

Council PR 10 (July 2019)

10.0 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

10.1 General

Members of the public who have a legitimate interest in the Borough, by way of work or residency, may ask a question at ordinary meetings of the Full Council, Executive and Committees. Questions by the public will not be included as an item on agendas for Special or Extraordinary meetings. Questions may be informal or formal.

Informal questions

10.2 Informal questions may be asked of the Executive before the start of ordinary meetings of Full Council and the Executive for up to 15 minutes, including replies. No notice needs to be given.

10.3 Questions will be taken in the order in which questioners register with the Democratic Services Officer prior to the start of question time. When read out, each question must be concluded within 2 minutes. In the event that it is not possible to give a verbal response, a written response will be provided following the meeting.

~~The rules for asking a written question are set out in Procedure Rules 10.2-10.7 below.~~

Written Formal questions

10.4 Notice of **written formal** questions

A **written** formal question may only be submitted if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Head of Policy and Governance no later than close of business (5.00pm), 4 clear working days before the day of the meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner.

10.5 Order of questions

Questions will be listed in the order notice of them was received, except that the Mayor or Chairman may group together similar questions.

10.64 Number of questions

At any one meeting no person may submit more than 1 formal question and no more than 1 such question may be asked on behalf of one organisation.

10.7 Scope of questions

The Chief Executive may reject a question if it:

- is not a matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the Borough;
- is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months;
- requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information; or

- is not substantially in the form of a question, or the length of the preamble is disproportionate to the question.

10.8 Record of **written formal questions**

The Chief Executive will immediately send a copy of the question to the Chairman of the Executive and relevant Portfolio Holder. Where the Chief Executive recommends that the question be rejected, reasons for rejection will be stated. Copies of all questions and answers will be circulated and made available to councillors and the public attending the meeting. All **written** formal questions submitted will receive a prepared answer.

10.9 Reference of question to the Executive or Committee

Unless the Mayor decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question, but any member may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the Executive or the appropriate named Committee or Sub-Committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.

~~**10.8— Informal questions at the Executive**~~

~~Members of the public may ask informal questions of the Executive before the start of each ordinary meeting of the Executive, in accordance with the arrangements at Executive Procedure Rule 2.9.~~

Executive Procedure Rules (July 2019)

2.9 Questions by the Public

Informal questions

2.9.12 Informal questions may be asked of the Leader, Deputy Leader or an appropriate Portfolio Holder before the start of each ordinary meeting of the Executive for up to 15 minutes, including replies. No prior notice needs to be given. Questions will be taken in the order in which questioners register with the Democratic Services Officer prior to the start of question time. When read out, each question must be concluded within 2 minutes. In the event that it is not possible to give a verbal response, a written response will be provided following the meeting.

Written Formal questions

2.9.21 Members of the public may ask **written** formal questions at ordinary meetings of the Executive in accordance with the provisions in Council Procedure Rules 10.4 – 10.9. The Leader and/or the Deputy Leader or appropriate portfolio holder should be invited to respond to the question.