Item 4

Public Participation

Eagle eyed members may have noticed that details about Public Participation have been moved to form part of the agenda (Item 4) in order to make it clearer to residents how they can get involved at our public meetings.

In doing so I have reviewed the wording, compared it with other councils of our size and checked out our legal obligations.

I have removed the option to send a written question or comment to be read out at the meeting because the law is very clear that in order to take part in a meeting you must attend the meeting.

We recently had a situation where a resident sent in some comments that she wished to be discussed at the meeting. The comments were circulated in advance to members but not discussed at the meeting much to the resident's annoyance. I feel that inviting people to send in written comments suggests that they will be considered by the meeting which may not be the case.

Residents and Non-residents are, of course, always able to contact the Clerk, other officers or Councillors by phone, email or in person. All queries will always be dealt with internally or put on agendas for discussion.

The law is very clear that you if you wish to take part in the conversation you must attend the meeting, hence the fact the those attend on zoom are not permitted to take part.