

Scheme for Public Participation for the Health & Wellbeing Board

The Board is committed to encouraging public participation in its work. This Scheme will give the public an opportunity to raise issues at Board meetings that concern them. All issues raised by the public under this scheme will be given careful consideration. While it will not be possible, in every case, to resolve an issue to the satisfaction of everyone, the Board will ensure that the issue is considered fairly.

1. What can the public do?

The public may use this Scheme to either submit a petition or ask a question at a Board meeting as follows:

(a) Petition:

A petition must be submitted at a minimum of seven working days before a Board meeting and must be given to Democratic Services by this deadline. This is to allow sufficient time for the petition to be added to the agenda papers for the Board meeting and circulated. There must be a minimum of ten signatures for a petition to be submitted to the Board.

(b) Question:

The Board will include a 15 minute slot for questions from the public near the beginning of its agenda. If a member of the public would like to ask a question they must arrive 15 minutes before the start of the meeting to provide the clerk with their name, address and the question they would like to ask. Alternatively, members of the public can provide this information via an email to Democratic Services or the contact officer listed on the front of the Board agenda papers at least two hours before of the meeting.

At the meeting, the Chairman will invite each member of the public to put their question at the appropriate point in the agenda. This may be addressed to the Chairman of the Board, who will decide which Board member is best placed to provide a response. The question must be about an issue that falls within the remit of the Board's work. A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question, without notice, to the Board Member who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. The Chairman may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in Section 3 below.

2. Relevance to the Board

The subject matter of a petition must be about something that is within the Board's responsibilities. This includes matters of interest to the Board as a key stakeholder in improving the health and wellbeing of communities. The subject matter of questions must relate to an item on the Board's agenda for that particular meeting. Democratic Services can provide advice to the public on the content of their submissions where requested.

3. What falls outside the scheme?

Some matters fall outside the scope of this scheme. These are:

- Individual's circumstances where it would not be appropriate for details to be aired in open session;

- Applications for legal consents where alternative procedures exist for the public to offer views; and
- Other proposals of any kind which have been formally published and where specific arrangements are made for the public to express their views.

The Chairman may also reject a submission if it:

- is not about a matter for which the Board has a responsibility or which affects the Bracknell Forest or Ascot area;
- is defamatory, vexatious, frivolous or offensive;
- is substantially the same as a submission which has already been put at that meeting or another meeting held within the preceding six months;
- Is about the subject of an appeal or review procedure that has not yet been concluded, or
- requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

4. Number of submissions

If numerous submissions are made to any one particular meeting, no person may make more than **two** submissions and no more than two submissions may be made on behalf of one organisation or group. If numerous submissions are not submitted, three submissions may be made by any one person or group/organisation.

5. Support for the Public

The prospect of speaking at a formal meeting of the Board may be daunting for the public. Every help and support will be made available to those who wish to use this scheme. The Councillors and Officers present will treat members of the public with courtesy and respect.

6. Time Limits

No individual question will be allowed more than three minutes at a meeting. This rule will be strictly enforced in fairness to all those who wish to address the meeting. The overall time allowed at a meeting to hear and deal with submissions from the public will be decided by the Chairman, or by the meeting itself, but will not normally exceed 15 minutes. This will take into account the issues to be raised in the submissions, the number of submissions and the other business of the meeting.

Submissions will be heard in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chairman may group together similar matters. Where there is insufficient time to deal with all submissions received, the Chairman will decide which submissions should be dealt with at the meeting. Any submissions not dealt with will be formally received by the meeting and a written response will be given as soon as possible after the meeting.

7. Written Answers to Questions

Any question which cannot be dealt with during the allocated time, either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the Board Member to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer. Written answers shall be sent to the

Questioner and copied to all Board Members.

8. Action the Board May Take

In the case of a question, a written reply may be given where this is more convenient and can be circulated at the meeting. In the case of Petitions, the meeting will decide on the most appropriate course of action, which will be either to note the petition or to request an Officer report to a subsequent meeting of the Board on the issue raised.

9. General Information

The public are welcome to attend Board meetings where open business is discussed, but may not speak at the meeting unless via the Board's Public Participation Scheme.

This Scheme will be reviewed by the Board in the first 12 months and thereafter as required.