



**HIGHCLERE PARISH COUNCIL**  
Rules of Public Participation 2023-2024

Highclere Parish Council wishes to encourage public participation during its meetings. However, the Council recognises that rules must control the manner of participation in order that the Council Meeting may continue to operate effectively.

Public participation is an opportunity to ask questions, NOT to make statements.

Accordingly, the following rules must be observed for public participation at meetings:

- **General** – Members of the Public may ask questions of Elected Members at Ordinary Meetings of the Council.
- **Time** – 10 minutes will be made available for questions at the commencement of Ordinary Meetings of the Council with each member of the public being allowed a maximum of 3 minutes to ask their question.
- **Order of Questions** – Questions will be asked in the order that they were received, except that the Chairman may group together similar questions.
- **Notice of Questions\*** – A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Parish Clerk ([parish.clerk@highclerepc.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@highclerepc.uk)) no later than 9am on the Thursday preceding the Council meeting. The name and address of the questioner must be provided.
- **Number of Questions** – At any one meeting, no person may submit more than one question and not more than one such question may be asked on behalf of one organisation.
- **Scope of Questions** – Questions will be rejected by the Chairman if they:-
  - are defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
  - are substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
  - require the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

**Asking the Question at the Meeting** – The Chairman will invite the questioner to put the question to the Member named in the notice. The Chairman may ask the question on behalf of the questioner, indicate that a written reply will be given or decide, in the absence of the questioner, that the question will not be dealt with.

**Written Answers** – Any question which cannot be dealt with during public question time due to lack of time or due to the absence of the named Member, will be dealt with by a written answer to the questioner within 14 working days of the meeting.

\*If no notice has been given, the Chairman can allow the question at their own discretion.

Revised: 09 May 2023