

# **WILLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**Feb 2020**

### **1 DEFINITION**

In line with the Council's Standing Orders (numbers 3d-n) and to encourage participation in Council and Committee Meetings, members of the public are invited to ask questions of or make statements to:

- The Chairman of the meeting

The time allocated for public speaking will be restricted to fifteen minutes for each meeting with a maximum speaking time of three minutes per person.

### **2 SCOPE**

Questions at meetings of the Parish Council must be relevant to matters in relation to which the Parish Council has powers or duties or matters relating to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the village.

Questions posed at Committee Meetings must be relevant to the Terms of Reference of that Committee.

The Council will not permit public speaking that is abusive or slanderous, relates to a specific or identifiable person, that involves personal or prejudicial issues nor matters associated with political parties or organisations where there is recourse to the courts, a tribunal or to a Government Minister. The interpretation of the above criteria by the Parish Clerk is final.

### **3 NOTICE**

Whilst it is not necessary to give notice. In the case that several members of the public wish to speak priority will be given to those who have provided advance notice of their intention to the Parish Clerk. Large groups will be requested to appoint a representative spokesperson

### **4 PROCEDURE**

Anyone who wishes to speak is asked to make themselves known to the Clerk of the meeting before the start of the meeting. In the case of a number of members of the public wishing to speak on the same item/topic they might, due to time constraints, be asked to appoint a 'spokesperson' to represent their collective views.

### **5 ANSWERS**

An answer can take any of the following forms:

- A direct verbal answer;
- A reference to one of the Council's publications if it answers the question; or
- If it would not be practical or appropriate to answer a question verbally, a written answer to the question will be given

Any question which cannot be dealt with during public question time either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the Member to whom it was to be put, may be dealt with by a written answer.

Unless the Chairman of the meeting decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question but any Member may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the full Council or the appropriate Committee. Once seconded, such a Motion will be voted on without discussion.

**February 2020**