

Procedure for public participation at Western Gateway Transport Board Meetings

Can I attend a meeting?

Formal meetings of the Western Gateway Transport Board are open to the public who may attend to observe and may participate in accordance with section 2 that follows below. Public attendance is subject to the Local Government Access to Information rules, which permit the board, when considering an item of business on the agenda, to exclude the press and public in circumstances where there is the likelihood of the release of exempt information (e.g. commercially sensitive information) as defined under the Local Government Act 1972.

Members of the public may use social media including Facebook, Twitter and blogs to report on proceedings of the meeting. Anyone wishing to film part of or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings will need to advise the Secretariat Officer in attendance so that those present may be made aware. Members of the public will be treated with respect and courtesy when attending meetings of the Western Gateway Transport Board. They will be listened to and everyone who has registered will be able to be present/speak without interruption or intimidation.

It is expected that members of the public listen to the proceedings and respect the views and experiences of other people contributing.

The Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body requests that, members of the public are not filmed unless they are playing an active role such as speaking within a meeting. There may also be occasions when speaking when members of the public request not to be filmed.

Public Participation

Members of the public are required to submit a statement and / or ask a question at formal meetings of the Western Gateway Transport Board. Statements and questions must relate to the remit of the Western Gateway Transport Board.

Are there any restrictions on the statement that can be made or the question that can be asked?

The only restrictions are:

The statement / question must not be frivolous or defamatory and must not concern a confidential issue which would normally be considered in private. The Board's Chair has discretion to refuse statements / questions which fail this requirement.

A member of the public may only submit a single statement and / or ask one question at any meeting of the Western Gateway Transport Board. If more than one statement / question is received or a single question contains a number of component questions, then only the first statement / question will be accepted. You may ask one 'supplementary' question at the meeting arising from the answer given to your original question.

How do I submit my statement / question?

Formal statements/questions must be submitted in writing (by letter or email) before 12 noon on the fifth working day before the date of the meeting (i.e. if the meeting is on a Friday then the submission must be made by the preceding Friday, taking into account any Bank Holidays). The contact details for the Secretariat are available online at <https://westerngatewaystb.org.uk>

Where you submit a statement/ question relating to a report on an agenda for a meeting and that report is not available by this time you may nonetheless be entitled to make a statement/ ask a question in certain circumstances.

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The Western Gateway is formed by an alliance of the following Local Authorities:

The Secretariat will respond to the member of the public at least three working days in advance of the relevant meeting to confirm that:

- a) The representation is appropriate for discussion by the board.
- b) There is sufficient time available at the board meeting for the representation to be heard by the board.

Where representations are received, but are not considered to be relevant to the board the relevant Local Authority officer shall be identified by the Accountable Body and the representation forwarded to the relevant authority to respond

All statements / questions will be listed in the order received and will be circulated to everyone at the meeting together with written responses to questions.

When a statement / question is submitted it would be a benefit if a telephone number could also be supplied. This will enable the Secretariat to make contact with the member of the public should any clarification regarding the statement / question be necessary or if for some reason no reply can be given to a question.

Can I speak at the meeting?

A member of the public who has submitted a statement / question will be allowed to make oral representations at the meeting to introduce their statement / question. Such representations will be limited to 3 minutes. While your views and comments may be acknowledged by the Chair of the meeting, you will not receive detailed 'answers' to any points included in your statement / question.

How much time is allowed for public participation?

A maximum of 30 minutes in total is allowed at each meeting for public participation. If your statement / question cannot be dealt with in that time then you will be sent a response by letter or email after the board meeting. The Chair has the discretion to extend the period allowed for public participation in exceptional circumstances.

If I submit a statement / question do I have to attend the meeting?

No you do not have to attend the meeting if you submit a question / statement. If you cannot attend the meeting, your statement / question and the response to the question / statement, will be published online at <https://westerngatewaystb.org.uk/> with the minutes of the meeting together with your name. If you do attend, you will be invited to sit at the place reserved for you while your statement / question is dealt with.

Is there a limit on the length of any statement / question?

No there is no limit on the length of any statement / question, but it is best to keep your statement/question concise to avoid any misunderstanding. If a lengthy statement / question is submitted, the Chair may require it to be shortened before it is accepted for circulation.

How will I know what is on the agenda for a meeting?

Agendas are normally published one week in advance of the meeting and are available online at <https://westerngatewaystb.org.uk/>

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