

Protocol on Public speaking at the Rossendale 3 Tier Forum @ December 2013

For the purpose of this protocol, "members of the public" includes members of the press and parish and district councillors who are not members of the Forum. It does not include officers of county or district authorities who are in attendance to support and advise the meeting.

Each Forum will agree at what points of the meeting members of the public will be entitled to speak. **On the 4th December 2013 the Forum agreed that members of the public would be allowed to speak during the discussion of each item on the agenda.**

Each Forum may also set a maximum length of time for any individual speech from a member of the public. **On the 4th December 2013 the Forum agreed that each speaker would have up to 3 minutes per person, to be managed by the Chair at their discretion.**

Public speaking must be on topics included on the agenda for the meeting.

Whilst a member of the public is speaking, no interruption shall be allowed from either a member of the Forum or another member of the public.

However, the Chair of the meeting may intervene in the speech of a member of the public. This includes the right of the Chair to terminate a speech if it is felt appropriate to do so. The Chair's judgement will be informed by the following provision:

Members of the public must not

- Speak at a point in the meeting other than those specified
- Interrupt another speaker
- Speak for longer than the allotted time
- Reveal personal information about another individual
- Make a personal complaint about a service provided by County, District or Town / Parish Councils in the area
- Make individual or personal complaints against any member of the authority
- Reveal information which they know or believe to be confidential
- Use offensive, abusive or threatening language
- Ignore the ruling of the Chair of the meeting

Members of the public who breach these guidelines may, following a warning, be asked to leave the meeting. If a person refuses to leave the room, the Chair shall adjourn the meeting for a short period of time and if necessary to a later date

Speeches by members of the public are not expected to be the subject of a debate, nor are any questions raised expected to be answered. The Chair may, at his or her discretion, invite a response or comment from an appropriate officer or Forum member, but it is anticipated that this will be the exception rather than the rule.

The contents of any speech by a member of the public will be noted by officers supporting the Forum and will be dealt with via the appropriate mechanism.