

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

This statement has been produced by **Chadwick End Parish Council** to explain the process of its meetings and how public participation is managed.

Meetings

Ordinary meetings of the Parish Council ('the Council') are held in a public place, usually Chadwick End Village Hall, bi-monthly.

Members of the public have a legal right to attend meetings of the Council and its committees, except where they are excluded for specific items which need to be discussed in confidence, for example, staffing matters or tenders for contracts. They have no legal right to speak at meetings of the council or its committees. However, as part of its community engagement, the Council will set aside time for electors of the parish to speak at meetings.

Public Participation

A specific time is set aside for public participation at all ordinary meetings, which is usually at the very beginning before the formal business of the Parish Council begins. Standing Orders state that this public forum will not exceed 15 minutes, with individual contributions being limited to 3 minutes. All comments and questions are to be directed to the Chair. Any question or comment which may be considered scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or objectionable will be disallowed by the Chair. If it appears that a large number of people wish to speak, the Chair will encourage people not to repeat comments made by earlier speakers or may even ask for a single representative to be appointed.

Neither the Parish Council Clerk ('the Clerk') nor the Councillors are obliged to respond at once to comments or questions during the public forum. Comments may be referred to the Clerk to write to the speaker or could form the basis for an agenda item at a future meeting. Comments made during public forum will be (very briefly) minuted. Names of members of the public who speak will not be minuted unless the person concerned requests it.

Disruption at Meetings

Members of the public are invited to remain after the public forum has ended to observe the meeting of the Parish Council. They are not permitted to converse further with the Parish Council without invitation. Members of the public should not heckle or interrupt the meeting. The Chair will cut an interrupter short and warn them that further interruptions could result in his or her exclusion from the room. Alternatively, if there is serious disorder the Chair could adjourn the meeting for a short time to allow people to calm down.

Principal Authorities

Principal Authority councillors have no special rights at Council meetings. However, it is beneficial to the community for the Council to maintain good relationships with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and Warwickshire District Council. The Council's agenda will therefore provide for the receipt of reports from the principal authorities. Members of the public are not permitted to question or make comments on these reports during the meeting. The salient points of these reports given will be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Other ways to engage with the Parish Council

Members of the public are invited to contact Councillors or the Clerk outside of meetings, by email (preferably) or telephone.