

**KINGSLEY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**POLICY ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS**

Kingsley Parish Council holds its meetings on the third Tuesday of each month (except August) usually at 7.30 pm. When it invites a speaker the meeting will commence at 7pm. Notice is given by Wednesday of the previous week. You will find information on the Parish Council notice board in the centre of the village and on the village website [www.kingsleyvillage.co.uk](http://www.kingsleyvillage.co.uk)

Members of the public have a statutory right to attend meetings of the council as observers and are welcome.

As part of its community engagement, Kingsley Parish Council has set out a time for public participation, near the beginning of its meetings, when members of the public are invited to speak. Members of the public should not be involved in the decision making of the Council. The Council should not make any instant decisions at the request of the public on items that are not included on the agenda. If matters raised are not on the agenda for the meeting these can be used to form part of the agenda for a future meeting at the discretion of the Council.

As a matter of best practice the public forum will be kept separate from the debate of the councillors

Members of the public are welcome to stay for the remainder of the council meeting after the public session as observers, but will not be able to join in the discussion unless invited to do so by the Chairman.

**EXCLUSIONS**

Members of the public may be excluded by a resolution of the meeting for specific items which need to be discussed in confidence (e.g. staffing matters, tenders for contracts, some legal issues).

**RULES**

1. The Public Participation Session is an opportunity for members of the public to make representations, answer questions and give evidence relating to the business on the agenda
2. The session will be limited to a maximum time of 15 minutes
3. The time for each member of the public to speak is limited to 3 minutes
4. If more than one member of the public wishes to speak on the same topic then they should nominate one person to speak on their behalf. This will avoid duplication and make best use of the public participation period.
5. If there are a large number of people wishing to speak, the chairman will give priority of the time available to residents of Kingsley
6. Please address your comments to the Chairman
7. The Chairman has the right to say that any question or statement is inappropriate and will not be accepted.

8. Neither Councillors nor the Parish Clerk should be put under pressure to respond immediately to comments made under public participation. Members of the public do not have the right to force items onto the council agenda nor to insist on how matters are recorded in the minutes.
9. A question raised by a member of the public shall not require a response and there should be no debate or discussion between the Council and the public.
10. Any member of the Council, who has declared a disclosable pecuniary interest on an item to be discussed, will be allowed the same rights and time as a member of the public for this session. The member will be required to leave the room before the council considers the matter in which they have declared the disclosable pecuniary interest.
11. **All persons present will act respectfully towards every other person present and will not behave offensively or improperly. Please note that threatening or offensive behaviour will not be tolerated. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings of any meeting the Council reserves the right to curtail the contribution of that person and to exclude a disorderly person.**
12. All statements, questions and responses must be related to the facts of the matter and not be personal in nature. There should be no reference to personal views about any person.
13. A brief record of topics raised at public participation will be included in the minutes of that meeting. However libellous, offensive and discriminatory comments will not be minuted.

## **RECORDINGS OF MEETINGS**

A person attending a meeting can film, photograph or make an audio recording of proceedings at the meeting. This means that filming or photographing can take place of councillors and members of the public speaking as part of the meeting, but there is an expectation that you will not focus your photography or filming on other members of the public who are observing the meeting. Persons filming or taking photographs are asked to be considerate and try to avoid children and vulnerable persons being in the film or photographs, without checking first with their parents or carers.

The Council allows written reporting or commentary during the meeting e.g. through social media and blogging.

A person may not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place, since a running commentary will be too disruptive. If you want to make any oral report during a meeting you will need to leave the room.

The press will be provided with reasonable facilities for taking a report of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.

APPROVED AT COUNCIL MEETING ON 21<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2017