



Chichester District Council
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Designed by Chichester District Council
April 2015



Public Question Time

Revised April 2015

Public Question Time

Public Question Time is a well established opportunity for you to come along to meetings and ask questions of your elected district councillors on issues of local concern. It was introduced with the aim of increasing your involvement in District Council affairs as well as giving you the opportunity to have a greater understanding of the way in which your Council conducts its business.

How does the scheme work?

A period of 15 minutes is set aside at the start of Council, Cabinet and committee meetings shown on the council's website www.chichester.gov.uk/committeemeetingscalendar, other than meetings of the Planning Committee.

Questions can be asked by residents or non-domestic ratepayers of the District. The questions must be in writing and should be kept as concise as possible. They must be signed, show the name and address of the questioner and be dated. Those which take the form of a long address may not be accepted. **Questions should be sent to the Member Services Manager at East Pallant House, Chichester, PO19 1TY**

A tear-off form for you to use is set out at the end of this booklet but questions will also be accepted by letter or email to memberservices@chichester.gov.uk

Each questioner will be allowed a maximum of 5 minutes to ask their questions. At the Chairman's discretion, supplementary questions may be permitted. The Chairman may also extend the limit for each member of the public asking questions or the total time for public questions.

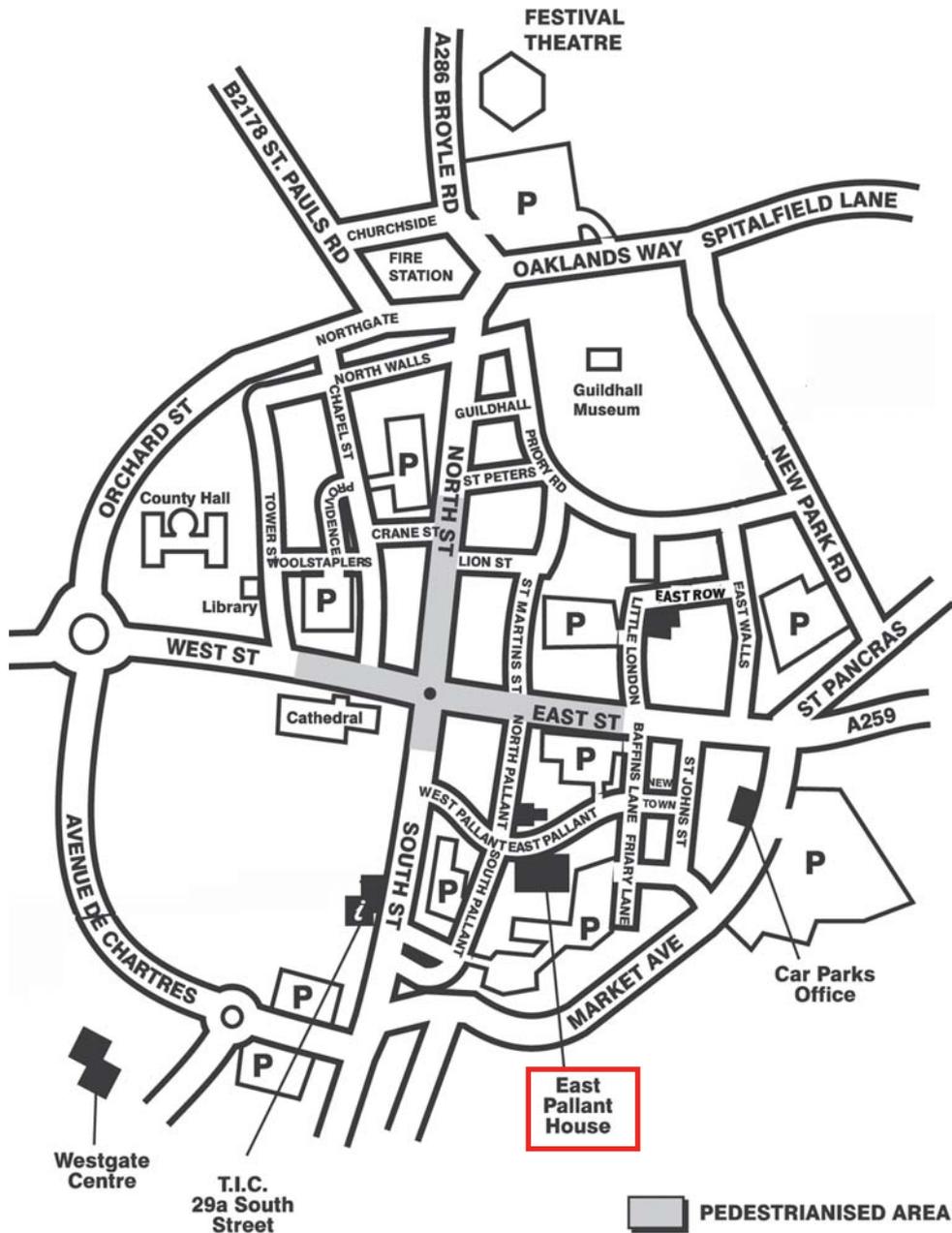


Public Question Time

Name & Address of Questioner:

I wish to ask the following question of the Chairman of the meeting of the _____
to be held on _____

Signed _____ Date _____



Questions will be dealt with on a “first come/first served” basis and will be accepted up to noon on the previous working day before the meeting. In the case of a meeting held on a Monday, the deadline will be noon on the previous Friday. In the event that neither the questioner nor their representative are present at the meeting, the question will not be asked but the questioner will receive a written answer within 7 working days.

If any question remains unanswered at the end of the 15 minute time limit and no extension has been allowed, a response will be given in writing within 7 working days.

The timetable of meetings shown on the website to which public question time applies is not exhaustive as there are a number of meetings which are held on an ad hoc basis and are not shown on the timetable. Sometimes meetings are cancelled or other venues are used so it is worthwhile to double check with the Member Services Section. Details of all forthcoming public meetings are published on notices displayed at East Pallant House, the Assembly Rooms (the offices of Chichester City Council) and at the District Council’s Area Offices at Midhurst and Selsey. Further information can always be obtained from the Member Services Section at East Pallant House (Telephone (01243) 534653 or 534684 or 534655 or 534674).

Planning Committee

This Committee deals with planning applications and the planning process provides the opportunity for members of the public to comment on applications prior to them being considered by this Committee. A separate code of practice on public speaking at Planning Committee is on the Council’s website at www.chichester.gov.uk or available from the Member Services Section.

Other points you need to know

As with any system there have to be some exceptions. These are:-

- ◆ Questions about planning applications being considered by the Planning Committee or Council will not be accepted.
- ◆ Questions should not relate to matters personal to the questioner, spouse, partner or relative.
- ◆ Questions will not be taken on matters within the various categories of “exempt information” in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (details of which are set out below).
- ◆ The facility to ask a question is not available when the Committee acts like a court of law e.g. in considering licensing matters.

The following is a schedule of the Classes of “exempt information” in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and about which questions would not normally be permitted:-

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim or legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes -
 - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.