

## West of England Public Forum

There will be an opportunity for a Public Forum of up to 30 minutes in total (or more at the discretion of the Chair) at the following meetings:

- Joint Scrutiny Committee
- Joint Transport Executive Committee
- Planning, Housing and Communities Board

Members of the public can speak for up to 5 minutes per person (less if more than 6 people wish to speak).

### Who can speak

Public Forums are open to:

- Councillors from each of the four local authorities
- Residents of the West of England area
- Someone paying council tax or business rates to one of the four councils in the West of England area
- Representatives of businesses or voluntary sector organisations operating in the West of England area.

The West of England area covers the areas of the following four councils:

- Bath and North East Somerset Council
- Bristol City Council
- North Somerset Council
- South Gloucestershire Council.

### How the Public Forum can be used

The public can use this time to:

- Present a **petition**
- Make a **statement**
- Ask a **question** of members of the Board/Committee or of West of England Office officers.

The petition, statement or question must relate to the business of the Partnership and particularly to the responsibilities of the relevant committee.

### Notice

The public are required to give:

- Notice by noon on the working day before the meeting for petitions or statements
- 3 full working day's notice for questions.

Notice should be given to the person named as clerk on the front sheet of the agenda for the meeting. This notice should include the name, address, (where appropriate) organisation represented and any question to be asked. It is helpful, but not necessary, if a copy of the submission can be provided before the meeting.

The prospect of speaking at a formal meeting can be daunting. Advice and support is available; please ask the clerk if you have any questions or would welcome advice. It would be helpful if members of the public needing help to access and speak at the meeting could inform the clerk of their particular needs.

## **Response**

If the matter raised concerns about an item on the agenda, the representation will be considered when that item is discussed. If not, any response will be at the discretion of the chair.

Officers will do their best to get an answer to a question but questioners should be aware that co-ordinating a response from across the West of England might take more than 3 days.

Questioners may ask only one supplementary question, however many questions they have asked originally. The supplementary question must be on the same subject as the original question.

## **Recording**

It is assumed that, through participating, participants agree to their name and details being recorded. A copy of any written submission will be included in the official minute book and on the West of England Partnership website.

## **Matters which fall outside this process**

This process will not apply to:

- matters outside the remit of the Partnership
- matters which concern an individual's circumstances where it would be inappropriate for details to be aired in public
- contractual matters
- allegations against individual councillors or officers (in these cases the Council's complaints or code of conduct procedures should be used)
- any defamatory, frivolous or offensive submissions.

5 July 2011

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