

Guide to Public Speaking at Council Meetings

To view agenda items for meetings, visit the Council website <http://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>. This will give you the time, date and venue of the meeting. The agenda and reports are published 5 working days before the meeting. To register to speak, please email democratic_services@bathnes.gov.uk.

Giving local people a say in local decisions is an important part of our decision-making system. There are many ways you can contribute and get your voice heard at public meetings.

If you wish to speak, you are asked to give **advance notice and provide your statement** to the Democratic Services Officer for that meeting, who is responsible for the organisation, clerking and smooth running of the meeting. Please contact them via democratic_services@bathnes.gov.uk

The table below gives you general guidance on giving notice to speak at a meeting. To see exact dates please see: <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13585>

Meeting type	How much notice to make a 3 minute statement or deputation	How much notice to submit a question	How much notice to submit a petition
<i>Description</i>	<p><u>Statement</u> – about a Council service or about something the Council has or has not done, or about a matter of local interest or concern.</p> <p><u>Deputation</u> – similar to a statement but would normally be made on behalf of an organised community group.</p>	<p><u>Question</u> - To ask up to two questions (with up to 2 sub-sections) of councillors at a meeting – your question must be set out in full by the deadline as stated above.</p>	<p><u>Petition</u> – to present a petition about an issue which reflects the concerns of the local community.</p>

<p>Council</p>	<p>Notice, and the text of the statement, is required by no later than close of business 2 clear working days before the day of the meeting (i.e. Monday for a Thursday meeting).</p> <p>[Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]</p>	<p>The deadline for receipt of questions is 4 clear working days before the day of the meeting.</p> <p>[Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]</p>	<p>Notice, and the text of the accompanying statement, is required by no later than close of business 2 clear working days before the day of the meeting (i.e. Monday for a Thursday meeting).</p> <p>[Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]</p>
<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>Notice, and the text of the statement, is required by no later than close of business 2 clear working days before the day of the meeting (i.e. Monday for a Thursday meeting).</p> <p>[Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]</p>	<p>The deadline for receipt of questions is 4 clear working days before the day of the meeting.</p> <p>[Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]</p>	<p>Notice, and the text of the accompanying statement, is required by no later than close of business 2 clear working days before the day of the meeting (i.e. Monday for a Thursday meeting).</p> <p>[Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]</p>
<p>Policy and Development Scrutiny Panels</p>	<p>Notice, and the text of the statement, is required by no later than close of business 2 clear working days before the day of meeting (i.e. Monday for a Thursday meeting).</p> <p>[Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]</p>	<p>The deadline for receipt of questions is 2 clear working days before the day of the meeting.</p> <p>[Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]</p>	<p>Notice is required by no later than close of business 2 clear working days before the day of the meeting.</p> <p>[Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]</p>
<p>Regulatory</p>	<p>Notice is required by no later than close of business 2 clear working</p>	<p>The deadline for receipt of questions is 2 clear working days</p>	<p>Notice is required by no later than close of business 2 clear working</p>

Committees	days before the day of the meeting (i.e. on Monday for a Thursday meeting, on Wednesday for a Monday meeting and on Friday for a Wednesday meeting). Note - please refer to the relevant Democratic Services Officer regarding Planning Committee, Licensing Sub-Committee & Avon Pension Fund Committee as they have specific speaking schemes.	before the day of the meeting. [Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]	days before the day of the meeting. [Close of business is deemed to be 5pm on Monday – Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday]
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There is an overall limit of one hour (which can be varied at the Chair’s discretion) for submissions from the public to Council, Cabinet and Scrutiny Panels.

A submission may be allowed at shorter notice only at the sole discretion of the Chair of the meeting. Normally, there will be no debate with you about what you say. However, providing you have no objection, Councillors may ask questions about your submission solely for clarification. Once you have spoken, you can leave the meeting at any time, but you are also free to wait and listen to the ensuing discussion or decision. The meeting will decide on the most appropriate course of action regarding your submission.

Who can speak? Anyone who is a resident in the area covered by the authority - Anyone who has a business operating in the area covered by the authority - Employees of the Council who wish to make submissions as private citizens (not related to issues connected with their employment).

Support for the public and access for those with disabilities - The prospect of speaking at a formal meeting may be daunting to some people. If you have any concerns or questions, do ask the Democratic Services officer for advice and support. Councillors and officers at the meeting will treat members of the public politely and with respect. Similarly, it is expected that the public will make any submissions courteously. If you have any particular needs to enable you to access the meeting and speak, then please

inform the Democratic Services officer so that they can make the appropriate arrangements. Public meetings are held in buildings which have reasonable access and seating for the public. Microphones will normally be installed in meeting rooms. A hearing induction loop is available in Keynsham Civic Centre and in all meeting rooms at the Guildhall, Bath.

Exceptions to the public speaking scheme - Some matters fall outside the scope of the scheme. These are:

- Meetings which, because of their private content or reference to individual circumstances, have to be held in closed session e.g. taxi licences
- Other matters which are subject to established appeal procedures (e.g. complaints, school admission appeals) and allegations against or comments about individual councillors or officers.

What we will do with your details

In most cases, we will include your name and the content of your submission in the official minutes of the meeting, which are published online and kept on the Minute book for that meeting. When you have submitted your statement electronically, we will usually attach this to the electronic record, and to the Minute book.

For general enquiries about democratic services, please contact: Democratic_services@bathnes.gov.uk
01225 394435