



Bedfordshire

Fire & Rescue Authority

QUESTION TIME/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

The Scheme

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) must include provision on its Agenda near the beginning of each agenda for questions to be put to Members of the Authority relevant to the work of the Authority. This scheme was introduced to increase transparency of the Service and to allow for greater public participation.

Who can participate?

Questions /comments can be put by any member of the public – individuals, representatives of Town and Parish Councils, Community Liaison Forums, Urban Community Councils or voluntary and other external organisations, including businesses.

How long will be allowed?

Up to fifteen minutes will be allowed in total for questions/comments and responses.

How will the scheme operate?

1. Speakers will be invited on a first come first served basis. Written questions should be delivered in writing or by email to the Clerk by no later than noon two working days before the day of the meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner. Questions submitted by email should be sent to: democratic.services@bedsfire.gov.uk
2. The subject matter of the question must relate to matters within the remit of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service; the Chair's decision will be final.
3. The Chair may invite each speaker to address Members of the Authority in order that they may be clearly identified and hear better. Questions or statements should be directed to the Chair.
4. Each person will be able to ask up to two questions (subject to paragraph 5 below) but will be limited to a maximum of three minutes in which to do so. The Clerk will time each speaker to ensure that s/he does not exceed three minutes. If a speaker continues for longer the Chair will ask him/her to stop. No more than three speakers will normally be permitted per subject at a meeting (subject to the Chair's discretion).
5. The Chair will respond to the question/statement or request that an appropriate Member (or Officer) reply orally. At the Chair's discretion an

opportunity will be provided for one oral follow-up question and answer. An oral answer will be provided by the Chair, or they may invite an appropriate officer to answer.

6. Any questioner who attends but does not receive a response through lack of time will be sent a written reply within five working days after the meeting.
7. Questions will normally be taken at the next available meeting, but they may be deferred to a future meeting at the discretion of the Chair.
8. Copies of all questions and answers will be circulated to members of the Committee and will be made available to the public prior to the meeting.
9. Questions considered to be similar in nature may be taken together and provided with one oral answer, at the discretion of the Chair.
10. If the questioner cannot attend, they can ask for the question to be tabled at the meeting.
11. The Chair has the discretion to accept questions from the public which are not received in accordance with the protocol.
12. The Chair shall normally reject a question if: - it is not about a matter which relates to Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service - it is defamatory, frivolous or vexatious - it requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

When does Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority meet?

The Fire and Rescue Authority meetings are published on our website at the following link:

<http://bedsfireresauth.moderngov.co.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>

Who shall I contact?

Queries may be directed to Democratic.services@bedsfire.gov.uk



Bedfordshire

Fire & Rescue Authority

REQUEST TO SPEAK AT MEETINGS OF BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Please complete this form and return it to:

- Democratic Services, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Southfields Road, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7NR or Democratic.Services@bedsfire.gov.uk

I wish to speak at the meeting of the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority on
(*insert date of meeting*).

I wish to ask the following question / make the following statement:

Capacity in which speaking: (eg personal or representative of an external organisation, etc)

Name	
Address	
Tel No.	
Date	