

Reference: nalc Legal Topic Note; 5E, 28 OCTOBER 2022 - Extract

Public participation

42. When the public attend meetings, including attending remotely if the council so permits, they have no right to participate in them, unless permission is given. It is good practice for councils to set aside time (e.g. 15 or 20 minutes) at meetings for the public to make statements and ask questions. It is advisable for a council to permit public participation at meetings of the full council (and the meetings of committees) that are likely to be of most interest to the public e.g. a planning committee. Where members of the public are attending remotely a council should ensure that they can remotely contribute to the public participation. Councils are recommended to adopt standing orders to structure public participation sessions and may refer to NALC's model standing orders 3e-h. Standing orders may confirm that public participation at a meeting is restricted to items of business on the agenda for the meeting. Members of the public who wish to communicate about business which is not included in the agenda for a meeting may communicate with the council in alternative ways e.g. by written correspondence or attending councillors' surgeries.

43. Where a council permits the public to participate at a meeting, this session:

- a) is included as an item in the agenda
- b) forms part of the council meeting in law;
- c) is managed by the Chair of the meeting