

Greater Cambridge City Deal

Executive Board and Joint Assembly Public Questions Voluntary Protocol

1. Purpose

Opportunity for questions from the public is a fundamental part of an open and transparent democratic process.

Policy governing this exchange as part of the Greater Cambridge City Deal's (GCCD) public meetings of the joint committee (Executive Board) and joint advisory committee (Joint Assembly) is laid out in Standing Orders adopted by the three local authority partners. The Standing Orders outline minimum standards that must be achieved.

In line with policy and guidance, management of public questions at Board and Assembly meetings is at the discretion of the Chair and this seeks to fairly balance the public's right to participate with the need to carry out council business efficiently and effectively.

This voluntary protocol has been developed in liaison with representatives of the community to enhance and improve the opportunity for public participation in the GCCD decision-making process beyond the minimum standards outlined within the Standing Orders and is considered deliverable within limited resource available.

To enhance public engagement, feedback and dialogue outside of the meeting process, the City Deal will continue to promote and develop alternative channels for public Q&A, within the resources it has.

Existing channels include via e-mail, social media and at other public forums such as meetings, consultation events and Local Liaison Forums.

This protocol will be subject to six-monthly review by the City Deal Programme Management Team in consultation with partners and community representatives.

This protocol should be read in conjunction with the Standing Orders for the Greater Cambridge City Deal Joint Committee.

2. Principles

2.1 All formally submitted public questions, statements and petitions for Board and Assembly meetings, subject to law and the governance framework, are published

as a supplementary document to the meeting agenda at least one day prior to the public meeting.

- 2.2 The questions will be published in a single document uploaded to the South Cambridgeshire District Council website, with link through to the Greater Cambridge City Deal website, and their publication promoted via the City Deal's social media channels.
- 2.3 Where questions are answered in full at the meeting, as per Standing Orders, a summary of the question and answer exchange will form part of the meeting minutes and be published as soon as possible and no more than 10 working days, after the meeting. To manage officer time, this will remain the primary source of publication.
- 2.4 Responses to questions* requiring a written response, or where a written response or partial response is agreed at the meeting, will be published in a supplementary document to the minutes and published, as far as possible, within ten working days of the meeting, subject to access to relevant information and resource.
- 2.5 Where a submitted question was not subsequently asked in the meeting, for example, as a result of multiple questions or time pressure, a written response will be published as per this protocol.
- 2.6 Publication will follow a direct response to with the questioner.
- 2.7 This protocol will be a living document and subject to feedback from members, officers and members of the public/representatives.
- 2.8 Any changes will be clearly communicated to the public with rationale.

** According to Standing Orders questions will be 'as notified' and subject to Chair's discretion which may rule out responding to questions where they differ substantially.*