



PUBLIC SPEAKING AT A COMMITTEE MEETING

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council recognises that its residents can make an important contribution to its decision-making process and be a valuable source of information.

This Guide provides information on what members of the public can expect when attending a meeting of the Council.

Please note that specific guidance is available in respect of public speaking at the following Committees:

- [A Cabinet or Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting;](#)
- [A meeting of the Council;](#)
- A [Planning & Development Committee meeting;](#) and
- A [Scrutiny meeting.](#)





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1. Where and when do the Committees meet?

A calendar of meetings can be found [here](#).

Most Committee meetings are undertaken on a hybrid basis (subject to the Chair's discretion). This means that participants can attend the Council chamber in person or join the meeting online (via Zoom). All hybrid meetings are live streamed to allow the public to watch the meeting as it happens.

If a meeting is virtual, it is held entirely on Zoom and recorded through the application.

2. How do I get my "voice" heard?

Your "voice" at a Committee meeting can be heard in two ways, by attending in person at the Council chamber or by joining the meeting virtually via the Council's supported online platform 'Zoom'. You will be provided with clear instructions on how to join the meeting in either capacity following your request to speak (See section 11 'How do I register to speak?')

3. Who can speak?

Anyone who lives or works in Rhondda Cynon Taf has the opportunity to address a Committee at a scheduled meeting, subject to the discretion of the Chair, as long as they have registered in advance their intention to speak.

The number of speakers permitted to speak to an agenda item will be at the discretion of the Chair, and where appropriate the Chair may request that one speaker addresses the Committee on behalf of a group if a number of requests are made to the same agenda item.

Should a person aged under 16 years of age wish to address a Committee of the Council, arrangements will be made for them to be accompanied by an adult and the relevant GDPR documents will need to be completed.



4. How long do I have to speak?

Individual speakers will have a maximum of 5 minutes to address a Committee of the Council. If there a number of public speakers on a specific agenda item the Chair, through their discretion may reduce the time allocation to allow for the number of speakers and speakers will be advised of this amendment in advance of the meeting.

The Chair has the discretion to stop the speaker before their allotted time has concluded, if, in the Chair's view, the speaker is making any comments that are, or appear to be, defamatory, offensive or unrelated to the agenda item under discussion.

5 What can I speak on at the meeting?

A member of the public must address the item to which they have registered to speak and will not be permitted to address other agenda items or unrelated business.

We ask you ensure that:

- Your comments are clear and concise and are directly related to the report on which you have requested to speak;
- You avoid repeating points made previously by other public speakers;
- Your views are limited to the report, and you highlight how the report could affect the delivery of services to specific user groups of citizens in Rhondda Cynon Taf; and
- Your comments are not defamatory, discriminating or contain offensive language.

Speakers may be asked to clarify any of the comments they make and it is important that public speakers do not enter into debate with the Cabinet Committee Members.

6. Preparing your comments for Committee

The right of the public to speak applies to all items on the agenda with the exception of the following:





- Apologies; Declarations of Interest and Minutes;
- An agenda item which has been withdrawn;
- Any agenda item that is not accompanied by a written report;
- An agenda item where the Chair has exercised his or her discretion to withdraw the right of public speaking; and
- When confidential/exempt items are under consideration by a Committee, the Chair will ask all members of the press and public to vacate the meeting room/leave the online meeting.

The right to speak does not include the right to ask any questions of any Elected Member, Officer of the Council, invited attendees or any other speaker.

7. Attendance at the Meeting

Members of the public who have registered to speak are asked to present themselves in person/online at least 15 minutes before the scheduled start time of the meeting and should make themselves known to the Democratic Services Officer.

For attendance at the Council chamber, the Democratic Services Officer will meet you and seat you accordingly. When it is time to speak you will be asked by the Chair to make your address.

For attendance online, an officer from the Council will contact you via email or telephone to provide you with the necessary meeting log in details. The meeting ID and password must not be shared with anyone else. Only one person will be able to participate with these details and sharing these details may result in you being unable to join the meeting.

Please note that should you choose either option, you are consenting to being included in the recording of the meeting for publication on the Council website. The meeting recording will capture your sound and image of you and other participants in the meeting (Please see below the link to the Council's Corporate Privacy Notice:-





Council's Corporate Privacy Notice – [How we use your personal information - An Overview | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council \(rctcbc.gov.uk\)](#)

8. When will I speak during the Meeting?

The Chair will go through the agenda in its current order, regardless of public speakers. Reports will be presented in the following format:

- Responsible Officer from the Council to present the report;
- Members of the Committee to discuss and present views on the report presented
- Non-Executive Members who have registered to speak
- Members of the public who have registered to speak;

Public speakers will be introduced by the Chair at the relevant time and encouraged to make their address.

9. Supporting documents or visual aids

In order for Members to consider any points made by public speakers, they must provide any supporting information/documentation in advance and upon registering to speak. No additional information/documentation may be produced at the meeting itself.

Should speakers wish to produce visual aids by way of a PowerPoint presentation, then these slides must also be provided in advance of the meeting and will be subject to the discretion of the Chair.

10. Following My Address to Committee

After you have finished addressing the Committee, the Members of the Committee or Officers, under the direction of the Chair will respond to the address.





The Committee will then determine the agenda item and a decision will be made before moving onto the next item.

You are free to leave the meeting at the close of the agenda item.

A decision record will be produced following the conclusion of the meeting.

Any Public speakers will be named as in attendance on the Decision Record and within the Meeting minutes as a public record.

11. How do I register to speak?

The agendas for Committee meetings are published on the Council's website, 5 clear days before the date of the meeting.

Non-Committee Members and Members of the public wishing to speak, may request the facility to dress the Committee at their meeting on the business listed by no later than 5.00 p.m. on the penultimate working day preceding the relevant meeting.

To register an interest to address a particular Committee, the forms are available [here](#).

Paper versions of the register speak to forms are also available at the Council HQ reception.

12. How do I register to speak in Welsh?

We welcome any correspondence in Welsh and in accordance with the guidance (as shown in section 13 above), should you wish to address Members of the Committee in Welsh the same process applies, including stipulating whether the address is to be conducted in Welsh or English. Simultaneous translation facilities are available at the meeting should you wish to make your address through the medium of Welsh.





13. How do I register to speak if I have a disability or additional needs?

If you have a disability or any additional needs and require assistance to participate in the Committee process, please contact us on the email address below by no later than 5.00 p.m. on the penultimate working day preceding the relevant Committee meeting. A member of our team will be pleased to contact you to discuss your specific needs and facilitate your request to speak.

14. Additional Information

Filming and recording of meetings is not permitted by members of the public and we also politely request that the joining details for the meetings are not shared.

Speakers should advise Democratic Services in advance if they have any special needs or requirements.

If you have any questions concerning public speaking at a meeting, then please do not hesitate to contact one of our team on the email address as shown below:

executiveandregulatorybusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk

