

A PROTOCOL FOR THE ATTENDANCE OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF ONE PUBLIC AUTHORITY AT MEETINGS OF ANOTHER PUBLIC AUTHORITY

It is intended that this protocol will be agreed and adopted by all the local authorities in Gloucestershire.

1. An authority may request Officers and/or Members of another authority to attend at a meeting or meetings of the authority or any of its Committees, Sub-Committees, Boards, Panels or other gatherings being held at its Offices. The purpose of such attendance is limited to assisting that authority in the conduct of its business including reviewing the effects of, but not scrutinising, decisions of another authority.
2. All such requests shall be made in writing to the Head of Paid Service of the authority, normally at least 10 working days before the date of requested attendance (although time limits in an authority's Constitution may affect this period of notice) and shall include the following information:
 - The date, time, location and anticipated duration of the attendance requested.
 - The name of the person(s) whose attendance is requested.
 - If a particular person's presence is requested, the reason for selecting that person.
 - A summary of the matter in respect of which attendance is requested.
 - All questions which reasonably can be anticipated will be put to any person(s) attending (it is accepted that answers to questions may lead to further questions).
 - The names of the person(s) who will be putting questions.
 - A list of the names of all other persons expected to attend.
 - The name and telephone number of the responsible Officer as a point of contact for the person attending.
3. A Head of Paid Service receiving such a request shall respond to the request within five working days stating:
 - Whether anyone will attend.
 - Whether attendance will be as requested or that alternative arrangements will be necessary.
 - Whether the particular person(s) whose presence is requested will attend and/or whether in their place, or in addition, some other person will attend and who that person will be.
 - Whether the questions specified in the request will be answered either at all or to some limited extent (in which case reasons will be given) or fully.
 - In the event that there will be no attendance, whether and if so how and when, the questions notified will be responded to.

4. All questions shall relate to facts and not opinion although the person(s) attending may express opinions.
5. The person(s) attending may only decline to answer any question on the grounds of competence or knowledge.
6. All reasonable expenses relating to the attendance(s) will be met by the authority responding to the request.
7. All persons attending in response to a request shall, at all times, be treated with the highest standards of courtesy and respect and shall not under any circumstances be bullied, harassed or abused.