

Asking a question at a Council meeting

Can I ask a question at a Council meeting?

You can ask one question of a Member of the Cabinet or a Chairman of a Committee at ordinary meetings of the Council. Public questions cannot be asked at special Council meetings.

How soon before the meeting should I submit my question?

The Chief Executive must receive your question by noon, seven working days before the day of the meeting. The deadlines for submitting questions are set out on the Council's website under the heading *How to have your say*:

www.medway.gov.uk/democracy

What information should I include?

You must give your name, address, and the name of the Member of the Council the question is for. If you are unsure please ask Democratic Services for advice using the e-form (please see section below entitled "How do I submit my question" for further information).

Is there a time limit?

There is a **30 minute** time limit for taking and answering questions. Any questions not dealt with in the time limit will receive a written reply as soon as possible after the meeting.

How do I submit my question?

Please send your question to the Chief Executive of Medway Council. Post it to:

**Chief Executive
c/o Democratic Services
Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
Kent ME4 4TR**

Or please use the e-form which is set out on the Council's website under the heading *How to have your say*: **www.medway.gov.uk/democracy**

If your question is accepted for consideration, it will be sent immediately to the Member who is expected to answer.

Is there any reason for my question to be rejected?

The Chief Executive may reject a question if it:

- is not about a matter for which the Council has responsibility or which does not affect the area;
- is frivolous, defamatory, offensive, racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise improper;
- is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months;
- requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

We will explain why, if your question is rejected.

Will my question be published?

Yes. The Chief Executive will enter each question in a book open to public inspection and will immediately send a copy of the question to the member to whom it is put. Rejected questions will include reasons for rejection. If the question has been rejected because it is considered frivolous, defamatory, offensive, racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise improper then only the fact that a question was received and that it was considered so, will be entered.

Copies of all questions will be circulated to all Members in the agenda for the meeting and will be made available to the public attending the meeting.

Both your question and a summary of the response will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting unless you do not attend to ask your question.

The agenda and minutes of the meeting are published on the Council's website www.medway.gov.uk/democracy

When and where are Council meetings held?

Council meetings are usually held at 7pm on a Thursday at the St George's Centre, Pembroke Road, Chatham Maritime.

An up to date schedule of meetings is available on the Council's website www.medway.gov.uk/democracy

If you are unable to attend the meeting, you will receive a written response to your question as soon as possible after the meeting.

What time should I arrive?

Please arrive at 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. You will be met by a member of staff and shown to your seat.

What will happen at the meeting?

At the appropriate time, the Mayor will invite you to put your question to the Member named.

What will happen after the meeting?

After the meeting you will receive a written summary of the response to your question.

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