



CREDITON TOWN COUNCIL



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

1 Public Question Time

- 1.1. Public questions may be put at all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub Committees to which the public have access.
- 1.2. Public questions must be put at the beginning of the agenda (ie as part of the formal meeting) immediately following receipt of apologies and members' declarations of interest, subject to 3.5 below.
- 1.3. Up to a maximum of 30 minutes shall be allowed for public questions but, in the event that there are no questions, or no further questions, the Chairman shall have discretion to proceed with the agenda prior to the expiry of that period.
- 1.4. Residents, electors or business rate payers of the parish shall be entitled to ask questions.
- 1.5. Persons submitting questions must be present at the meeting, where possible.
- 1.6. Questions may be verbal or written.
- 1.7. Written questions will be dealt with first.
- 1.8. Written questions shall be submitted by 9.30am two clear working days prior to the meeting (in respect of meetings starting at, or after, 5.30pm the day of the meeting shall be regarded as a clear working day).
- 1.9. Written questions shall consist of no more than 100 words.
- 1.10. Verbal questions shall not exceed 3 minutes.
- 1.11. At the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting, questioners may ask one supplementary question.
- 1.12. Replies to questions may be verbal, or at the discretion of the Chairman, in writing or by reference to a published document.
- 1.13. Questions must be relevant to the work of the Council.
- 1.14. The Chairman shall have the discretion to disallow any question which, in his/her opinion is scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable.
- 1.15. The Chairman of the meeting shall respond to all questions.

2 Public Statements – Planning Applications

- 2.1. In respect of individual Planning Applications contained in the Agenda, one spokesperson in favour of an application and/or one spokesperson objecting to an application shall be allowed to speak on each application, normally.
- 2.2. Spokespersons shall be allowed to speak for 3 minutes either during Public Question Time or at the beginning of the agenda item relating to the application, at the discretion of the Chairman.
- 2.3. The Chairman shall rule out of order statements which do not refer to the application under consideration.

3 Petitions

- 3.1. Members of the public and councillors have the right to put forward petitions at a Council meeting.
- 3.2. There is no minimum number of signatures required for a petition.
- 3.3. A submission under this Rule will not be accepted if:-
 - it seeks to address exempt or confidential matters;

- the subject matter is about an application for a legal consent or permission where there is an alternative process to challenge the decision or to appeal against it or where this Procedural Rule might prejudice the proper consideration of such an application or consent;
 - it is about a matter which has already been lodged with the Council or with another statutory body as a formal complaint;
 - it contains an allegation against, or comments about, the conduct of individual councillors or officers.
- 3.4. Individual submissions will be limited to a maximum of three minutes.
- 3.5. If the submission relates to a general matter not on the agenda for the meeting, it will be taken at the start of the meeting. If it relates to an item on the agenda for the meeting, the person making the submission may be invited to address the meeting either at the start of the meeting or immediately before the item is debated.
- 3.6. Once the submission has been made, the Chairman will ask factual questions of the person making the submission. The meeting will then determine what action it wishes to take on the matters contained in the submission.

This Policy was adopted by the Council at its meeting held on 11 November 2007

A copy of the Public Question Time leaflet is appended.