



## **PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AT MEETINGS**

Members of the public have the right to address meetings of Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council and its committees on issues listed on Council agendas. Meetings of the staffing sub-committee are however held in confidential session.

Meetings of the Parish Council are held in public however they are not public meetings.

A member of the public who wishes to speak in the public session at the beginning of the meeting should please arrive at least 10 minutes before the start of the meeting and make themselves known to the Chairman of the meeting or the Clerk. This allows time for an explanation of the procedures and for collection of the speakers details i.e. Name, organisation, representing (if applicable) and relevant agenda item.

Members of the public will normally be asked to speak in the order they are registered with the Chairman of the meeting.

Public question time should not exceed 15 minutes, except on the rare occasion where this is directed by the Chairman of the meeting. Each member of the public should not speak for more than 3 minutes. They shall raise their hand when requesting to speak, stand up (if this is possible) and direct their questions or comments through the Chairman. Only one person shall speak at a time. Members of the public are encouraged not to repeat something that has already been raised by another member of the public.

A question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

It is useful for members of the public to prepare some notes in advance to ensure that all the important points are covered. Try to be brief and to the point. Where there are a large group of people attending together, it is worth deciding beforehand who will present to the Parish Council in order to avoid duplication.

It is important that defamatory statements are avoided. There is no legal protection for comments made at meetings.

During the public question time members of the Parish Council will have the opportunity, through the Chair, to ask members of the public questions of clarification in relation to agenda items. Once the public question time has passed members of the public will not be allowed to interrupt the meeting and will only be allowed to speak at the Chairman of the meeting's discretion and upon the suspension of Standing Orders.

L Hurst  
Officer  
March 2024

Adopted by Full Council 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019