



HYNDBURN

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HYNDBURN BOROUGH COUNCIL

PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

DETAILS OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings of full Council are held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Blackburn Road, Accrington and usually start at 7.00 p.m. Details of meeting dates are publicised on the Council's website or they can be obtained from Democratic Services, Hyndburn Borough Council, Scaitcliffe Street, Ormerod Street, Accrington, BB5 0PF. Telephone: (01254) 388111.

AGENDA PAPERS

Agendas are usually published on the Council's website 5 clear days before the meeting and are also available for inspection at the Council Offices. Public copies of the agenda are available at the meeting. Please contact Democratic Services at the above address if you require information before the meeting or a copy of the agenda. Some items of Council business are confidential and that information is not available to the public.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Hyndburn's residents, businesses and all other interested sectors can submit one question only to a meeting of the Council for answering.

Question time will normally last for up to 30 minutes.

Please note that although you are entitled to attend the Council meeting, the Chair of the meeting (the Mayor) will ask your question.

Questions will be asked in the order they are received, although similar questions may be grouped together.

Questions must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive or via the Council's website, using the online form available, at least three clear days in advance of the meeting and must be received by twelve noon on the last day for receipt of the question. "Clear days" means working days and excludes the day the question is received and the day of the meeting. Written correspondence should be sent or delivered to the Chief Executive, c/o Democratic Services, Hyndburn Borough Council, Scaitcliffe House, Ormerod Street, Accrington, BB5 0PF. The online form for submission of questions can be accessed at http://www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/site/scripts/xforms_form.php?formID=97

CONDUCT AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Any Member of the public is allowed to attend Council meetings but once the meeting has started they are not permitted to approach or engage with members or officers. Members of the public will not have the right to ask their questions directly or take part in debates or decision making and may not question

members or officers or disrupt the meeting whilst their question or any other item of business is being dealt with. The Chair of the meeting can ask you to leave the meeting if you are behaving in what he/she feels is an inappropriate manner.

GUIDANCE

WHO CAN SUBMIT QUESTIONS?

Any person living in the Borough or any business or other interested sector located within the Borough may submit a question to the Council's Chief Executive.

WHO WILL ASK THE QUESTION?

Questions will be put by the Chair of the meeting (the Mayor) and asked in the order they are received, although similar questions may be grouped together.

HOW MANY QUESTIONS CAN I SUBMIT?

Only one question per Council meeting may be submitted by any person (except with the consent of the Chair) and must state the questioner's name and address.

DO I NEED TO GIVE NOTICE THAT I WANT TO SUBMIT A QUESTION?

YES. Questions must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive, c/o Democratic Services, Hyndburn Borough Council, Scaitcliffe House, Ormerod Street, Accrington, BB5 0PF or via the Council's web site, using the online form available, at least three clear days in advance of the meeting and must be received by twelve noon on the last day for receipt of the question. "Clear days" means working days and excludes the day the question is received and the day of the meeting.

If your question needs researching you may wish to submit it in advance to help the Council prepare an answer.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ARRIVE?

You should arrive at the meeting at least ten minutes before the start of the meeting and make your way to the Council Chamber's Public Gallery. The Public Question Time agenda item will normally be taken early in the proceedings.

WILL I BE ALLOWED TO SPEAK?

NO, the question you have submitted will be asked by the Chair of the meeting (the Mayor).

WHO WILL ANSWER MY QUESTION?

Your question can be addressed to either the Leader of the Council, a Cabinet Member or a Chair of a Committee. You must state which one of those members you require an answer from.

If answered at the meeting, your question will be recorded in the minutes.

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED AT THE MEETING

Any question not dealt with at the meeting will normally be answered after the meeting in writing within ten working days,

SOME QUESTIONS ARE NOT ALLOWED

You may not ask a question where the following applies and, if received, any such question will be rejected:-

- It is not a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or it does not affect Hyndburn.
- It requires the disclosure of exempt or confidential information.
- It is defamatory, frivolous or offensive.
- It is substantially the same as a question which has been asked at a meeting of the Council in the past six months.

DO I HAVE TO STAY FOR THE FULL MEETING?

If you have come to listen to an answer to your question or any other particular item, you are welcome to stay for the rest of the meeting. If you do wish to leave, we ask that you do so quietly so as not to interrupt the proceedings.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The minutes of the meeting will normally be available within seven working days after the meeting and agreed at the subsequent meeting.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any queries relating to Public Question Time please contact Democratic Services Tel: (01254) 388111.