



## **Protocols for Public Participation in Council Meetings**

### **1) Participation in the public forum**

A council meeting is not a public meeting, it is a meeting conducted in public. There is no requirement in law to provide a public forum.

As the council meets and makes its decisions in public and is committed to community engagement, we warmly invite members of the public, the press, the police and district, borough or county councillors to attend our meetings and contribute during the public forum.

Please respect the fact that this is a meeting to conduct council business and interjections during council business are not permitted. If you disrupt business in any way you may be asked to leave. If you feel for any reason that you do not wish to take part in the public forum or if your problem is complex, you might wish to provide information to the council prior to the meeting in plenty of time before the meeting (at least 7 clear days if possible) using the contact details below.

- Public participation will be for a maximum period of 10 minutes. The Council meeting will technically be closed during such public participation. The agenda will indicate when the public participation will take place. This will be early on the agenda in order that councillors can take account of any views expressed when reaching their decisions,
- Questions and comments should relate to business on the agenda and only one question on a topic will generally be received from each person and supplementary questions will be at the Chairman's discretion. No question shall be repeated within a 6 month period. The Chairman may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- A person (shall stand when requesting to speak and when speaking (except when they have a disability or are likely to suffer discomfort)) OR (shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when they have a disability or are likely to suffer discomfort)). Questions must be addressed to the Chairman and a member of the public must not speak for more than 3 minutes.

### **2) Reports in the public forum**

The Council provides an opportunity for the police and district, borough or county councillors to present reports. An opportunity will be given to ask questions, at the council's discretion, subject to the relevant conditions above and within an overall time limit of 15 minutes.

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