

Guidance on the ‘Public Question Time’ and public speaking schemes

Under the ‘Public Question Time’ scheme, any member of the public may ask a question at an Authority meeting, on any matter relating to the business of the Broads Authority or its committees.

We also operate a public speaking scheme for people wishing to make representations on items included on an Authority meeting agenda.

Please note that if you want to speak to our Planning Committee as an applicant or objector to a development proposal, you will need to refer to our separate ‘Public speaking at Planning Committee’ arrangements. For more information, visit our planning pages at www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-us/committees/planning-committee.

How do I submit a question?

The Authority allows a period of 20 minutes at the beginning of its meetings to deal with public questions.

Please submit your question in writing to the Chief Executive using the contact details below, at least four clear working days before the meeting date. You should include the subject matter, name, address and contact details of the person asking the question. You will receive an email acknowledging receipt.

You will be allowed a maximum of five minutes at the meeting to present your question, so bear this in mind. There is also a limit of a maximum of three questions per person/organisation per meeting.

Any question or statement that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair, considers to be vexatious or defamatory, or that relates to a specific Authority officer or member, will not be included and you will be informed of this.

What happens at the meeting?

Public question time is included in the meeting agenda. The Chair will invite you to read out your question and, they will then read out the Authority’s response.

You may ask one supplementary question (directly related to the original question or reply), which the Chair or an officer may answer at the meeting if the information is available. If not, we will provide you with a written answer within 20 working days of the meeting date. Supplementary questions are limited to one minute.

If you are unable to attend the meeting to ask your question, the Chair will read out your question to the meeting, together with the Authority's response.

A record of questions and responses will be included in the formal minutes of the meeting.

How do I register to speak at an Authority meeting?

You will need to register to speak at least two clear working days before the Authority meeting. Please contact the Governance team using the contact details below. Please state the agenda item you wish to make verbal representations on and include your name, address and contact details. You will receive an email acknowledging receipt of your request.

You will be allowed a maximum of five minutes to make your verbal representations so please bear this in mind. A total of ten minutes is allocated between all speakers on any one item, unless the Chair rules otherwise.

What happens at the meeting?

The Governance Officer will take your name and explain how the meeting will run.

The Chair will invite public speakers to address the meeting following the officer presentation on the relevant agenda item. Please ensure that you keep to the subject matter under discussion; your statement is not defamatory or vexatious; and does not relate specifically to an Authority member or officer. Public speakers will not be permitted to question other speakers, officers or Members.

A summary of your representation will be included in the formal minutes of the meeting.

Publication of agenda papers

Broads Authority agenda papers are published five working days before the meeting date. Visit the [committees page](#) on our website for meeting dates and to view the papers.

Contact information

Please submit your question in writing or request to speak to:

Chief Executive
Broads Authority
Yare House
62-64 Thorpe Road
Norwich NR1 1RY
Email: committees@broads-authority.gov.uk
Tel: 01603 756062

Any enquiries about the Public Question Time scheme or requests to speak at an Authority meeting, should be made to the Governance team using the contact details above.