

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Public Question Time will be conducted on the Main Council Agenda each month and will occur after Apologies. The rules relating to the Public Question Time are listed below:-

1. An Agenda item should appear on each Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda, immediately after Declarations of Interest. The Agenda item heading should read 'Public Question Time'.
2. Questions (written or oral) should only be accepted from electors from the four Wards of Buckley Town Council and should be limited to one question per elector per month. The Council should not accept or answer frivolous or vexatious questions.
3. Questions should only be asked that relate to matters regarding the services provided by Buckley Town Council, questions should not be accepted that relate to other Councils or Agencies.
4. When the matter falls under the responsibility of the Unitary Authority – Flintshire County Council this will be forwarded.
5. No questions will be entertained that may be deemed to include potential personal canvassing on any matter or seek to gain an advantage for the questioner on any matter.
6. Repeat questions from previous months should not be considered.
7. The minutes should record the questions asked and the answers given.
8. Questions can be submitted in writing:-
 - 8.1. Questions should be received 7 working days before the Council meeting.
 - 8.2. The questions should be read out, the answer given with no further debate.
9. Questions raised orally:-
 - 9.1. No one person may speak for longer than 3 minutes except by consent of the Council.



PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

10. A maximum of 15 minutes should be allowed for the Mayor or Chair of a relevant Committee to answer the questions.
11. A maximum of five written or oral questions per month should be accepted. The questions should normally be chosen on a first come first served basis.
12. All questions (written or oral) shall be answered:
 - a) At the meeting by the Town Mayor, Chair of the appropriate Committee or the Town Clerk when there are matters specifically the responsibilities of the Town Council, or
 - b) In writing following the meeting by the Town Clerk after consultation with the Town Mayor or appropriate Committee Chair or
 - c) By placing an item on an agenda for the appropriate Committee or a future Council meeting to consider.



Welcome to the Council meeting of Buckley Town Council

A guide to 'Public Participation' at meetings



What is a Town Council meeting?

It is a business meeting for the Town Council.

The Council makes its decisions at meetings.

Sometimes there is a lot of discussion before a decision is taken.

The public have a right to come and observe the business conducted at the Council meeting.

Can I address the Council with questions, ideas or concerns at a Town Council meeting?

YES! Public participation is important to the Council.

Buckley Town Council sets aside some time for the public to address the Town Council during its monthly meetings. This time is near the beginning of the meeting and called

'Public Question Time'.

Are there any guidelines for 'Public Participation'?



There are some guidelines the Council ask the public to observe during 'Public Participation'.

These guidelines help the Council to continue to run an efficient and balanced meeting.

- Members of the public may make representations and ask questions in respect of the **business on the agenda**.
- If matters raised are not on the agenda for the meeting these can be used to **form part of the agenda for a future meeting** at the discretion of the Council.
- The period of time designated for the entire 'Public Participation' session at a meeting shall not exceed **15 minutes** unless directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- An individual member of the public shall not speak for more than **3 minutes**.

- A question shall not require an immediate response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question.
- The Chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the Chair of the meeting.
- Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

Other than the ‘Public Participation’ item on the agenda can I join in with the rest of the meeting?

Outside of the ‘Public Participation’ item on the agenda, members of the public are very welcome to stay and **observe** the meetings proceedings.

There may be times when public attendance is not allowed because it could affect the public interest due to confidential matters or other special reasons. If a confidential matter is discussed, the public and the press may be excluded from part or all of the meeting. If this happens, the Council will make a decision and provide reasons for it.

By law, members of the public cannot join in the Council's debate or comment on other agenda items. We kindly ask that this rule be respected at all times.



Buckley Town Council

Councillors, Staff and Residents working together to change our community for the better

We look forward to meeting you soon

Disorderly Conduct at Meetings

The Councillors and the Town Clerk of Buckley Town Council are a friendly and hardworking team who welcome the input of the residents of Buckley.

The Council kindly asks that members of the public do not disrupt the meeting. If a disruption occurs, the following rules on disorderly conduct apply:

1. No person should interrupt the meeting or behave in an offensive or improper way. If someone does, the Chair will ask them to correct their behaviour.
2. If the person does not respond to the Chair's request, any Councillor or the Chair may suggest that the person should not be allowed to speak or be asked to leave the meeting. This suggestion, if supported by another Councillor, will be voted on without discussion.
3. If the decision in (2) is ignored, the Chair may take further reasonable steps to restore order and continue the meeting. This may include temporarily pausing or closing the meeting.