

# **Public Participation Guide**

## **1 PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE**

The Council's policy on public participation at meetings is defined in our Standing Orders, but that is a lengthy document covering matters outwith public participation. This guide describes how public participation works in a more informal way.

## **2 WHICH MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC?**

Every meeting of the Council is open to the press and public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest because the business to be transacted is confidential or for some other special reasons. The exclusion of the press and public from any part of a meeting has to be agreed by a resolution of the Council, and the reasons for the exclusion must be given.

## **3 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

While there is no right in law for members of the public to speak at Council meetings, the chairman of the meeting may allow the public to speak at his/her discretion. A period for public participation is provided shortly after the beginning of each Council meeting.

## **4 PROCEDURE**

- There is no need for you to give notice prior to the meeting that you wish to speak, but it helps if you do inform the Parish Clerk before the meeting starts.
- You will be allowed to speak at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- If you do not want your name to be recorded in the minutes, please inform the chairman of the meeting before you start.
- More than one question may be asked by an individual questioner subject to the time limit of 5minutes per speaker.

## **5 WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR SPEAKING?**

- The Chairman of the meeting will invite you to stand/sit where you can be clearly heard.
- You can speak for a maximum of 3 minutes unless the chairman of the meeting directs otherwise.
- The period for public participation is limited to a maximum of 10 minutes unless the chairman of the meeting directs otherwise.
- The Council may respond to you at the meeting or may write to you.
- No debate will take place during the period for public participation.
- Councillors may debate any matter you have raised later in the meeting, but only if it is on the agenda.

## **6 BEHAVIOUR**

- Please do not interrupt speakers or speak during the members' debate.
- Please do not hold conversations with other members of the public while the meeting is in progress.
- The chairman of the meeting will ask members of the public who become disruptive to leave.

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Review *Not later than Oct 2017*