



## **PUBLIC SPEAKING POLICY**

Whitnash Town Council adopted paragraph 12 (2) of the revised Model Code of Conduct at the Town Council Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2008 which allows public participation session at Council Meetings. This means that all Town Council (including committee) meetings must be open to the public to attend unless they are excluded by resolution because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution (s.1 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960).

At all meetings of the Council, the Chairman may at his discretion, and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, **adjourn** the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted. The public may comment on items of business on the agenda for that council meeting and councillors may make statements and answer questions etc., the Council makes no decisions in respect of agendered items of business at this time because the meeting is “adjourned”. Matters or comments arising from the public participation session should be placed on the agenda for the next council meeting or relevant committee meeting. The Council may also agree that they will respond in writing to oral or written questions arising from the public participation session. Public participation must be recorded in the minutes.

### **Procedure for Public Speaking at Whitnash Town Council Committee Meetings:**

#### **WHO CAN SPEAK**

People wishing to speak will fall into the following categories:

- Objectors
- Supporters

To ensure equity objectors and supporters will only be allowed to address the Town Council / Committee if objectors and supporters have registered to speak. There will be a **three** minute time period for each category of speaker. If there is more than one person registered to speak in any one category, the three minutes will be split

**Date Approved: March 2008**

**Review Date:**

equally between those persons registered to speak. However, they will be encouraged to liaise with each other and nominate one speaker.

## **REGISTERING TO SPEAK**

People wishing to speak must contact the Town Clerk in writing, by telephone or email by 12 noon on the Monday before the meeting. Persons wishing to speak must provide the following information:

- Name
- Home address and telephone number
- Which subject they wish to speak on
- The Town Clerk will inform them that their name will be made public before the meeting and they will also ask if their contact details can be passed on to other people registered to speak in the same category on the same application.
- A list of those who have registered an interest to speak will be available for all Members of the Committee, together with the addendum papers for the meeting.

### **Summary of procedure for each meeting:**

1. Record members present at the meeting.
  2. Apologies
  3. Declaration of Interests with regard to items on the agenda.
  4. Public Participation session with regard to items on the agenda (with the Council hearing first from councillors with prejudicial interests who must leave the room immediately after they have made their representations, answered questions or given evidence i.e. they cannot remain the room to hear the representations of others. After the close of the public participation session when the council reaches any item of business which councillors have a prejudicial interest in, those councillors would need to leave the meeting room whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting whether or not they had made representations in respect of it within the public participation sessions. This accords with paragraph 12 (1) (a) (ii) of the revised Model Code of Conduct.
  5. The Mayor or Committee Chairperson will introduce the item.
  6. The names of those persons having registered to speak will then be announced by the Chair.
  7. After all the speakers have finished, the Chair will open the item up to the Committee for debate. There will not be a specific formal questions slot.
- *Please note that the use of presentation material including handouts in any form is not permitted when addressing the Town Council / committee.*

**Date Approved: March 2008**

**Review Date:**

<b>Policy Number: 10</b>
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**Exemption to the above rules:**

The following are exempt from the above policy:

Police, representatives of Warwickshire County Council, Warwick District Council and persons who have been invited to speak on Council business.

<b>Date Approved: March 2008</b>	<b>Review Date:</b>
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