

Public speaking at Town Council meetings

The Town Council encourages public participation at its meetings.

To ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to talk, it has introduced guidance on how you can best have your say, and make the most of your time when you speak.

To ensure everyone gets a fair-share of the available time you will only be able to **speak once for up to three minutes.**

You are only able to speak on matters that are on the Agenda for the Meeting.

GENERALLY

- You will be asked to give the Clerk your name and address. This is to establish that you are a parishioner. Non-Parishioners may only speak if invited to do so.
- To make the best use of your time, please be brief and to the point. You may find it helpful to rehearse what you have to say to ensure that everything is included. **You will not be allowed to over-run your time.**
- You may find that if there are significant numbers of objectors / supporters that it would be better to appoint one person to speak for you all.
- Written submissions, photographs or display material will not be accepted at the meeting, but may be sent to the Clerk at least 5 days before the meeting, so they can be copied and given to the Councillors.
- Please avoid derogatory or defamatory statements. If the Chairman feels that this is the case you may be asked to stop speaking. The Council does not tolerate inflammatory or abusive behaviour towards its councillors or staff.
- Owing to the short time you have to put your views across, it may not be appropriate to bring plans or elaborate visual aids to illustrate your points.
- The Town Council now routinely videos Full Council Meetings. If you have an objection to being videoed you must let the Clerk know.
- Only the names of speakers from Organisations will be recorded in the Minutes of the Meeting. Names and addresses of speakers who speak on private matters will not be recorded in the Minutes.

PROCEDURE AT THE MEETING

- Most meetings of the Town Council take place in the St Johns Chapel, The Butts, Belper. Please check with the Clerk before the meeting in case there has been any change. If you want to speak, please arrive at least 15 minutes before the meeting and introduce yourself to the Clerk.
- You will be asked to sit in the public area.
- The Chairman will announce that Public Participation has commenced and if you wish to speak, invite you to do so.
- If you are speaking on an issue for which there are other speakers who hold differing views. Objector(s) will be invited to speak first, followed by the supporter(s).
- You will be invited to speak for up to three minutes. The time limit will be strictly enforced and the Chairman will notify you when you have 30 seconds left. Please have the respect and courtesy you would wish for yourself when others present their thoughts.
- After you have finished speaking, you may be asked questions by the Councillors to clarify issues that have arisen.

- After Public Participation section of the Agenda, the Town Council will continue with items as listed in the Agenda. You are welcome to sit and listen to the debate and other workings of the Council, but will not be able to take part in further discussion.
- The Chairman has responsibility for the smooth running of the meeting. His/her decision on procedural matters is final.