

Addendum B

PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

1 DEFINITION

To encourage participation in Council Meetings and Committee meetings, members of the public are invited to ask questions of:

- Chairman of the Parish Council
- Vice Chairman of the Parish Council
- Chairman of a Committee

Public question time is dealt with prior to the commencement of the meeting and doesn't form part of the formal business of council (or committee) and is limited to 15mins (an additional 15 minutes can be allocated in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Chairman).” Each resident wishing to speak will be allocated a maximum of 3 minutes in order to allow other people to also speak without the public session exceeding its allotted time. Please Note: Councillors will not be able to respond on items on the agenda, but will take notice of the views put forward.

2 SCOPE

Questions shall be relevant to matters in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or a matter relating to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the Parish.

The Council will not permit questions to be asked which are abusive or libellous, relate to a specific or identifiable person, involve personal or prejudicial issues nor matters associated with political parties or organisations where there is recourse to the courts, a tribunal or to a Government Minister. The interpretation of the above criteria by the Parish Clerk is final. The person submitting the question must be on the electoral roll in the Parish of Cambourne.

3 NOTICE

A question may only be asked if notice is given prior to the beginning of the meeting or preferably it has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Parish Clerk by no later than 12.00 noon on the Monday preceding the meeting. Each question shall give the name and address of the questioner and shall name the Member of the Council to whom the question is to be addressed. No person may submit more than one question but one supplementary question may be asked (At the chairman’s discretion additional questions may be allowed if time permits).

The Parish Clerk will keep a record of submitted questions and send a copy of the question to the Member to whom it is to be put. A member of the public whose question has been rejected will be notified of the reason(s) for its rejection.

4 PROCEDURE

The Chairman will invite the questioner to put the question to the Member named in the notice. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, he/she may ask the Chairman to put the question on their behalf. The Chairman may ask the question on the questioner's behalf or indicate that a written reply will be given or decide, in the absence of the questioner, that the question will not be dealt with. A questioner has three minutes to put a question and a further two minutes for a supplementary question. Questions shall be dealt with in the order in which they are submitted unless the Chairman chooses to group together similar questions.

The questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question without notice to the Member who has replied to his/her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.

Note The Parish Council is not obliged to react to the comments made by the public. However common sense should prevail.

5 ANSWERS

An answer can take any of the following forms:

- A direct oral answer;
- A reference to one of the Council's publications if it answers the question;
- If it would not be practical or appropriate to answer a question orally, the Member will supply a written answer to the questioner within seven days.

Any question which cannot be dealt with during public question time either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the Member to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer.

Unless the Chairman decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question but any Member may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the full Council or the appropriate Committee. Once seconded, such a Motion will be voted on without discussion.

6 PUBLIC SPEAKING DURING THE MEETING

No member of the public can speak during a meeting or participate in the debate. (Note under the Local government act County and District councillors not directly elected to the Parish Council are treated in the same way as members of the public).

County & District Councillors have a separate Agenda Item to allow reports to be made to the Council.

In special circumstances a member of the public can be invited to speak with the agreement of the Council but the meeting has to be suspended and reconvened to continue the debate after the member of the public has spoken.

7 GUIDANCE ON SPEAKING BY OTHERS

People such as principal authority officers, the local police officer, technical experts (if they have relevant knowledge) and the clerk, can be invited to speak during the meeting but they cannot take part in the debate or cast a vote.

8 RECORDING

Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is not permitted without the Council's prior (written) consent.