

LLANTRISANT COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Public Attendance at Council Meetings Policy

Filename:	Clerk/My Documents/Policies/Council/Public Attendance at Council Meetings Policy
Date Adopted:	Sept 2013
Next Review Date:	Sept 2014

Introduction

The Council hopes that this short policy will encourage members of the public to attend its meetings and will be particularly helpful for those unfamiliar with meetings procedure.

Why are meetings held?

Aside from the fact that there is a statutory obligation for the Council to meet, meetings are the Council's principal means by which to discuss issues, formulate policies and make decisions on matters affecting the Llantrisant Community Council wards.

Who can attend?

Anyone. However, if the Council needs to consider certain matters in confidence – such as employee issues, negotiating contracts or pursuing/defending a legal action – Councillors may vote to exclude the public and press.

When are meetings held?

Meetings of the Community Council and its committees are held at the Caerlan Hall in Newbridge, normally on the second Tuesday of the month, with the meeting commencing at 7.00pm.

A timetable of meetings can be found on the Council's web site: **www.council.llantrisant.org.uk** – as can Minutes of previous meetings and much more useful information about the Council. The agendas for meetings (usually published 5 days earlier) appear on the Council's web site and the community noticeboards.

Why should I attend?

- To raise an issue or concern
- To become better informed about topical issues and matters impacting on the wellbeing of the wards and their inhabitants
- To observe Councillors' participation in decision-making

When can I speak?

Unless a Councillor makes a prejudicial interest statement, members of the public have no automatic right to speak during a meeting. However, at the beginning of most Council meetings the chairman may adjourn the meeting for up to 15 minutes for the public to ask questions or express concerns. The Councillors and staff present will endeavour to address the issue you have raised but please be aware that the Council may make decisions only if the matter has been included on the agenda. You may be advised that the Council requires more time in order to investigate your concern before you receive a full response.

It is the chairman who determines who shall speak, in which order and for how long.

If the chairman of a meeting considers that a member of the public present may have information which would help Councillors or committee members make an informed decision, s/he may – with the permission of the meeting – invite that member of the public to speak during the actual meeting.

Note: Other opportunities exist to raise concerns with the Council – including: contacting Councillors directly or contacting the Parish Office.

What happens at meetings?

The area set aside for the public and press (the 'Public Gallery') lies at the back of the hall (by the entrance). If you have a hearing or visual impairment, arrangements will be made for you to sit closer to the Councillors.

The order of business at every meeting will be as set out on that meeting's agenda and we ask that everyone attending respects the office of the chairman who is responsible for the conduct of the meeting and for ensuring that the business specified on the agenda is carried out.

The Clerk will normally be present and is responsible for preparing agendas, taking Minutes and helping Councillors make decisions that are informed, procedurally correct and lawful.

Still unsure about attending?

The Council appreciates that some people may find the prospect of attending a meeting for the first time a little intimidating. If you have any concerns at all about attending a meeting please do contact the Parish Office for help and guidance. If we know you are coming to a meeting we can make sure there is someone there to greet and advise you.

How to contact us

The Community Council offices are open Monday to Friday, 9.30am-1.30pm.

Llantrisant Community Council
Parish Office
Newbridge Road
Llantrisant
CF72 8EX

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