

Public Questions Policy

- A formal public questions agenda item where all questions and answers are read out by the Clerk.
- Questions are submitted in advance, by midday the day before to guarantee being included for that meeting. Questions received afterwards will be included if the Clerk is able to.
- Questions are rejected if they are rude, defamatory, inappropriate, already answered, or unclear. This will not be used unreasonably. In the first instance the Clerk will respond with a suggested edit to the wording for approval if possible, or send the previous answer and the member of the public can clarify if/why their question is different. If this process continues after the deadline above, inclusion is not guaranteed.
- Questions and answers will be read out at the top of the meeting up to a total of 15 minutes. All questions and answers, including those that we ran out of time for, will be published on the website after each meeting when ready.
- Questions that relate to the agenda for the meeting will be prioritised, and otherwise will be answered in the order received.
- Questions must be questions that can be answered, not opinions or statements written as questions e.g. “Why is the council so xyz?” is a statement of opinion disguised as a question.
- Context can be included as needed for a question to be understood, but otherwise the submission should just be the question, not opinions with a question amongst them.
- If questions cannot be fully answered (for example, if the Clerk needs to consult a councillor who is away or requires advice from a third party and the reply hasn’t yet been received) then that will be explained as the answer during the meeting, and the full answer will be provided in the written version.
- If the Clerk is unable to create the question and answers document from the above process due to emergency circumstances or illness, then a 15-minute public participation session with 3 minutes per person will be conducted instead.
- The Clerk has discretion over this process for unforeseen situations.