



Appendix 1

EXTRACT OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

These rules are designed to ensure meetings of the Full Council run smoothly and are conducted properly.

9.3 Public Question Time

There will be an opportunity for up to four members of the public to ask questions at meetings of the County Council, excluding extraordinary or special meetings of the Council and the first annual meeting of a new Council, to the Leader of the Council and the Chairman/woman of any Committee.

If more than four members of the public apply to speak, questioners will be invited to defer their question to the next meeting. The Democratic Services Officer will ensure that all steps are taken to inform the “unsuccessful” speakers in advance and, where they either choose not to defer their question or do not reply, a written reply will be sent within ten working days after the meeting.

(Any decision to exceed the limit, in exceptional circumstances, will be at the discretion of the Council Chairman/woman.)

Members of the public wishing to ask a question at the Council meeting should provide the following details to the Council’s Democratic Services by no later than 12.00 noon, five working days before the meeting:

- Name and address and contact details of the person asking the question.
- The name of the organisation if the question is being asked on their behalf.
- Details of the question to be asked.
- The name or position of the member of the Council to whom it is to be put.
- Brief information about how the subject of the question relates to the person asking the question (e.g. as a resident of the area, as a recipient of a service, as the owner of a property affected by a proposal).

Only one question may be asked by each member of the public or organisation and the question must relate to a single topic. **A question which is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months will not be allowed.**

If the Monitoring Officer considers a question:

- **is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the County;**
- **is illegal, improper, defamatory, frivolous or offensive; or**
- **requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.**

he or she will inform the Chairman/woman who will then decide whether or not to reject the question.

Members of the public shall have up to two minutes in which to ask the question.



The named member will respond to the question which may take the form of:

- (a) a direct oral response of up to a maximum of two minutes;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written response circulated later to the questioner and made available to all members of Council and to the public.

After the response has been given, the questioner has up to a further minute in which to put one supplementary question or seek clarification of the response to the original question. The supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply and must not introduce new material.

The recipient of the original question then has up to a further two minutes in which to reply to the supplementary question.

No debate will be allowed on any question or the response.

If the questioner cannot be present at the council meeting to pose her/his [sic] question, a written question will be accepted and answered in writing.