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Public Questions

- 14.6 Any resident of the authority's area may submit a question addressed to the Leader, a Member of the Cabinet, a Chair of any Committee or Sub-Committee, or a Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee by delivering it in writing to the Monitoring Officer, to be received by Democratic Services by 5.00 p.m. at least six working days prior to a meeting of Council (for example, as the Council usually meets on a Wednesday, the deadline for receipt of a question will be 5.00 p.m. on the Monday the week before the meeting is due to be held). The question must relate to a matter which affects the authority or residents of the authority's area and in relation to which the authority has powers, and must name the individual to whom it is addressed. A question must be concise and clearly worded and must not extend into a statement. The question must relate to a single proposition and may not contain more than one part. No member of the public may submit more than one question in total for any one meeting of Council or ask or submit questions on behalf of another member of the public.
- 14.7 The Monitoring Officer shall copy the question to the person to whom it is addressed and place it on the agenda for the next meeting of Council unless, in his/her opinion:
- a) the request does not comply with the requirements of Rule 14.6 above;
 - b) the question is defamatory of an individual, offensive, discloses confidential or exempt information, names or clearly identifies an employee of the authority, or otherwise infringes the proper conduct of local government;
 - c) the question is substantially the same as a question which has been previously been received and answered within the **three months**, and there has been no significant and relevant change of circumstances since the previous question was answered; or
 - d) the question discloses, or the reply is likely to disclose, confidential or exempt information.
- 14.8 The Monitoring Officer shall put the questions on the agenda in the order that they have been received.
- 14.9 Where the questioner is present, the person to whom the question was addressed shall then provide a verbal answer to the question (which may include a more detailed answer in writing). Where the person who submitted the question is not present, the person to whom the question was addressed

may provide a written response as an alternative to a verbal response.

- 14.10 Where the person who submitted the question is present, after the initial answer, they may ask one supplementary question arising directly out of the initial question or answer which must not extend into a statement, without notice, and the person who answered the initial question shall respond to the supplementary question.
- 14.11 The time limit for all questions under this Rule at any meeting shall be up to 30 minutes. Where a question is not dealt with at the meeting, the person to whom the question is addressed shall provide a written answer as soon as practicable, but no later than, the next meeting.

Members' Questions

Questions without notice

- 14.12 Any Member may ask the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chair of a Committee any question without notice upon an item of report or recommendation of the Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Committee concerned, immediately following the presentation of that matter.

Questions on Notice

- 14.13 Any Member may submit a maximum of 2 questions (except for the Leader of the Opposition who can ask 2 questions of the Leader and a further 2 in total of other Members) for the next ordinary meeting of Council addressed to the Leader, a Member of the Cabinet, a Chair of any Committee or Sub-Committee, or a Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee by delivering them in writing to the Monitoring Officer, to be received by Democratic Services by 5.00 p.m. at least 6 working days prior to a meeting of Council (for example, as the Council usually meets on a Wednesday, the deadline for receipt of questions will be 5.00p.m. on the Monday the week before the meeting is due to be held). The question must relate to a matter which affects the authority or residents of the authority's area and in relation to which the authority has powers, and must name the individual to whom it is addressed. A question must relate to a single proposition and may not contain more than one part. No Member may ask or submit questions on behalf of another Member.
- 14.14 The Monitoring Officer shall copy the question to the Member to whom it is addressed and place it on the agenda for the next meeting of Council unless, in his/her opinion:
- a) the request does not comply with the requirements of Rule 14.13 above)
 - b) the question is defamatory of an individual, offensive, discloses confidential or exempt information, or otherwise infringes the proper conduct of local government

- c) the question is substantially the same as a question which has been previously been received and answered within the past three months, and there has been no significant and relevant change of circumstances since the previous question was answered.

- 14.15 The Monitoring Officer shall place the questions on the agenda in the order that they have been received. Where the Monitoring Officer considers that the question or the answer is likely to disclose confidential or exempt information, he/she shall place the question in the exempt part of the agenda. A question may be withdrawn by the Member giving notice provided that such notice is in writing and is submitted to the Monitoring Officer before the agenda is published.
- 14.16 At the meeting, the Mayor shall enquire whether the Member submitting the question is present. Where they are present, the Member to whom the question was addressed shall then provide a verbal answer to the question (which may include a promise to provide a more detailed answer in writing). Where the Member who submitted the question is not present, the Member to whom the question was addressed may provide a written response as an alternative to a verbal response. A question may be withdrawn after the agenda has been published but before the meeting if the Member who submitted the question has given notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer. A question may be withdrawn at the meeting in person by the Member who submitted the question before it is to be put.