

Copdock and Washbrook Parish Council

Protocols for Public Participation in Council Meetings

1) Participation in the public forum

A council meeting is not a public meeting; it is a meeting conducted in public. There is no requirement in law to provide a public forum.

As the council meets and makes its decisions in public and is committed to community engagement, we invite members of the public, the press, the police and district and county councillors to attend our meetings and contribute **during the public forum**.

Please respect the fact that this is a meeting to conduct council business and interjections during council business are not permitted. If you disrupt business in anyway, you may be asked to leave. If you feel for any reason that you do not wish to take part in the public forum or if your problem is complex, you might wish to provide information to the council prior to the meeting in plenty of time before the meeting (at least 7 clear days if possible).

- Public participation will be for a maximum of 15 minutes. The Council meeting will be closed during such public participation. The agenda will indicate when the public participation takes place. This will be early on the agenda in order that councillors can take account of any views expressed when reaching their decisions.
- Questions and comments should relate to business on the agenda and only one question on a topic will generally be received from each person and supplementary questions will be at the Chair's discretion. No question shall be repeated within a six-month period. The Chair may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when doing so (health permitting). Questions must be addressed to the Chair and a member of the public must not speak for more than 5 minutes.

2) Reports in the public forum

The Council provides an opportunity for the police and district and county councillors to present reports. An opportunity will be given to ask questions, at the Council's discretion, subject to the relevant conditions and within an overall time limit of 15 minutes.