

2. Public Participation

- 2.1 Members of the public may present petitions to the Joint Committee, ask questions of Members of the Joint Committee or address the Joint Committee on any substantive agenda item at ordinary meetings subject to the restrictions set out below. There shall be a specific agenda item near the start of each meeting of the Joint Committee to permit such public participation to take place.
- 2.2 Petitions and questions shall be directly relevant to some matter in relation to which the Joint Committee has powers and duties and which directly affects the area of West Northamptonshire.
- 2.3 Any member of the public shall be entitled to present a petition containing a minimum of 50 signatures to an ordinary meeting of the Joint Committee. He or she must notify the Chief Executive of one of the partner authorities in writing or by email at least three clear days before the meeting (i.e. not counting the day of the meeting or the day of receipt) to which the petition is to be presented. In the event that the receiving Chief Executive is from a partner authority other than South Northamptonshire Council he or she shall forward the petition to that Council's Chief Executive forthwith. A representative of the petitioners may speak at the meeting in support of the petition for up to three minutes. The petition shall then be referred without discussion to the next meeting of the Joint Committee for consideration.
- 2.4 Any member of the public wishing to ask a question of a Joint Committee Member may do so at an ordinary meeting of the Joint Committee. He or she shall give notice of the question in writing or by email to the Chief Executive of one of the partner authorities at least three clear days before the meeting (i.e. not counting the day of the meeting or the day of receipt). In the event that the receiving Chief

Executive is from a partner authority other than South Northamptonshire Council he or she shall forward the question to that Council's Chief Executive forthwith. The questioner may also nominate a Joint Committee Member to whom any question shall be put although the Chairman may nominate a different Joint Committee Member and the Chairman's decision shall be final in this regard. If no Joint Committee Member is nominated by the questioner the Chairman shall nominate the Joint Committee Member to answer a question. The questioner can speak in relation to the question for up to three minutes. No supplementary question may be asked unless it is to seek clarification of the answer given to a question. The answer may take the form of an oral statement by the relevant Joint Committee Member, or may be given subsequently in writing to the questioner with a written copy circulated to all Members of the Joint Committee with the agenda for the next ordinary meeting of the Joint Committee. No discussion shall take place on any question or answer.

- 2.5 The Chief Executive of South Northamptonshire Council may, in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Committee, refuse to submit a petition or question to the meeting if he or she considers it to be offensive, defamatory, frivolous or vexatious.
- 2.6 Any member of the public may address the Joint Committee on any substantive agenda item for the relevant meeting. Such address shall be for up to three minutes. The speaker shall give notice of their wish to address the Joint Committee by email or in writing no later than 12 noon on the day of the meeting to one of the Chief Executives of the participating authorities. In the event that the receiving Chief Executive is from a partner authority other than South Northamptonshire Council he or she shall forward the notification to that Council's Chief Executive forthwith. Once the member of the public has spoken and, with the leave of the Chairman, any questions of clarification asked of the speaker by Joint Committee members duly answered, the Joint

Committee shall proceed to the next item of business with no debate on the representations made.

- 2.7 No more than five petitions and/or questions shall be presented/submitted to any one meeting. Those submitted shall be dealt with in the order of receipt by the Chief Executive of South Northamptonshire Council. No more than five members of the public may address the Joint Committee on a substantive agenda item. The Chairman, in his or her discretion, can agree to permit the maximum of five to be exceeded by a defined number at a particular meeting.
- 2.8 The Chief Executive of South Northamptonshire Council shall notify the Chairman of any petitions, questions or notifications received in accordance with this Rule as soon as is practicable.