

Protocol for Public Forum.

Westbury Town Council [The Council] welcomes questions and comments from the public and has granted a Public Forum of no more than 30 minutes duration before the start of Council meetings. The Public Forum is not part of the formal Council meeting.

Speakers must register to speak at least 10 minutes before the start of The Forum. Speakers will be called one at a time, in order of registration, and may speak for up to 5 minutes.

Speakers may ask questions for information make comment on items on the agenda or make statements on matters that might be of interest to The Council.

What you can expect from the Council:

- *The Council will listen to you;*
- *If you ask a question, make a comment or a statement the Mayor will respond for The Council. The matter will not be debated and no other Councillor will comment;*
- *If you are speaking specifically about an item on the Council agenda, you will be offered the opportunity to speak later at the beginning of that debate;*
- *A factual question will be answered by The Mayor or failing that by the Chair of the appropriate standing Committee; or the Town Clerk.*
- *If the Mayor cannot answer your question it will be recorded and you will be told that a written answer will be sent to you;*
- *If you make a comment or statement about a decision of The Council or about matters that The Council may be progressing or neglecting the Mayor may make an immediate response which will be final;*
- *If the Mayor believes that your matter may require scrutiny/debate they will refer that matter to the next relevant Committee or Working Group for consideration and report back. You will be given the date & time of that meeting and invited to speak;*
- *The notes of the Forum will record that you spoke and what you spoke about in brief. If you asked a question that was answered this will be recorded in the notes, entirely. If a comment or suggestion is simply 'noted' that is all that will be recorded. Should that comment provoke further debate or scrutiny (at a later date) by referral to committee, this will be recorded in the Notes in full as a recommendation of the Mayor.*

What the Council expects of you:

- *That you prepare what you want to say in advance;*
- *That you speak only when you are invited to do so, you stop when requested and you accept the Mayors response is final;*
- *That your presentation is measured, polite and courteous throughout, although you may feel like it you are not required to be angry to speak to The Council;*
- *That you refrain from making personal comments about individual Councillors in the Public Forum as that Councillor will not have a right of reply*

NOTE: If councillors wish to speak and have seven days' notice, or more, the item should be placed on the agenda via the Town Clerk, however if it is an urgent matter, the item may be added to the agenda at the discretion of the Chair. This will be for discussion only; no decisions will be made".