**Public Open Forum**

Gedney Parish Council would like to outline their procedures for the Public Forum (in accordance with the New Guidance about Public Participation by the National Association for local Councils dated October 2013) in order to make the interaction and communication between Council and members of the public as easy and transparent as possible

The Forum will be held at 7pm **before each Council meeting, for a maximum of 15 minutes.**Notices publishing the dates and location of the meetings are published in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and will include the notice boards and the council’s website) whenever possible.
1)   To give members of the public the opportunity to raise issues about the Parish with the Council.
2)   Where possible, to provide answers to questions at the meeting.
3)   Where an immediate answer is not possible or practical, to make relevant enquiries and reply either at a subsequent meeting or in writing.

**Procedures**The Forum will be conducted in the following way:
The Chairman of the Council will be the sole arbiter of the Forum and of the use of the time available.
Any member the public may address the Council during the forum with Parish matters.  Where appropriate the Chairman will satisfy himself that a person wishing to speak has a right to do so.
The Chairman will allocate the time available equally between those wishing to speak, with a maximum of 5 minutes for any single issue. (There may be occasions when public interest is such that the Chairman deems it appropriate to allocate an issue more time. Such a decision will be entirely at the discretion of the Chairman).

Members of the public will be afforded the opportunity to make brief background comments and ask appropriate questions addressing just one issue at a time. Normally members of the public will be confined to 2 issues at any Forum unless time becomes available and the Chairman allows another issue to be raised.

The Chairman may then comment upon or seek to answer the question. He may also invite other members of the Council or the Clerk to to provide information that will answer the question.  The Chairman may seek further information from the member of the public who raised the issue and when he believes that the matter has had sufficient attention or when the allocated time has expired he will declare the matter closed.  Should the issue require further consideration; the Chairman will refer it to the appropriate outside body.

In the Conduct of the Forum the ruling of the Chairman is final.
There may be questions that the Chairman declines to accept.  These may be matters within the various categories of what are known as 'Exempt Information'. These are contained in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Examples of these are:
· Information relating to any individual
· Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
· Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
 Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.
The Chairman may also rule out of order, questions he considers improper, irrelevant or objectionable.  If any member of the public interrupts the proceedings the Chairman may initially warn him, and should inappropriate behaviour continue request his removal from the meeting.

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| Version Number | Date Approved | Amendments made | Next review Date |
| V1 | March 2015 |  | March 2019 |
|  | February 2024 | None | February 2028 |
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