reference and Mandate;
- Coordinate the preparation of the Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations of New Members prior to the end of the Committee's term;
- Arrange for parking passes, if required; and,
- Forward completed Committee Member Resignation Forms to the Legislative Coordinator for inclusion in the appropriate Standing Committee agenda.

Use of Working Groups or Task Forces

Committees can create working groups or task forces to assist in the research or review of a given item and it reports its findings back to the Committee. A working group is normally comprised of Committee Members, however, when required, volunteers may be called upon for their expertise to assist a working group by providing required information. Working groups operate by consensus and formal motions are not required. Administrative support shall not be available to working groups and consequently, the preparation of agendas, minutes and meeting requirements shall be the responsibility of the working group, if required. Support staff shall not be required to attend working group meetings.

Members Communicating with Any Outside Agencies, Including Other Levels of Government and the Media

Please note that members of a Committee cannot correspond or speak to any Ministries, any outside agencies, or the media without Council's prior approval, as per Standard Operating Procedure #08-001 – Communicating with any outside agencies, including other Levels of Government and the media attached as Appendix "D" and the Code of Conduct attached as Appendix "G".

Use of Secondary Logos for Advisory Committees

The use of secondary logos for promotional/educational purposes by a Committee requires approval, subject to the following guidelines:

- (i) Requests for approval of a secondary logo are required to be presented to the Governance Review Sub-committee for consideration and approval by the Committee's respective Standing Committee and Council, prior to any use.

- (ii) The approved City Logo (triple H symbol, with the word mark Hamilton, with an underscoring line), as per the *Identity Standards Guide*, must be of appropriate size relative to the intended purpose and included in a sufficiently prominent location on the promotional/ educational materials.
- (iii) Design costs are to be funded by the Committee.

Committee Member Resignation

While the City of Hamilton hopes that, upon applying for and being appointed as a member of a Committee, you are able to fulfil your commitment, we do realize that on occasion a person's circumstances may change.

Therefore, if for any reason you are unable to continue to participate as an active member of the Committee(s) you have been appointed to, it is very important that you resign formally in writing by providing a completed and signed copy of the Committee Member Resignation Form (attached as Appendix "F") to the appropriate Legislative Coordinator, in the City Clerk's office, stating which Committee(s) you are resigning from and general reasons why (the inclusion of private/personal information is not required). This will allow the Committee to adjust its membership accordingly in order to remain effective in achieving the goals of its mandate. Your completed Committee Member Resignation Form will be included in the appropriate Standing Committee agenda to be received by Council.

What to do if further consultation on procedural advice is required?

Depending upon which Standing Committee, the Committee reports through, please contact the one of following Clerk's Division staff:

Ida Bedioui

Legislative Coordinator
Planning Committee
Phone: (905) 546-2424 ext. 4605
Fax : (905) 546-2095
E-mail: ida.bedioui@hamilton.ca

Angela McRae

Legislative Coordinator
Audit, Finance & Administration
Committee
Phone: (905) 546-2424 ext. 5987
Fax : (905) 546-2095
E-mail: angela.mcrae@hamilton.ca

Loren Kolar

Legislative Coordinator
Board of Health
905 546 2424 ext. 2604
905 546-2095 (fax)
E-mail: loren.kolar@hamilton.ca

Stephanie Paparella

Legislative Coordinator
General Issues Committee
Phone: (905) 546-2424 ext. 3993
Fax : (905) 546-2095
E-mail: stephanie.paparella@hamilton.ca

Lauri Leduc

Legislative Coordinator
Public Works Committee
905 546 2424 ext. 4102
905 546-2095 (fax)
E-mail: lauri.leduc@hamilton.ca

Lisa Chamberlain

Legislative Coordinator
Healthy & Safe Communities Committee
Phone: (905) 546-2424 ext. 2729
Fax : (905) 546-2095
E-mail: lisa.chamberlain@hamilton.ca



Hamilton

A G E N D A **ABC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Monday, January 1, 2000
2:00 p.m.
Room 123, 1st Floor
City Hall
71 Main Street West, Hamilton

**Added Items*

- A. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR** *(This should be done at the first meeting of each year. After the first meeting – this heading is to be removed)*
- 1. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
 - 3.1 ABC Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, dated December 1, 1999 *(for approval)*
- 4. CONSENT ITEMS**
 - 4.1 Research Report *(for receipt)*
 - *4.2 Working Group Minutes *(for receipt)*
- 5. PRESENTATIONS**
 - 5.1 ABC Advisory Committee Terms of Reference Review *(for approval)*
 - 5.2 ABC Advisory Committee Strategic Plan *(for approval)*
- 6. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - 6.1 Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations of New Members *(for approval)*
- 7. NOTICES OF MOTION**
 - *7.1 ABC Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule *(for approval)*
- 8. MOTIONS**
 - 8.1 ABC Advisory Committee Change to the Location of Meetings *(for approval)*
- 9. OTHER BUSINESS**
- 10. ADJOURNMENT**



Hamilton

MINUTES
ABC COMMITTEE
Monday, January 1, 2000
2:00 p.m.
Room 123, 1st Floor
City Hall
71 Main Street West, Hamilton

Present: Chair: (insert name)
(Committee members only) Vice-Chair: (insert name)
Secretary: (insert name)
Members: (insert names)

Absent with
Regrets: (insert names of absent Committee members only)

Also Present: (insert staff names with titles)

1. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

The Clerk advised of the following changes to the agenda:

4. CONSENT ITEMS

4.2 Working Group Minutes

7. NOTICES OF MOTION

7.1 ABC Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule

(Mover/Second)

That the agenda for the January 1, 2000 meeting of ABC Advisory Committee be approved, as amended. *(if there are no changes to the agenda, then the approval would be "as presented")*

CARRIED

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

List any declarations that were made or note that there were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3.1 January 1, 2000

(Mover/Second)

That the Minutes of the January 1, 2000 meeting of ABC Committee be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

4. CONSENT ITEMS

(i) Research Report (Item 4.1)

(Mover/Second)

That the Research Report, be received.

CARRIED

(ii) Working Group Minutes – December 1, 1999 (Item 4.2)

(Mover/Second)

That the Working Group Minutes – December 1, 1999, be received.

CARRIED

5. PRESENTATIONS

(i) ABC Advisory Committee Terms of Reference Review (Item 5.1)

(Insert Name) provided the Committee with a presentation respecting a review of the ABC Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

(Mover/Second)

That the presentation respecting the ABC Advisory Committee Terms of Reference Review, be received; and

That the ABC Advisory Committee Terms of Reference Review, be amended to *(insert recommendation approved by the Committee)*

CARRIED

(ii) ABC Advisory Committee Strategic Plan (Item 5.2)

(Insert Name) provided the Committee with a presentation respecting a review of the ABC Advisory Committee Strategic Plan.

(Mover/Second)

That the presentation respecting the ABC Advisory Committee Strategic Plan, be received; and

That the ABC Advisory Committee Strategic Plan, be approved. *(or insert recommendation approved by the Committee)*

CARRIED

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

(i) Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations of New Members (Item 6.1)

(Mover/Second)

That the Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations of New Members, be approved. *(or insert recommendation approved by the Committee)*

CARRIED

7. NOTICES OF MOTION

(i) ABC Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule (Item 7.1)

(Committee Member's Name) introduced a Notice of Motion respecting the ABC Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule.

(A Notice of Motion can be left as a Notice of Motion and then placed on the next Committee agenda or the Rules of Order can be waived to allow the introduction of the Notice of Motion as a Motion at this meeting, if so, a motion to waive the rules, is required)

(Mover/Second)

That the Rules of Order to be waived to allow for the introduction of a motion respecting the ABC Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule.

CARRIED

(Mover/Second)

That the ABC Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule, be approved. *(or insert recommendation approved by the Committee)*

CARRIED

8. MOTIONS

(i) ABC Advisory Committee Change to the Location of Meetings (Item 8.1)

(Mover/Second)

That the ABC Advisory Committee Meeting Location be changed to _____. *(or insert recommendation approved by the Committee)*

CARRIED

9. OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Title

Brief overview of the item

10. ADJOURNMENT

(Mover/Second)

That, there being no further business, the meeting be adjourned at ____ a.m./p.m. *(insert time that the meeting adjourned)*

CARRIED

The minutes are signed by the Chair or Vice Chair (whoever presided over the meeting) and the Secretary.



Hamilton

CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT

To:	Chair and Members General Issues Committee
From:	Monika Ciolek (Co-Chair) _____ and Kyle Andrew Skinner (Co-Chair) _____ Arts Advisory Commission (to be signed by the Chair)
Date:	March 22, 2017
Re:	Transfer from reserve for Big Picture 2017 Arts Community Outreach Event (AAC-17-01) (City Wide)

Recommendation:

That an amount of up to \$13,000 be transferred from the Arts Advisory Commission Reserve (112212) to Arts Advisory Commission operating (300322) to fund the Commission's 2017 outreach event and programs.

Background: *(Describe here what the money will be used for and why the Committee is asking for more)*

The Arts Advisory Commission (AAC) has the following mandate:

To recommend activities for the stabilization and strengthening of the arts community; to inform Council of issues and achievements in the Hamilton arts community; to liaise with and act as a point of contact for members of the arts community regarding issues affecting the arts community; to monitor and assist with the implementation of the Public Art Program; to monitor and assist with the implementation of the Arts Awards Program.

The primary focus of the Arts Advisory Commission over the last five years has been the development of a strategic arts funding model through its Arts Funding Task Force.

A new AAC was appointed in 2016. The new members of the AAC are looking to undertake a community outreach and consultation program to determine the issues important to the arts community moving forward.

Analysis/Rationale: *(In the Analysis/Rationale section, the Committee should explain why the recommendation is being put forward, benefits for the recommendation, and any another information, which Committee wishes to share with the Grants Sub-Committee to support the recommendation)*

In 2017, the Arts Advisory Commission will focus its efforts on outreach and consultation with the arts community to identify issues important to the community. It is assumed that issues such as; artists living and work space costs, sustaining and growing the arts community and promoting the arts community will be identified among others. Consultation plans include a symposium type event to bring the community together along with interviews and online surveys. The results of this work will be used to develop the AAC work plan for 2017-2018.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE	08-001
Subject:	Communicating with any outside agencies, including other Levels of Government and the media

- a) City of Hamilton Committees wishing to correspond with any outside agency including the media, Ministers of the Provincial/Federal Governments or with MP's and MPP's will follow the subjoined procedures:
1. Recommendation(s) to correspond with any outside agency submitted by a Committee are forwarded to the appropriate Standing Committee for approval with the draft correspondence being attached as an appendix to a Citizen Committee Report prepared by the respective Committee Staff Liaison.
 2. Once the recommendation is approved by the Standing Committee and Council, the correspondence is submitted for signature and will be signed jointly by the Mayor and the Chair of the Committee.
 3. Any follow up correspondence received by the City of Hamilton in response to the letter will be forwarded to both City Council and to the Committee, which initiated the recommendation and correspondence.
 4. Appointees should accurately communicate a recommendation or direction.
 5. Appointees may provide their own personal opinion on a matter, provided that it is made clear to the party they are speaking to that the comments are their own and are not being made on behalf of the Committee.
 6. Appointees may refer the media or others making inquiries to the Chair, or, in the absence of the Chair, to the Vice-Chair.



Hamilton

COMMITTEE MEMBER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I _____ in consideration of the City of Hamilton appointing me to the _____, for the _____ term, acknowledge, undertake and agree as follows:

1. I will make all reasonable efforts to attend all meetings of this body to which I have been appointed and to participate in an impartial manner with the understanding that:
 - (a) If I am absent from more than three meetings, I may be subject to replacement on the Committee and not be eligible for re-appointment.
2. I will exercise all of the roles and responsibilities of a member of the body to which I have been appointed.
3. I shall respect and co-operate with the other Committee members and City staff.
4. I shall not disclose to any member of the public any confidential information, acquired by virtue of my position.
5. As a volunteer Committee member, I have received, read and have a general understanding of the City of Hamilton Advisory Committee Procedural Handbook

Dated at City of Hamilton, in the Province of Ontario this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Applicant:

Witness:

(Must be at least 18 years if age.)

(Please Print Your Name)

(Please Print Your Name)

(Please Sign)

(Please Sign)



Hamilton

COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION FORM

I, _____, would like to submit my resignation, effective _____, 20____, from the _____, for the following reason(s):

- ☐ My circumstances have changed and I know longer have the time to effectively participate on the Committee.
- ☐ Personal reasons.
- ☐ Other (please explain briefly):

Additional Comments (optional)

Signature

Date

HAMILTON ADVISORY COMMITTEE/TASK FORCE CODE OF CONDUCT

Council has adopted this Code of Conduct for the guidance of Appointees to Advisory Committees and Task Forces providing recommendations to Standing Committees and to assist Appointees in performing their duties in a manner which will promote the public's confidence in these Advisory Committees and Task Forces operating with integrity, transparency and courtesy.

It is recognized that the Code of Conduct cannot anticipate all possible fact situations in which Appointees may be called upon to exercise judgement as to the appropriate standard of conduct. When this occurs, Appointees are to ensure that their decisions maintain the Advisory Committee or Task Force's integrity, transparency and courtesy.

This Code of Conduct does not apply to Members of Council who are subject to the Council Code of Conduct.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in the Advisory Committee or Task Force:

- (1) requesting an apology from the Appointee; and/or
- (2) removing the Appointee from the Advisory Committee or Task Force for a portion or all of their term.

1. GOOD CONDUCT

Appointees shall act with honesty and integrity including:

- acting in a manner that contributes to the public's confidence in the Advisory Committee or Task Force; and
- not engaging in conduct that may, or may appear to, constitute an abuse of their position as an Appointees.

2. MEETINGS

Appointees shall maintain proper control over meetings demonstrating respect for everyone who is involved in a proceeding.

Appointees are expected to attend all meetings of the Advisory Committee or Task Force. If an Appointee misses more than three meetings during their term, the Chair, after hearing and considering any explanation provided by the Appointee, may remove the Appointee from the Advisory Committee or Task Force for the remainder of their term.

3. COLLEGIALLY

Appointees shall respect and co-operate with other Appointees and the Advisory Committee or Task Force staff.

4. GIFTS OR BENEFITS

Appointees shall not accept a gift or benefit that may appear as being offered because they are a Appointees.

5. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Appointees shall not disclose to any member of the public any confidential information acquired by virtue of their position.

6. COMMUNICATION

Appointees should accurately communicate a recommendation or direction.

Appointees may provide their own personal opinion on a matter, provided that it is made clear to the party they are speaking to that the comments are their own and are not being made on behalf of the Committee.

Appointees may refer the media or others making inquiries to the Chair, or, in the absence of the Chair, to the Vice-Chair.