

Smisby Parish Council

Standing orders for public participation in parish council meetings

September 2009

1. In principle, the public (which includes the press) is entitled to be present at all meetings of the Parish Council.
2. The Council, however, may exclude the public for a particular item of business, if it is reasonably of the opinion that the business is 'confidential' or such exclusion is in the public interest. Where the public and press have been excluded, the decisions made in the closed session will be minuted and a record kept of who was present at the session.
3. The public cannot, of course, take part in the proceedings of the Council, but Smisby Parish Council will arrange for a short period ~~before~~ near the beginning of each meeting (as determined by the Chairman, usually about 10 minutes) when members of the public can put questions to the Council or to make observations. This is to create and sustain public interest in the parish council role and village matters.
4. The order of receiving comments from the public is police, councillors / statutory authorities and then public comments
5. The Chairman will decide, for each public submission received, whether to
 - ❖ handle the matter immediately by raising the item under Chairman's Communications during the meeting, or
 - ❖ to nominate a councillor or the Clerk to commit a response in writing before the next meeting, or
 - ❖ to defer the matter for research followed by possible inclusion on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting
6. Parishioners are welcome to write to ask that a particular matter be placed on the agenda for a Parish Council meeting. Such requests must reach the Clerk at least 7 days before the meeting. The Council will then consider the request to place the item on the agenda or explain in writing why it is not appropriate to do so.