



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Public Participation at Council Meetings Policy

Policy Statement

Parish council meetings are held in public but are not public meetings. Any member of the public can attend as an observer for the main meeting (but will be required to leave before confidential items are discussed).

Scope

This policy applies to all councillors and employees, including full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract workers, as well as volunteers associated with Alston Moor Parish Council.

Additionally, we set aside a maximum of 15 minutes, (Standing Orders 3f) early in the meeting, for residents to make a statement or ask a question, by prior arrangement with the clerk. Certain rules must be observed for this public participation.

1. No member of the public may speak for more than 3 minutes. (Standing Order 3g)
2. Statements and questions should relate to matters within the remit of the parish council. If in doubt as to whether the topic is appropriate, please consult the clerk at least five days before the meeting.
3. If the contribution relates to an item on the agenda, the points will be noted and considered during later discussion of that agenda item.
4. Complaints about parish council actions or failures to act are better addressed in writing to the clerk, following the complaints policy of the council.
5. If appropriate and necessary, issues raised in public participation may form an agenda item at a future parish council meeting.
6. Other than in exceptional circumstances, at the request of the chair, no member of the public may speak at any other time during the parish council meeting.
7. Minutes of the meeting will include a brief statement of the topics raised, but not names of those speaking during the public participation nor details of the matter.
8. Disorderly conduct at meetings (Standing Order 2)
 - a) No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
 - b) If person(s) disregards the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chair of the meeting may move that

the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.

c) If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

Date of policy: October 2025

Supersedes: Public Participation Policy 2024

Policy effective from: October 2025

Date for next review: October 2027