



## **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME SCHEME**

Members of the public have an opportunity to ask questions at meetings of the full National Park Authority. The following are the terms upon which the scheme is operated, but it may be adjusted in the light of working experience.

- Public question time will be at the beginning of each meeting of the Authority, immediately after the Minutes of the previous meeting have been dealt with; the question time will be limited to 15 minutes of questions and answers in total, subject to the period being extended in any particular case if the Chairman agrees;
- Any questioner will be limited to 2 minutes maximum speaking time;
- Supplementary questions will only be permitted for the purpose of clarifying an earlier answer;
- If an answer cannot be provided on the day, a reply in writing will be offered;
- Any questions must be delivered to the Committee Administrator at least 10 clear working days before the meeting. The Chairman will call upon questioners at the meeting in the order in which questions were received. The order of questions will be identified in the Agenda Paper for the meeting; and
- Answers to questions will normally be given by the Chairman but may be supplemented, if they wish, by spokespersons for other groups, unless the Authority decline to respond to the question in the interests of the Authority.

No question relating to an individual recipient of services will be allowed, as appropriate alternative channels exist for such enquiries. (e.g the Complaints Procedure)

The opportunity to ask questions under this scheme does not apply to questions from staff or their representatives, on staffing issues, since other mechanisms are available, but does admit staff to ask questions in a representative capacity on an issue they are involved with personally.

No questions can be accepted which relate to matters normally dealt with in private because they relate to exempt information, for example:-

- Legal actions
- Financial and business affairs of other organisations
- Individual members of staff
- Trade Union negotiations

No questions can be accepted where there is a statutory procedure in place for public consultation, for example:-

- Planning development control matters
- Traffic Regulation Orders
- Public rights of way orders

Questions which are defamatory or potentially defamatory or anonymous will not be accepted.

**Notice of questions should be sent to:-**

**Corporate Support Officer,  
Northumberland National Park Authority,  
Eastburn, South Park,  
Hexham, NE46 1BS**

**Telephone: 01434 605555**

**Fax 01434 611675**

**[Email committees@nnpa.org.uk](mailto:committees@nnpa.org.uk)**

**The Authority reserves the right not to accept any question for public response, but in such a case will give reasons in writing to the questioner.**

2008