

ELSWICK PARISH COUNCIL
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY
Adopted 24.11.16

All members of the public and press are welcome to attend meetings of Elswick Parish Council and have a legal right to do so under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. **The Parish Council meeting is not a public meeting but a meeting conducted in public.** From time to time confidential items may be discussed in which case the press and members of the public are excluded in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Although there is no statutory right for members of the public to speak at these meetings Elswick Parish Council meets and makes its decisions in public and is committed to community engagement and as such residents are warmly invited to attend and contribute during public time.

The agenda is the official order of business for Parish Council meetings. By law, the Parish Council cannot take action on items or issues that are not listed in the agenda.

All notices of meetings and agendas are posted in the following locations:

- Parish Council Notice Board: Burton House Stores, High Street
- Parish Council Notice Board: Elswick Village Hall, Roseacre Road
- The Agenda and Minutes page of the Parish Council website (elswickparishcouncil.gov.uk)

There is a period of 15 minutes set aside for Public Time just before the formal agenda starts in order that councillors can take account of any views expressed when reaching their decision. There will be no debate during this period and no dialog with members. The session will purely be an opportunity for residents of the village to address the council.

- Any resident wishing to address the council must register with the clerk by email or letter no later than 12 noon on the day of the meeting. A maximum of five speakers will be heard per meeting.
- All speakers will be heard in order of registration.
- Speakers must sit at the parish council table and start their address by stating their name and home address. Speakers may only speak once.
- The Chairman will control the session.
- Questions and comments must be directed to the Chairman of the meeting. Questions may be answered later in the Council meeting or in writing.
- Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. Each speaker can speak for up to 3 minutes or as decided by the Chairman (*If there is a keen interest in an issue, a spokesperson should be appointed to speak rather than the same point being repeated*)
- Where there is repetition the Chairman will have the right to stop a speaker prior to the completion of the allotted 3 minutes.
- Questions and comments should address only business on the agenda. Otherwise, the matter will be carried forward, without discussion, to the next meeting, if appropriate.

Public Participation Time is not, and has never been, the principal means of communication between residents and their councillors. Contact can be made by e-mail, letter or telephone using the contact list on the notice boards and website.

The Parish Council would be grateful if members of the public would respect the fact that this is a meeting to conduct council business and interruptions during council business are not permitted.