

Protocol for members of the public to speak at council and committee meetings

Your elected councillor represents you.

Find your local councillor - <http://frodsham.gov.uk/councillor-info/>

If there is anything you want to tell your councillor to influence the decisions they make you can:

- Write to your councillor
- Talk directly to your councillor - by phone or in person
- Speak at the beginning of most public meetings.

This protocol explains what you need to do if you wish to speak at council meetings. The rules are set down in our Standing Orders - **3 Meetings generally**:

- e) Members of the public may, in Public Speaking time, make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend, in respect of the business on the agenda
- f) The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) above shall not exceed (20) minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- g) Subject to standing order 3(f) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than (5) minutes.
- h) In accordance with standing order 3(e) above, a question 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 be given.
- i) A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- j) A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- k) 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.
- l) Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is permitted unless the public are excluded by reason of the confidential nature of the business or where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest. Exclusion of the public must be authorised by a resolution of the meeting and the reason for exclusion must be stated.** The public are requested to notify the Clerk if they intend to film a meeting in order that necessary arrangements can be made.

Requesting to speak

Contact the Town Clerk, preferably in writing, to discuss the matter you wish to speak about and she will identify the most appropriate meeting. The public can only speak about an item which is already on the agenda so you will need to give sufficient notice for an item to be included. Legally agendas must be published 3 clear days (not including Sundays or Bank Holidays) before the meeting.

Telephone: 01928 735150

Email: townclerk@frodsham.gov.uk

If you have a disability and require assistance, please let us know so we can make necessary arrangements.

On the day

You will have been contacted with confirmation of the date, time and venue of the meeting you wish to attend. On arrival please make yourself known to the Town Clerk who will explain the procedure to you.

At the appropriate point the Chairman will invite you to speak.

You are reminded of the rules relating to libel and slander. You could be at risk of legal action if you say something in public about a person which is not true.

The meetings are recorded by audio recorder and you can make your own recording subject to Standing Order 3l above.

You are free to leave the meeting at any point after you have spoken but you are welcome to stay if you wish.