

Extract of Part 5: Policy and Procedure Rules

RULE 11: Questions by Members

11.1 Questions on Notice by Members

11.1.1 Notice and Scope

Provided that the Member has given written notice to the Monitoring Officer, via email to democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk, by no later than 12 noon on the seventh working day before the date of the meeting, at a Council meeting, a Member of the Council may ask:

- the Chair;
- a Member of the Executive;
- the Chair of any Committee;
- the Council's representative on any outside body

a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District, (subject to Rule 11.2 below). **The word limit for a question on notice is 250 words.**

Questions will be listed on the agenda in the order in which they were received, subject to the requirement to rotate questions from each political group. Any question from the largest political group will be taken first, followed by each other political group in order of size, followed by any question from a member not part of a political group. This rotation continues until all questions have been listed.

11.1.2 Urgency

Any Member of the Council may ask a question of the Chair or Leader of the Council where it relates to an urgent matter, which could not have been foreseen 7 working days before the meeting and cannot reasonably be left in abeyance until the next scheduled Council meeting, provided they have the consent of the Chair of the Council, and that notice and a written copy of the question have been provided to the Monitoring Officer, via email to democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk, by no later than 10.00am of the day of the meeting.

11.1.3 Scope

The Monitoring Officer may reject any such question if it relates to:

- A decision of the Development Control Committee or its Sub-Committees on a specific Planning application;
- A decision of the Standards Sub-Committee on a Standards determination;
- A decision of a Licensing Committee on a specific application, review or similar matter;
- A decision on a staffing appointment or appeal relating to an Individual;
- A matter which is substantially the same as a question which has been put to a meeting of the full Council by a Member of that Council within the previous 6 month period.

Annex F

11.1.4 Asking and Responding to the Question

Every question put and answered shall be without discussion.

The question will be included in writing in a briefing document to all Members, published on the Council website, and circulated at least one clear working day prior to the Council meeting.

The person to whom a written question has been put may refer it to another Member for written response.

The response will be in writing. The written response will also be included in the briefing document and circulated to all Members, and published on the Council's website, at least one clear working day prior to the day of the meeting.

Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, the written response may simply be a reference to that publication.

11.1.5 Supplementary Question

A Member submitting a question under this Council Procedure Rule may ask one supplementary question, without notice, of the Member to whom the first question was put, or of the Member who provided the written response. **The time limit for asking a supplementary question is 1 minute.** The supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the response to it. The Member may provide a verbal response or provide a written response to the supplementary question within 3 clear working days. Where a written response is provided, it should be circulated to all Members of the Council.

11.1.6 Referral to the Executive or a Committee

In addition, any Member may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the Executive or a Committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.

11.1.7 Time Limits

Questions will be taken in the order in which notice was given, save that the Chair may group similar questions together.

There is no time limit for each individual question but 15 minutes shall be allowed in total for Member questions. If the 15 minutes expires during a question or supplementary question, the Chair may allow the question to be heard and responded to, and any supplementary question also to be put and responded to. 15 minutes is also allowed for public questions, and if this has not been used, the remainder of this time may be added to the 15 minutes allowed for Member Questions.

Where a supplementary question cannot be responded to during member question time due to a lack of time, it will be dealt with by way of a written response to be circulated to all Members within 3 clear working days.

11.1.8 Record

Annex F

Questions asked on notice at Council under this procedure rule will be recorded in the minutes, and published on the Council's website, as will any response provided.

This provision shall apply only at Council meetings.

11.2 Questions by Members Without Notice

A Member may ask a question, at a meeting of Council, without notice as follows:

- (i) A Member of the Council may ask the Leader or the Chair of a Committee any question on an item on the agenda when that item is being considered. Such questions should be raised prior to the item being moved or seconded;
- (ii) A Member of the Council may ask the Chair, Leader, Member of the Executive or the Head of Paid Service, Chief Financial Officer or Monitoring Officer, a question arising from an announcement made at the meeting;