

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Questions

71. Members of the public shall be able to ask questions at meetings of the Panel, at the discretion of the Chairman, where those questions relate to items identified on the Panel's agenda.
72. Members of the public shall be able to ask questions on notice, at ordinary meetings of the Panel, however, the Monitoring Officer of the Host Authority may reject a question if it:
 - a) is not about a matter for which the Panel has a responsibility
 - b) is defamatory (or potentially so), or is frivolous or offensive;
 - c) is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Panel in the past six months; or
 - d) requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information

Notice

73. A question must be in the form of a question, and not a statement, and it may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Monitoring Officer of the Host Authority at least seven clear working days before the day of the meeting, unless the Chairman exercises his/her discretion and agrees that a question or questions may be asked without the required period of notice.

Allocated Time

74. The total time allocated to public questions, submitted on notice will be 15 minutes.

Order of Questions

75. Questions will be asked in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chairman may group together similar questions.

Number of Questions

76. At any one meeting no person may submit more than two questions and no more than two such questions may be asked on behalf of one organisation.

Asking the Question at the Meeting

77. The Chairman will invite the questioner to put the question to the Panel. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, they

may ask a representative or the Chairman to put the question on their behalf. The Chairman may ask the question on the questioner's behalf, or indicate that a written reply will be given or decide, in the absence of the questioner and the questioner's representative, that the question will not be dealt with.

Supplementary Question

78. A questioner who has put a question in person, or a representative of a questioner asking a question on the questioner's behalf, may also put one supplementary question, without notice. A supplementary question must arise directly out of, and be specifically related to the original question or the reply. The Chairman may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in Rule 72.

Written Answers

79. Any question, which cannot be dealt with during public question time, either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the Member to whom it was to be put, or for any other reasons, will be dealt with by a written answer.

Referral of Question/Issue to the Commissioner

80. Questions received on notice, or issues raised as part of the discussion of a question, including any supplementary question may be referred to the Commissioner if considered appropriate by the Host Authority's Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, or by the Panel.