

Waldridge Parish Council Public Participation Policy

Waldridge Parish Council wishes to encourage public participation during its meetings in order to use this as one means of consulting with the public.

However, the Council recognises that rules must control the manner of participation in order that the Council Meeting may continue to operate effectively.

Availability of agendas, minutes of meetings, etc.

Agendas are posted on the Parish Council's notice boards located outside Waldridge Parish Rooms, Fenton Close and the Millennium Green.

Agendas and Minutes are available from the Council's website at www.waldridgeparish.co.uk

Copies of documents are available from the Parish Clerk in accordance with the Council's Freedom of Information Policy.

Public attendance at meetings

As a general rule, all Parish Council meetings are open to the press and members of the public. However, from time to time, confidential items may be discussed in which case the press and members of the public are excluded in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Public participation is an opportunity to ask question not to make statements.

Written submissions

Members of the public may submit comments on any agenda item in writing (including by e-mail).

Members of the public may also submit a written request for the Parish Council to consider any matter within its remit. Valid requests will be put on the agenda for the next appropriate meeting.

The Clerk will reply to any request informing the date of meeting when comments will be discussed as soon as practicable.

Where allowed by the Freedom of Information Act 2000, requests for confidentiality will be respected.

Written submissions should be sent to the Parish Clerk (see below for contact details).

Public speaking

Although there is no automatic right for members of the public to speak at Council meetings, the Chairman will consider requests to speak on any agenda item but is not obliged to grant all or any of them.

Members of the public may also indicate that they are willing to answer questions from councillors on any agenda item about which they have particular knowledge.

Requests to speak should preferably be notified to the Parish Clerk verbally or in writing before the start of the meeting, indicating which agenda item their request relates to.

Any final requests to speak must be raised under the agenda item '**questions and comments from members of the public**' near the start of business. Later requests will not be considered.

Where more than one person makes a request to speak, the Chairman may ask those wishing to make a similar point to appoint a spokesman.

In most cases, priority will be given to requests to speak in the order that they are notified to the Parish Clerk, but this may be varied by the Chairman of the meeting where it is necessary to ensure that differing views are aired.

Persons invited to speak are required to give their name and address and state their interest in the matter under discussion.

Speeches are limited to a maximum of five minutes each person (maximum of 15 minutes)

The Chairman of the meeting may curtail any speech (for example, if inappropriate language is used, or if any member of the public is speaking for too long, or not relevant to the original question).

Questions about services the Parish Council provides are answered, where possible at the meeting. If this is not possible a written response will be given to the member of the public within 14 days of the meeting, the contents of which will be relayed to the next Parish Council meeting.

Contact details

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Adopted by Waldridge Parish Council on 10 January 2012 - to be reviewed annually at Annual Meeting of the Council

Clerk _____

Chairman _____

Reviewed 10 January 2017