

PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

Preston Parish Council wishes to encourage public participation during its meetings in order to use this as one means of consulting with the public. However, the Council has a duty to ensure that its meetings operate effectively, and accordingly, the following rules must be observed for public participation.

1. Public participation will take place at every full Parish Council unless the press and public are excluded by resolution as per Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.
2. Public participation is an opportunity to ask questions and to make representations to the Council. All questions to be asked should be submitted to the Parish Clerk prior to the meeting at which you wish to ask the question. Otherwise, comments must be directed to the Chair of the meeting.
3. **The public are not allowed to speak at any other time before or after the public participation session.**
4. Public participation will take place at an early stage in the meeting as dictated by the agenda. As per Standing Orders the time allowed for public participation will not exceed 15 minutes in total. Each member of the public will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes to ask a question or make a statement. A question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. The Chair will determine in what order members of the public will be allowed to ask their questions.
5. Those Councillors who have declared a prejudicial interest will be heard first. After asking questions, giving evidence or making representations regarding the business to be transacted the Councillor must leave the room before any other representations are made; they cannot hear the representations of others.
6. Such sessions form part of the council meeting in law and shall be included in the minutes.
7. As per Standing Orders a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To 'report' means to film, photograph and make an audio recording of meeting proceedings and use other means to enable persons not present, to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.

A person present at a meeting may NOT provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.

In allowing public participation the Council is aware that this forms only one means of consultation with the public, and that no decisions other than undertaking further research or writing to relevant bodies can be taken at the meeting where the matter is raised.

In answer to questions about services the Parish Council provides, answers where possible will be given at the meeting. If this is not possible a written response will be given to the questioner within 14 days of the meeting, the contents of which will be relayed to the next Parish Council meeting.

If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may, after warning, order that the person be removed from the meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such time is necessary to restore order.

Approved by Preston Parish Council on 14th September 2026. Minute ref: Sep26/11