

Public Participation Session

Any member of the public, being resident in, or a registered local government elector for Suffolk may take part in Public Participation Sessions at meetings of the following committees:

- Audit Committee
- Gt Yarmouth & Waveney Joint Health Scrutiny Committee
- Health Scrutiny Committee
- Pension Fund Committee
- Scrutiny Committee
- Suffolk Flood Risk Joint Scrutiny Sub-Committee

What is the deadline for applying to speak?

Notification must be received in writing by no later than 12 noon on the fourth working day before the meeting. Information about meeting dates is available on the Council's website: www.suffolk.gov.uk/meeting-dates

How long does a Public Participation Session last?

20 minutes will be set aside for the Public Participation Session. Contributions from the public will be taken in the order that they were received, unless the Chairman considers there is a more appropriate place on the Agenda for them to be taken.

How long can I speak for?

You may speak for up to five minutes. If there are more than four people wishing to speak, the Chairman may reduce the amount of time allowed for each speaker.

Can I ask a question rather than make a statement?

No, speakers may not ask questions at the meeting, but you are welcome to contact officers before the meeting.

What can I speak about?

Your statement must be about something on the agenda for the meeting. It must not be defamatory or offensive.

Do I have to be present to make a comment?

Yes.

How will the Committee respond?

The Chairman has discretion to decide how the Council or Committee will respond to comments from a member of the public. Through the Chairman, the Council or Committee may seek clarification or confirmation of facts from you. However, members will not enter into a debate with you during the Public Participation Session.

What will happen after the Public Participation Session?

After the Public Participation Session, you may stay for the remainder of the meeting or leave, as you wish.

A note of the issues raised will be made and will form a distinct part of the minutes of the meeting. The minutes will provide a brief outline of the issues raised and identify the speakers. The unconfirmed minutes will be available no later than five working days before the next meeting of the Committee.

Where are the meetings held?

Most of the meetings of Council and Cabinet are held at Endeavour House, Ipswich, where there are arrangements for people with mobility difficulties. If a meeting is held away from Endeavour House, every effort is made to ensure that it is accessible to all. Most Council and Cabinet meetings are open to the public, and there is an area of seating for people wishing to observe the meeting.

Fire and safety considerations determine the seating capacity of the public area and when a particular proposal attracts considerable interest, if possible, alternative arrangements will be made to accommodate those wishing to listen to the proceedings. If the Council or the Cabinet considers confidential information, the public and press will be asked to leave for that part of the meeting.

What time should I arrive?

Please try to arrive about 15 minutes before the meeting, so that we can explain the seating arrangements and use of the microphones. If you have a disability which you think may affect the seating arrangements or give rise to any special requirements, please let us know as soon as possible in advance of the meeting (see below for contact details). We can also provide information about disabled parking facilities.

How do I register to take part in a Public Participation Session?

Your application, in writing, must be received by no later than 12 noon on the fourth working day before the meeting.

Register your place using the online form: www.suffolk.gov.uk/apply-to-speak

Or send your application (including the topic for your statement and which meeting you wish it to be considered at) to:

Email: committee.services@suffolk.gov.uk; or

Address: Democratic Services, Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2BX

Please make sure you state clearly:

- Your name, address and telephone number.
- The subject matter you wish to raise.
- If appropriate, the name of any organisation you represent.

If you have any queries, or need any assistance to participate in the meeting, please telephone Democratic Services on: 01473 265119.