

Written Questions

Some research may be required to enable a comprehensive answer to be given to your question. It is suggested that you submit the question in writing, at least one working day in advance of the meeting. Every effort will be made in these circumstances to obtain the answer for you, so that this can be reported at the meeting. You will receive a written response.

You should write to the Town Clerk using the email or address on the front of this leaflet.

Matters to be Excluded from Public Questions

Questions shall not be heard which relates to:

- An individual's personal circumstances.
- An individual or the questioners pecuniary circumstances.
- A planning application – other than at the Planning and Transportation Committee.
- A matter which is not the responsibility of the Council or that particular Committee.
- A matter that the Committee or Council may have to determine in a quasi-judicial capacity.
- A matter which is the subject of legal proceedings or an appeal to a tribunal or to a Government Minister.
- The appointment, promotion, dismissal, salary, superannuation or conditions of service or the conduct of an individual employed by the Council or the conduct of a Member of the Council
- Any other matters within paragraphs 1 to 15 of Schedule 12A of the local Government Act 1972 ("Exempt" Information).

Disorderly Conduct

These provisions have been incorporated within the Standing Orders of the Town Council and therefore the relevant Standing Order applies – Standing Order 10 refers.

Under these provisions, if a member of the public interrupts the proceedings of any meeting or behaves inappropriately, the Chair may, after a warning, order that they be removed from the building.

Recording of Council Meetings

The public are allowed to film* the Committee and Officers only from the front of the public gallery, providing it does not disturb the meeting. Any items in the Exempt Part of an agenda cannot be filmed. If another member of the public objects to being recorded, the person or persons filming must stop doing so until that member of the public has finished speaking. The use of social media is permitted but all members of the public are requested to switch their mobile phone devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

*This applies to cameras, mobile phones, videos and any other equipment capable of recording sound and images.

To find out more information in regard to the Committee meetings and Committee membership, please visit littlehampton-tc.gov.uk/committee-meetings

August 2022



Your Council

Procedure for Public Questions
at Meetings of the Council

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Email: lrc@littlehampton-tc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01903 732063
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Public Question Time

In Littlehampton, we want people to be involved in the democratic process, be it at the ballot box, through consultation or by enabling members of the public to ask questions at Council and Committee.

Each meeting of the Full Council and each of the Committees has a Public Question Time session following the approval of the previous meeting minutes.

Asking Questions at Full Council Meetings

Public Question Time lasts for a maximum of 15 minutes at the start of each meeting, and allows members of the public to raise issues and put their views and questions to elected Councillors.

These meetings usually start at 6:30pm and are advertised on the public noticeboards around the Town. They are also available, with minutes and agendas, on the Town Council's website: www.littlehampton-tc.gov.uk/committee-meetings.

All a member of the public has to do is to raise their hand at the appropriate point during the meeting to indicate to the Mayor that they would like to ask a question. The Mayor will then call each questioner in turn to deal with the issues raised. We will attempt to deal with all issues raised at the meeting, but sometimes more work may be required. In these cases a written answer will be provided. You will also be allowed to ask one follow-up question if you need to.

At Full Council, your questions can be about any issue relating to the work of the Town Council, not just the agenda items for that meeting.

Asking Questions at Committee Meetings

The system operates in much the same way as for Full Council, except that the questions should only relate to matters within the scheme of delegated powers of the Committee. The matters should only be broad issues rather than cases that affect an individual alone. The exception to this rule would be at the Planning and Transportation Committee where individuals might wish to support or oppose a planning application because of the impact that it has on them or their property.

Number of and Time Limits on Questions

At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question and no more than one question may be asked on behalf of one organisation. Unless the Chair otherwise specifies, each speaker will be limited to two minutes in which to ask the question. There will be an overall limit of 15 minutes devoted to this part of the meeting. Subject to the Chair's discretion, and time permitting, this part of the meeting may be extended and a person may ask more than one question.

Scope of Questions

The Chair may reject a question if it:

- Is not about the matter for which the Council or Committee has a responsibility or which affects the Town.
- Is defamatory, frivolous or offensive.
- Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at the meeting of the Council or Committee in the past six months or
- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

Questions are often asked about matters that are not within the remit of the Town Council.

This can delay a response, so if you are intending to ask a question, we would recommend that you check what services the Town, District and County Councils cover before asking your question.

This information can be found on our website at: <https://www.littlehampton-tc.gov.uk/what-we-do>. The services covered by the District and County Councils are at the bottom of the web page.

Arun District Council and West Sussex County Council have public question time sessions at their meetings in the same way as us, and details can be found on their websites.

Supplemental Questions

A questioner who has asked a question may also put one supplementary question.

A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or reply. The Chair may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds set out above.

Written Answers

Any questions which cannot be dealt with during Public Question Time, either because of lack of time or because of the information not being available to give a full response, will be dealt with by way of a written response.

In these circumstances, the member of public should leave their contact details and question with the Clerk.

The question and response will be incorporated in an appendix to the minutes of the meeting.