

Oxfordshire Growth Board Public Participation Protocol

August 2020

Introduction

1. Members of the public may ask questions of, or make addresses to, the Growth Board at its meetings, subject to the restrictions in this protocol. There shall be a specific item on each agenda for public speaking to take place.
2. Questions and addresses must be directly relevant the Growth Board's functions and must relate to a substantive agenda item for that meeting.
3. This protocol will also apply to Growth Board Scrutiny Panel meetings until such a time that the Panel establishes separate arrangements.
4. Up to 30 minutes of each meeting will be designated for public speaking.

Questions and Addresses

5. Any member of the public wishing to ask a question or make a statement may do so at a meeting of the Growth Board, and must give notice of the question or statement in writing or by email to the Chief Executive or the Secretariat of the host authority, at least three clear days before the meeting (i.e. not counting the day of the meeting or the day of receipt).
6. Such questions and statements shall be for up to three minutes each, but this time may be varied at the Chair's discretion depending on the number of speakers in attendance and having regard to the total time allocated to public speaking.
7. The Chair will direct questions to the most relevant person on the Board to answer submitted questions, which may include supporting officers in attendance where the matter is of a technical nature.
8. The speaker may read their question or statement, but the Chair will do so if the questioner wishes for that or is not present at the meeting.
9. A supplementary question may be asked if, in the Chair's judgement, this can be managed within the time allocated to public speaking.
10. The answer given may take the form of an oral statement or may be given subsequently in writing to the questioner and published online. It is intended any written response will be given within ten clear working days of the meeting. Any oral response will be summarised as part of the minutes of that meeting.
11. The Chief Executive of the host authority may, in consultation with the Chair of the Growth Board, refuse to accept a submitted question or address if they consider it to be offensive, defamatory, frivolous, vexatious, or is not directly relevant to the remit of the Growth Board.

12. There will not normally be any discussion on representations made except to the extent that they are considered when the relevant agenda item is considered later in the meeting.
13. A written summary of public addresses and questions will be provided in the minutes of the meeting.

Restrictions

14. Submitted questions shall be dealt with in the order of receipt by the host authority, except where matters on the same subject can be grouped together.
15. The Chair may vary the provisions of this scheme for a meeting, on taking advice, should they believe that to be appropriate.