

## **Reighton & Speeton Parish Council – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

### **Public Participation at Parish Council Meetings Policy**

Meetings of the Parish Council are not public meetings but members of the public have a statutory right to attend meetings except where they are excluded (by a resolution of the meeting) for specific items which need to be discussed in confidence. They have no legal right to speak unless permission is given to do so.

A Parish Council can set out a time for public participation at an agreed time when members of the public are invited to speak.

Reighton & Speeton Parish Council include a Public Participation Session in its agenda & this is structured by having adopted model Standing Orders as issued by NALC.

#### **Standing Order 3 e to h**

**e.** Members of the public may make representations, answer questions & give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

**f.** The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed (15) minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

**g.** Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than (3) minutes.

**h.** In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

Comments made during the public participation will be briefly minuted & will not be a verbatim record. The names of members of the public who speak will not be recorded.

It is undesirable to allow members of the public to speak throughout the meeting as this runs the risk of confusing the roles of councillors, who participate in the meeting, and members of the public who observe it.

The public have a legal right to attend council and committee meetings but they don't have a right to disrupt them. Disorderly conduct at meetings is also covered by our adopted Standing Orders

#### **Standing Order 2 a to c**

**a.** No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.

**b.** If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.

**c.** If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.