

ATTENDING A HUSTINGS AHEAD OF THE 2026 SCOTTISH ELECTION

WHAT IS A HUSTINGS?

A hustings is an open meeting, usually held in the run-up to an election, featuring the candidates for that constituency. It is an excellent opportunity for voters to meet and question the candidates who want to represent them as MSPs. These events also enable you, the voter, to raise the issues that matter most by asking a question during the event. Hustings are often organised by a community group or several groups working together within an area.

It is therefore very important that pro-life people in Scotland consider the views on these matters of the MSPs they elect to the Scottish Parliament.

This briefing gives you information on these issues, as well as guidance on how to question your candidates on them.

WHY ATTEND A HUSTINGS?

SPUC is requesting that supporters ask their local candidates how they would vote on abortion decriminalisation and assisted suicide, through in-person interviews or email. Hustings provide an additional opportunity to directly ask candidates these questions. This information can inform the way you vote and can help SPUC provide this crucial information to other voters.

WHAT SHOULD I ASK?

We recommend keeping questions simple and asking candidates directly about their voting intentions, rather than their views, which might not elicit a simple answer. Attempts to expand abortion are likely during this Parliament, in light of the recommendations of the abortion law review group, and there have already been calls to bring in a new assisted suicide bill.

Therefore, we recommend asking:

QUESTION 1:

Would you vote to support or oppose any move to expand abortion laws?

QUESTION 2:

Would you vote to support or oppose any move to legalise assisted suicide?

Following the Hustings, please write down and send any answers you received to elections@spuc.org.uk

WHAT IF THERE IS NO HUSTINGS?

If you discover that there are no hustings events taking place in your constituency, consider organising one yourself or as part of a group. You can approach your Church or any community groups you are part of. Sometimes, several local churches will come together to plan a hustings.



Society for the **Protection**
of Unborn Children

ORGANISING A HUSTINGS AHEAD OF THE 2026 SCOTTISH ELECTION

HOW TO HOST A HUSTINGS

Organising a Hustings event is simple. We've broken it down into simple steps for you:

1. Preparation

- a. **Set a Date**
- b. **Find a Venue:** Explore different venues in your area. Church halls and schools are often used and are a good option. Things you will want at the venue: Sound equipment, a stage where candidates can sit, disability access, parking.
- c. **Invite Candidates:** Contact your local candidates and invite them to the Hustings. Be prepared to adjust your date so that all candidates can attend.

2. Planning

- a. **Publicise the Event:** Reach out to local newspapers and media outlets. Use social media, church bulletins, and personal contacts to make people aware of the hustings.
- b. **Find a Moderator:** A moderator is necessary to ensure the success of the Hustings. Some qualities that make a good moderator: experience chairing public events, organisation, authority, public speaking skills, recognition in the community.
- c. **Find Volunteers:** Volunteers will be needed for various tasks: Greeting attendees and directing them, handing microphones to attendees with questions, stewards/security, serving refreshments, operating any equipment.

- d. **Get Necessary Equipment:** Your venue may or may not have these necessary things: 2-3 microphones (for candidates and questions), a table for the candidates and moderator to sit at, and chairs for attendees and candidates.

Notify the Police: It is a good idea to notify the police about the Hustings.

3. Running the Event

- a. **Order of Business:** You must have a running order for the Hustings. Ordinarily, a Hustings would be 1.5 to 2 hours. Let the candidates know what to expect by sending them the Order of Business ahead of the event. We recommend:
 - i. **Moderator Introduction** (5 min)
 - ii. **Candidate Introduction** (5 min for each candidate)
 - iii. **Set Questions on Particular Issues** (30-45 min). *Include the 2 questions on the reverse.*
 - iv. **Questions from the Audience** (30-45 min)
- b. **Moderator Script:** Provide a short script to the moderator. This should include health and safety information and ground rules.

4. Follow-Up

- a. **Thank the Candidates:** Write to all of the candidates to thank them for participating.
- b. **Publicise the Hustings:** Take photos, note down quotes, and even record part of the Hustings. You can use these after the event.

You can also read the Hustings Guide from the Electoral Commission for more information here: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/are-you-holding-a-hustings

Following the Hustings, please write down and send any answers you received to: elections@spuc.org.uk



SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF UNBORN CHILDREN

40 St Enoch Square, Glasgow, Scotland, G1 4DH, UK.

TEL: +44 (0)141 221 2094 WEB: www.spuc.org.uk