



## Meeting length and agenda management policy

Walsham le Willows Parish Council is a very active and busy Council compared to many and periodically councillors have returned to the issue of the limits to their available time, effectively as volunteer members of the Council. The length of meetings is also a recurring.

Previous concerted attempt to address meeting length saw meetings closing after 90 minutes for a few months rather than 150 minutes.

It is recognised that there will always be some (often contentious) issues that unavoidably divert from a commitment to shorter meetings, but these should be the exception not the rule.

1. Items for agenda to be submitted a full week before the meeting (wherever possible) to allow time to process, circulate, and clarify if necessary.
2. Items that come in closer to publication of the upcoming agenda may be deferred to following agenda.
3. Agenda items to be framed in terms of an initial proposal and the decision to be made.
4. Even where discussion is likely to be required the framing as an initial proposal can tend to prompt some additional thinking beforehand on the part of all, which might get the meeting to counter proposals and decision more quickly.
5. Where councillors need to provide updates to Council, or questions remain, these will be handled by a report sent to the clerk in good time for circulation with the agenda. This too will encourage more focussed discussion in the meeting as well as prompting specific questions ahead of the meeting, thereby facilitating shorter discussions and meetings.
6. Where people are required for specific 3<sup>rd</sup> party meetings, please trail the dates ahead of the next meeting to prevent the need for consulting diaries in the meeting and facilitating a quick minuting of the attendees agreed.
7. The clerk will review the agenda every month for 'standing items' that are no longer serving useful purpose and propose removal from the agenda.
8. Mindful that decision making through formal process of set monthly meetings and often the need to seek further information, inevitably, and properly, delays decisions, it is the clerk's job to ultimately decide what goes on the agenda with but will henceforth copy to the Chair prior to serving notice on councillors. Where necessary a decision will be made to prioritise and defer items to a later agenda if it is felt there is too much to deal with in any one meeting.