

## **LINTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Public Participation at Parish Council Meetings Procedure**

Linton Parish Council meetings are not public meetings but members of the public and press do have a statutory right to attend as observers. This also includes our District and County Council Ward Members and Members of the Police.

Linton Parish Council encourages public participation at its meeting relating to any item **already** on the agenda. Linton Parish Council wants to ensure that everyone gets the opportunity to speak at our meetings, so we have introduced guidance on how you can best have your say, to make the most of your time when speaking at our meetings.

To make sure that every member of the public in attendance at our meetings gets a fair-share of this available time, Public Speaking at the start of the meeting is limited to a maximum time of 15 minutes, you will only be able to speak once for a maximum of 3 minutes each. However, if there are a lot of members of the public in attendance wanting to speak, then this time may be reduced with the time being divided equally between each person, this will be at the discretion of the Chairman

During the Public Speaking part on the agenda, members of the Public are required to adhere to the following procedure:

- Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- Please be brief and to the point, you will not be allowed to over-run your time.
- If more than one member of the public wishes to speak on the same subject, please nominate one person to speak on that subject. This will avoid duplication and make the best use of Public Speaking.
- Any member of the Council, who has declared a disclosable pecuniary interest on an item on the agenda, will be allowed the same right and time as members of the public for this session.
- Owing to the short time you have to put your views or comments across, photographs or display material will not be accepted at the meeting.
- Please avoid any derogatory or defamatory statements. If the Chairman feels that this is the case you may be asked to stop speaking or you may be asked to leave the meeting. The Chairman has the right to stop you speaking or ask you to leave the meeting if your question or statement is inappropriate.
- In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council, a question by a member of the public 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 is given or may direct the resident to contact the Clerk directly.
- Neither the Councillors nor the Clerk should be put under pressure by members of the public to respond at a Council meeting under Public Speaking.
- Members of the Public do not have a right to force items onto the Parish Councils agenda.
- Members of the Public do not have a right to insist on how matters are recorded in the minutes.
- If matters raised by members of the public are not on the agenda for the meeting, this may be added to a future meeting agenda at the discretion of the Chairman and Clerk.
- The Parish Council can only pass resolutions regarding items already on the agenda.
- All persons present at a Parish Council meeting should act respectfully towards others present and will not act in a manner that demeans, insults, intimidates, threaten or harasses. All statements, questions, responses, complaints or criticisms must be made

politely, be related to the facts of the matter and not be personal in nature. There should be no reference to personal views about any person. This type of behaviour will not be tolerated and you may be asked to leave the meeting.

- Members of the public shall raise their hand when requesting to speak.
- A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments/question to the Chairman of the meeting.
- Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

**Procedure at the meeting:**

- The majority of Linton Parish Council Meetings will take place at the Brick Rooms, Main Street, Linton, commencing at 7pm on the second Tuesday of the month, except for August where there is no meeting.
- There will be an area at the meeting for members of the public to sit.
- The Chairman will announce when Public Speaking starts and will announce when Public Speaking has concluded.
- The time limit on Public Speaking will be enforced and will only be extended at the discretion of the Chairman. Please have the respect and courtesy you would wish for yourself when others are speaking.
- After Public Speaking has concluded, the Parish Council will continue with items as listed on the agenda. You are welcome to sit and listen/observe the rest of the Council Meeting, but you will not be able to take part in further discussion or interact with the members of the Council on decisions that they may make.
- Where the presence of the public is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, or for other special reasons, the public's exclusion from part of the meeting shall be determined by a resolution.
- The Chairman at all times has responsibility for the smooth running of the meeting.
- The Chairman's decision on procedural matters at the meeting is final.