



## How to ask a public question at a Council meeting?

Any person registered as a local government elector for the Borough of Cheltenham may at any meeting of Council or its committees, ask written questions of:

- The Mayor (at Council)
- The Leader (at Council or Cabinet)
- A Cabinet Member (at Council or Cabinet)
- Chairmen of Committees (at Council or at the relevant committee)

The process is as follows:

1. Send your written question by post, email ([democratic.services@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@cheltenham.gov.uk)) or in person, to arrive no later than midday on the fourth working day before the day of the meeting. The agendas for public meetings will be published on the council website at least five working days before the meeting and available for inspection at the Municipal Offices.
2. Supply your name and address with the question, so that we can confirm you are a registered elector in Cheltenham. Your name will be made public but not your address. State clearly to whom your question is to be put (their title is sufficient, i.e. Cabinet Member) and indicate whether you intend to attend the meeting.
3. No member of the public or any organisation may submit more than two written questions to any one meeting. If it is an Extraordinary meeting of Council i.e. set up to consider a specific matter, then your question must be related to that issue.
4. We will confirm receipt of your question and your question will then be put to the Head of Paid Service for approval under the rules of the Council's constitution and if accepted, forwarded to the relevant Councillor to prepare a response.
5. For Council copies of the questions will be published with the agenda on the council's website once all questions have been received and approved. The questions and responses will be published with the agenda by 11am on the day of the meeting.
6. Hard copies of all public questions and answers will be available when you arrive for the meeting and a member of the Democratic Services team will be there to meet you and explain the procedures.
6. If you attend the meeting, the Mayor (or chair) will invite you to put your question and to take a seat near a microphone. You will be encouraged to have the question taken as read. The response from the Councillor is usually taken as read unless you request that you would like it to be read out in full. Unless the Mayor (or chair) decides otherwise, there will be no discussion on any question.
7. You may ask one supplementary question of the Councillor who replied to your original question and relating to the original question or the response. You can only ask a supplementary question if you are present and it must be a question rather than a comment on the response. Answers to supplementary questions will be given as a direct oral answer.

8. If you don't attend the meeting, a copy of the answer can be sent to you by email or seen when the minutes are published.
9. All questions and answers and supplementary questions and answers will be recorded in the minutes and available to the public on the website.
10. There is an overall limit of 30 minutes for public question time but this can be extended at the discretion of the Mayor (or chair).

### Further Information

- The rules for public questions are set out in the constitution and can be viewed via this link: <https://democracy.cheltenham.gov.uk/documents/s13269/PART%204A%20COUNCIL%20PROCEDURE%20RULES.pdf>
- If you have any difficulties or need advice contact Democratic Services by phone on 01242 264246, email [democratic.services@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@cheltenham.gov.uk) or write to us at:-

Cheltenham Borough Council  
Municipal Offices  
Promenade  
Cheltenham  
GL50 9SA

- There are special procedures for public speaking at Planning and Licensing Committees.

Rules for Planning can be viewed via this link:

[Public speaking at Planning Committee - Public speaking at Planning Committee - Downloads - Cheltenham Borough Council](#)

For the Licensing Committee contact the licensing team by phone on 01242 262626 or email [licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk)

- Under the new General Data Protection Regulations we are required to advise you why we collect your name and address so please read the [privacy statement](#).
- Please also be advised that the Council meeting will be filmed by the council for live and/or subsequent broadcast online. The footage will be on the website and on the YouTube channel for a period of six months. A record of it will also be retained for four years in accordance with the council's data retention procedures. Please contact us, in advance of the meeting, if you do not wish to be recorded and mitigating measures will be put in place.