

Procedure for Public Speaking: Licensing

26/08/2022

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Please note: This procedure applies only to those items of the meeting not governed by Licensing Act 2003 Hearing Procedures or Determination of Application Guidelines.

Licensing Committees

Members of the public have the right to speak at Licensing Committee meetings on items listed on the agenda for that particular meeting. This procedure explains how the Licensing Committee works and how you can have your say on an agenda item of concern to you.

The committee has to make decisions in the public interest and on the merits of each item individually, on the basis of what is relevant in the Council's various Licensing policies and procedures. All representations made in writing will be taken into account in written reports, but this is another opportunity for you to make your views known.

If you would like any further information or have any queries, please contact:

Committee and Member Services
Rossendale Borough Council
The Business Centre
Futures Park
Bacup
Lancashire
OL13 0BB
Tel: 01706 252426
Email: democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Details of Licensing Committee Meetings

Licensing Committee meetings are usually held in the Council Chamber and usually start at 6.30pm. Details of meeting dates, times and venues are publicised on the Council's website www.rossendale.gov.uk/meetings; at the One Stop Shop, Futures Park, Bacup, or they can be obtained from Committee and Member Services.

Agenda papers

Agendas are usually published on the Council's website 5 clear days before the meeting. For a meeting on a Tuesday the agenda should be available for inspection on the preceding Monday evening. Some items of Council business are confidential and the information is not available to the public.

Registering to speak

Members of the public are required to contact a member of the Committee and Member Services team if they wish to speak on an item by no later than 12 noon on the day of the committee meeting. A maximum of 2 public representatives will be allowed to register per item, and will be allocated the opportunity to speak on a first come basis. Several persons wishing to speak on an item should nominate one representative to speak on their behalf. If no agreement can be reached then the first party to register a wish to speak will be chosen.

Responsible Section/Team	Committee and Member Services	Version/Status	1
Responsible Author	Committee and Member Services Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	25/10/2022 SOD
Date last Amended	26/08/2022	Due for Review	September 2026

What happens when I arrive?

You should arrive at the meeting at least 10-15 minutes before the start of the meeting. Please make yourself known to the Committee Officer. This allows time for an explanation of the procedures.

How should I ask a question or give a statement?

Begin by giving your name and whether you are speaking as an individual member of the public or as a representative of a group. It is useful to prepare notes in advance to ensure that all the important points are covered. Try and be brief and to the point. Do not make derogatory or defamatory statements. Bring an extra copy of any prepared statement for the chairperson's information.

How long may I speak for?

You will be given a maximum of 3 minutes to address the committee.

Procedure for speaking on agenda items at the Licensing Committee

The Licensing and Enforcement Manager/Officer will briefly introduce the report and refer to any new issues raised since the report was published.

The first speaker will be invited to address the committee for a maximum of 3 minutes.

Members of the committee may then, if necessary, through the chairperson, question the speaker to clarify any points, or issues already raised.

The second speaker will then be invited to address the committee for a maximum of 3 minutes.

Members of the committee may then, if necessary, through the chairperson, question the speaker to clarify any points, or issues already raised.

The Licensing and Enforcement Manager/Officer will then bring any necessary information, in addition to that contained in the report to the committee's attention.

Any elected member who is not a member of the committee may, by prior agreement with the chairperson, be allowed to address the committee once per item, for a maximum of 5 minutes in each case.

The members of the committee only then debate and decide upon the item. The public cannot take part in this debate and decision making.

After hearing the committee's decision you are welcome to stay and listen to the discussion about other agenda items, but if you wish to leave please do so as discreetly as possible so as not to unduly disturb and delay the committee and other parties who may well be attempting to consider later items.

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Some questions are not allowed

You may not ask a question in furtherance of your own particular circumstances. These should be taken up with officers or councillors outside of the meeting. Nor may people ask about a matter where there is a right of appeal to the courts, tribunal or to a Government minister. You may not ask a question about the service of any person employed by the Council.

Do not make derogatory or defamatory statements. The chairperson may disallow any question that, in their opinion, is improper, vexatious irrelevant or otherwise objectionable.

The chairperson can also limit the number of questions that a person may ask. The answer may be given in writing. Any question not dealt with at the meeting will normally be answered within 10 working days.

Conduct at meetings

Once the meeting has started you are not permitted to approach or engage with members or officers. Members of the public cannot take part in the debate or decision making and may not question members or disrupt the meeting.

The laws of slander are very complex and serious. If you say something defamatory in public about a person that is untrue, even if you believe it to be true, you may be at personal risk of legal action. You should very carefully consider any criticisms you wish to make about people when speaking at Council and committee meetings. The chairperson can ask a speaker to stop speaking and/or leave if the speaker behaves inappropriately.

When will the minutes of the meeting be published?

The minutes of meetings are usually available 4 working days after the meeting and agreed at the subsequent meeting.

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