



Hustings Guidelines for Parliamentary Candidates 2017

Ahead of our hustings events in Mitcham & Morden **23rd May 2017** and Wimbledon **25th May 2017**, we have prepared some brief guidelines for candidates.

Which candidates have been invited?

We have invited parliamentary candidates from the following parties (in alphabetical order):

- Conservative
- Labour
- Liberal Democrat

How did you choose which candidates to invite?

We identified the top 3 national parties who were fielding local candidates

Can candidates send somebody else in their place?

No. Candidates should come in person to present their views and meet local disabled people

What will be the format of the hustings event?

- 5 minutes introduction from the chair setting out what the hustings is about
- Candidates have **5 minutes** each to set out why they should be elected
- Questions must be questions – anything the chair deems to be a speech will be ruled out of order. Candidates get **90 seconds** to answer each question

How will you decide what order candidates can speak in?

Candidates will draw lots at the start of the event.

What if one of the candidates talks for longer than 5 minutes in their initial speech?

The chair will end their speech after 5 minutes. All candidates will get the same amount of time.

How will the speeches be recorded?

There will be a note-taker at each event. The notes will be published after the event. We will not publish full transcripts

What should the speeches cover?

We are asking candidates to address the issues which matter most to local disabled people. We will send out a range of possible questions closer to the hustings date

What if the candidate talks for longer than 90 seconds when answering a question?

The chair will end their answer after 90 seconds. All candidates will get the same amount of time.

Can any candidates answer a question?

If a question is directed to all candidates, then they can all respond, in order. If a question is directed to one candidate, then they should answer the question first. Once they have responded, the other candidates will have an opportunity to respond if they wish, in order.

What if we run out of time?

If people have questions which are not answered in the session, then the organisers will gather those, send them to the candidates, and invite all candidates to respond in writing. The questions and responses will be made publically available.

What if one of the candidates makes offensive or illegal comments?

The chair will intervene if this is the case. The chair's decision is final. Extreme or repeated offences will result in the candidate being asked to leave.

What if a candidate's speech seems really irrelevant?

Local people have a chance to meet, and make their assessment of, the people who want to represent them. It is up to candidates how they use this opportunity.

Who will be in the audience?

This hustings has been organised by Merton Centre for Independent Living, Merton Mencap, and Focus-4-1 for local disabled people, families and friends.

What access needs should the candidate think about?

Our members have a range of access needs. Candidates should be patient listening to questions, talk clearly, using plain English. They should avoid talking too fast. Merton CIL will provide a BSL interpreter.

Will there be space to bring candidates' supporters?

In 2015, our hustings events were very popular. These events are aimed at local disabled people and space at venues will be limited. Please avoid bringing lots of supporters.