

Item 5. Written representation

From: Cllr Matthew Kellermann (Alton TC) <Matthew.Kellermann@alton.gov.uk>

Sent: 14 October 2026 17:54

Subject: URGENT: Formal Procedural Objection – Cllr Hammond's Amendment 1 to the Open Spaces Committee Motion

Dear Town Clerk and Mayor,

Re: Formal Procedural Objection – Cllr Hammond's Amendment 1 to the Open Spaces Committee Motion

I write in my capacity as an elected member of Alton Town Council to register a formal procedural objection to the admissibility of Cllr Hammond's proposed Amendment 1 to Cllr Eyre's motion concerning the establishment of an Open Spaces Committee.

1. Relevant Standing Order

Standing Order 1(e) expressly states:

"An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion."

This provision establishes a clear distinction between an amendment that modifies a substantive motion and one that negates its fundamental purpose.

2. Effect of the Proposed Amendment

The substantive motion proposes:

- The establishment of an Open Spaces Committee with defined terms of reference.
- The subsequent appointment of its Chair, Vice-Chair and membership.
- The incorporation of the committee into the Council's formal meeting structure.

Cllr Hammond's proposed amendment removes all three operative resolutions and replaces them with:

- The establishment of an Allotments Committee.
- The establishment of an Open Spaces Task & Finish Group, principally responsible for preparing management plans.

The resulting amended motion would make no provision whatsoever for the establishment of the Open Spaces Committee originally proposed.

3. Fundamental Difference Between the Proposals

A formally constituted committee and a task and finish group are materially different governance arrangements.

A committee may exercise ongoing responsibilities and formally delegated functions, whereas a task and finish group is ordinarily established to undertake defined work and report its findings or recommendations.

These distinctions are recognised in the Local Government Association's publication *A Councillor's Workbook on Scrutiny*, particularly page 14.

The proposed amendment therefore does not merely alter the composition, responsibilities or terms of reference of the Open Spaces Committee. It removes that committee altogether and substitutes a fundamentally different arrangement.

The fact that the proposed alternative bodies would also address matters relating to open spaces does not, in itself, preserve the substantive proposition contained in the original motion.

4. Compliance with Standing Order 1(e)

I submit that the complete removal of the proposed Open Spaces Committee amounts to negation of the central purpose of the original motion.

Consequently, there are substantial grounds for considering Amendment 1 inadmissible under Standing Order 1(e).

This objection does not challenge any councillor's right to propose alternative governance arrangements through an appropriately notified substantive motion. It concerns whether such arrangements may properly be substituted through an amendment subject to the express prohibition on negating the original motion.

5. Request for Procedural Determination and Recording

I formally request that:

1. The Chair, having obtained advice from the Proper Officer as appropriate, determines the admissibility of Amendment 1 under Standing Order 1(e) before it is debated or put to a vote.
2. Should the amendment be ruled admissible, the Chair explains how removing the proposed Open Spaces Committee in its entirety is considered compatible with the prohibition on negating the original motion.
3. This procedural objection, the relevant Standing Order and the Chair's determination are recorded in the minutes, together with the reasons for the determination where practicable.
4. This correspondence is retained as part of the Council's records relating to the agenda item.
5. All councillors are made aware of this objection before considering the proposed amendment.

As I am currently experiencing ill health, my attendance at the meeting may be limited. I therefore submit this objection in writing in advance to ensure that it is formally brought to the attention of the Chair, Proper Officer and fellow councillors.

I would appreciate acknowledgement of receipt and confirmation that the objection has been referred to the Chair for consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Matthew Kellermann.

Alton Town - Wooteys Ward.