

## Appearing before the Select Committee

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### Committee generally

$\frac{L}{C}$

- Politicians: comfortable in the setting; used to managing people; sceptical but persuadable; feel they have a real mandate
  - Relatively focused decision-maker:
    - Cannot touch “the principle”
    - But... likely to view broader matters of policy as within their remit
  - Overwhelmed with work – so need to stand out
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## Commons vs Lords

$\frac{L}{C}$

- Understand their different roles
  - Perhaps more formality and structure in HL, but not necessarily so
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## Basic process

$\frac{L}{C}$

- Petitioner makes the case
    - Witnesses as required
    - Witnesses may be cross examined
  - Promoter answers
    - Evidence or submissions
    - HS2 practice of not recalling witnesses
  - Petitioner has final say
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## Beyond the basic process



- Presentations / “teach ins”
- Site visits
  - Critically important for infrastructure schemes
  - Management required on both sides of the fence
- SoundLab etc.



## The Committee as a forum



- Level of engagement varies
- Often difficult to predict where members will come from on particular points
- Physically difficult to manage the number of members and the layout of the room – try to avoid sitting in the middle!



## For Promoters...



- Trust is key
    - Presentations from witnesses
    - “Honest broker”
  - Educating the Committee, e.g. the scheme, the Bill, statutory compensation provisions
  - Clearly articulating what lies within “the principle” and what does not ... but also reminding the Committee what is at stake (i.e. the wider benefits of the scheme)
  - Indicating a willingness to negotiate (“we will take that away...”)
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## For Petitioners...



- “Asks”
  - Objections to the principle are a waste of time
  - Complaints about process unlikely to get leverage
  - Forget about gimmicks
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## Co-ordination of Petitioners' cases



- If not a “property” case, need to bring others with you
  - Often petitions cancel each other out
  - Sometimes “asks” become incoherent because they are pursued in different forms by different people (Chiltern tunnels, Euston)
  - Getting the right slot in the programme can be important
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## Witnesses



- Choose wisely – are they going to bring the Committee with them?
  - Can they deploy particular expertise in clear, concise fashion?
  - MPs as witnesses
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## Exhibits



- Use the technology
  - Manage your presentation
  - Choose images carefully and be able to explain them (“are they your dogs?”)
  - Page 1 must explain what you want
  - Too much material either means members do not read it, or do read it and are annoyed by how much they had to read
  - Produce exhibits in the order you intend to use them
  - Must be exchanged in time
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## Advocacy



- Cut to the chase
  - Be polite
  - Avoid hyperbole
  - Cross examination rarely effective/useful
  - Good humour required but jokes don’t work (mostly)
  - How long do you need vs how long have you got?
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## Managing Committee rulings



- Need to be clear as to what you are being asked to do
- Need to agree timescales and basis for reporting back
- Clear benefits for petitioner in keeping case “alive”
- Interacting with the Committee outside of hearings/using the Clerk



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