

### **West Lancashire 3 Tier Forum - Terms of Reference**

- The Forums are joint business meetings of County/District/Parish Councillors.
- The membership of each Forum will be all local County Councillors and an equal number of District Councillors appointed by the District Council, and one Parish/Town Council representative nominated from the Parish Councils within the District area. District Councils and the Parish Councils can nominate deputies.
- The Forums will discuss issues that are of joint interest across the three levels of local government in the area.
- Agenda items will focus on strategic issues relating to all local councils in the area; the Chair is responsible for agreeing the agenda and where issues are raised that do not fall within the remit of the Forum these will be dealt with via the appropriate mechanism.
- In respect of the service areas and joint working arrangements referred for consideration, the Forum will reach agreement by consensus, failing which the issue will be referred to the Leaders of the County Council and District Council to be resolved.
- The Forums are not formal committees of County, District or Parish Councils, therefore Access to Information provisions do not apply.
- The appointment of the Chair and Deputy Chair is the decision of the Forum and will take place annually after a full round of meetings. There is no requirement for the Chairperson to rotate between County and District, and the same Chair and Deputy can be re-elected. The P&TC rep can also be nominated for either role.
- Forums will meet 3 times a year.

## **Protocol for Public Speaking at the West Lancashire 3 Tier Forum**

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.

On 25 November, 2013 the Forum agreed that members of the public would be able to raise any matters of interest or concern during a maximum 30 minute period prior to the start of a meeting. The public cannot speak once a meeting has started.

Public speaking must be on matters which are the functions of the County, District or Parish Council.

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.