

Council Meetings - Questions by the Public to Cabinet Members

1. Who can ask Questions?

Members of the public who are on the Derbyshire County Council register of electors, or are Derbyshire County Council tax payers or non-domestic tax payers, may ask questions of members of the Cabinet at ordinary meetings of the Council.

2. What notice is required?

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by fax or electronic mail, to the Director of Legal Services no later than 12noon three working days before the Council Meeting (i.e. on a Friday when Council meets on the following Wednesday). The notice must give the name and address of the questioner and the name of the Cabinet Member of the Council to whom the question is to be put.

3. Where should Questions be sent?

Questions should be sent to the Director of Legal Services in one of the following ways:

By post: Mr J McElvaney, Director of Legal Services, County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG.

By email: john.mcelvaney@derbyshire.gov.uk

By Fax: 01629 538326

4. How many Questions can be asked?

At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question, and no more than one such question may be asked on behalf of one organisation.

5. Scope of Questions

A question may be rejected by the Director of Legal Services if it:-

- Exceeds 200 words in length;
- is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility, or which affects Derbyshire;

- is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
- requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

6. What happens at the Meeting?

The Chair will invite the questioner to put the question to the Cabinet Member named in the notice. If the questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, he/she may ask the Chair to put the question on his/her behalf. In the absence of the questioner, the Chair may ask the question on the questioner's behalf, indicate that a written reply will be given, or decide that the question will not be dealt with.

The time allocated for questions by the public at each meeting will be 30 minutes. This period may be extended however, at the discretion of the Chair. Questions will be considered at the Council meeting in the order in which they were received.

Any questions not answered at the end of the time allocated for questions by the public will be answered in writing. Any question that cannot be dealt with during public question time because of the non-attendance of the Member to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer.

7. Can a supplementary question be asked?

The questioner may ask one supplementary question to the Cabinet Member who has replied to the original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the response provided by the Cabinet Member.

John McElvaney
Director of Legal Services

June 2015