

Questions to Area Committee

Protocol Guidelines

The protocol is managed by the Democratic Services Officer if you need any further advice on the protocol

- At each ordinary meeting, members of the public can submit a question (or have one submitted on their behalf) on matters that are relevant to the Area, Council and Partners agencies by the completion of the Questions to Area Committee form, two working days in advance of the meeting.
- All questions must be submitted before the Area Committee, if questions are received during or afterwards, there will automatically be presented to the next scheduled ordinary meeting.
- The person submitting the question can ask the question in person or have it read out for them by the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer or their nominee.
- The time limit given for a question is at the discretion of the Chairperson.
- The question is asked, and where possible Committee will address and respond. If it is not possible to provide a response straight away, either a letter will be sent directly to the person concerned from the relevant officer within ten working days from the Committee date, or a report will be made on this matter to the next meeting of the Area Committee, and the person concerned will be invited to attend and speak at the meeting. In all instances a written response will be given.
- At the discretion of the Chair the person asking the question maybe allowed to ask one supplementary, which must arise directly out of the original question or from the answer received.
- The Committee will have the opportunity of questioning to clarify any areas of doubt.
- If there are a large number of potential speakers on an issue, the Chairperson will ask them to select a spokesperson. If there are groups offering differing views on a particular issue more than one speaker can address the Committee, at the discretion of the Chairperson.
- If the Chairperson considers that the opportunity to address the Committee is being abused he/she have the authority to require the person to stop and if the person does not do so the Chairperson may require the person to leave the meeting.
- The Chairperson will determine the order in which the questions are asked.

Conduct at Area Committee

- Area Committee shall not consider any matter relating to standards of behaviour, conduct, ethics or probity, directly or indirectly about any Councillor, officer of the council or partners in attendance.
- Any such matter(s) shall be referred immediately, without debate, to the attention of the Chief Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, (and in the case of financial matters, also the City Treasurer). The Chief Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, or his/her nominee, shall seek such information as (s)he considers necessary to prepare a full report for consideration by the Standards Committee. (S)he will submit, without delay, the report to the Standards Committee.
- Residents are expected to behave in a manner that contributes to the well being of the City.
- Residents must not be violent, abusing or threatening to Councillors or others and must not willfully damage things owned by the Council, councilors or others.
- Residents are required to register to vote and actively encouraged to exercise their vote, as part of their commitment to citizenship and local democracy.

Questions to Area Committee Internal notes

Question received in advance of Area Committee that can be dealt with beforehand

or

In writing, via post, fax or email 2 working days before the meeting

As soon as the question is received the DSO will log and notify the relevant Service and Customer Service Manager (Chief Ex).

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Time permitting the Service will response to the question, 'cc' in DSO and CSM. Update given to Area Committee on all questions received, for information.

The Chair is notified of questions either at pre-meeting or before the meeting.

The Service will ensure, where possible, a representative attends the meeting.

The person submitting the question, or representative, will have a maximum period to speak, which will be controlled by the Chair.

If it is not possible to provide an answer straight away, either a letter will be sent directly to the person concerned from the relevant Service, or a report will be presented to the next meeting, with the person concerned invited to attend and speak at the meeting.

DSO will feed the outcome into Corporate Communications to publicise.

The action generated through the question will be analysis as a case study to see what can be learned from good practice, and shared in others areas of the City to ensure problems are resolved before they become an issue.