

Blackwood Town Council

Public Speaking Protocol – Full Council Meetings

Members of the Public have the right to speak at Full Council Meetings on any matter for discussion on the agenda for the meeting.

This protocol sets out the provisions of the Council's scheme of participation at meetings and answers some of the questions that you might have about the procedure and what to expect at the Meeting itself. The Town Council welcomes contributions from members of the public and hopes that this procedure will facilitate input from the public, consistent with maintaining orderly conduct of business.

If I want to speak, how do I arrange it?

Members of the public will be allowed at each Full Meeting of the Council to make representations on any item contained on the agenda. A request for participation in the public session should be submitted, if possible, in writing, to the Town Clerk by 12 noon Friday before the meeting.

***Full Council meetings are held on the first Monday of every month except August. The agenda will be published on the Town Council website – blackwoodtowncouncil.org – select (business/meetings)**

When will I be able to speak?

A 20-minute slot will be set aside towards the beginning of each Full Council Meeting or during an agenda item to enable up to 4 members of the public to make an individual representation of up to 5 minutes.

To whom do I address my representations?

Each representation must be directed through the Chair/Mayor.

What is the order of speaking on each item at the meeting?

- The individual will be asked to identify the item they wish to address the Council on.
- Members of the Council with a personal or prejudicial interest should act accordingly.
- The individual will be asked to address the Meeting.

For how long will I be able to speak?

Each address will be limited to 5 minutes, subject to the discretion of the Chair/Mayor. There will be a maximum of 4 representations per meeting.

How will I participate?

Individuals may address the Full Council; However, no dialogue or discussion will be permitted.

NB – Laws of slander/libel are very strict. If you say something, in public, about a person which is untrue, even if you believe it to be true, you may be at risk of legal action. You should think carefully about any criticisms you make about people in public speaking.

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