

Attendance and questions from members of the public at Board meetings

The rules for members of the public attending and raising questions at meetings are contained in Part IV Standing Orders for the conduct of Derby Homes Board and General meetings.

SO5 Open and Private Meetings of the Board:

The Board will hold meetings open to member of the public, subject to the access to information Standing Orders set out in Standing Order 19.

SO13 Observers

The Board may allow individuals who are not Board Members to attend Board Meetings as observers on whatever terms they decide. Observers may not vote but may take part in discussions unless the Board decides otherwise. The Board may exclude observers from any part of a Board Meeting where the Board considers the business is private. The Board must exclude an observer from any Board Meeting at which a possible benefit to him/her is being considered.

SO14 Questions by members of the public

14.1 General

Members of the public may ask questions of Board Members at ordinary meetings of the Board. The maximum period of time for questions by members of the public at a Board meeting shall be fifteen minutes.

14.2 Order of questions

Questions will be asked in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chair may group together similar questions.

14.3 Notice of questions

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Director of Derby Homes no later than 48 hours prior to commencement of the meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner.

14.4 Number of questions

At any one meeting no person or group may submit more than two questions.

14.5 Scope of questions

The Director of Derby Homes may reject a question if it:

- is not about a matter for which Derby Homes has a responsibility;
- is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Board in the past six months; or

- requires the disclosure of confidential information.

14.6 Record of questions

The Director of Derby Homes will enter each question in a book open to inspection by members of the public and will immediately send a copy of the question to the Board Member to whom it is to be put. Rejected questions will include reasons for rejection. Copies of all questions will be circulated to all Board Members and will be made available to the public attending the meeting.

14.7 Asking the question at the meeting

The Chair will invite the questioner to put the question to the Board Member named in the notice. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, he/she may ask the Chair to put the question on his/her behalf. The Chair may ask the question on the questioner's behalf, indicate that a written reply will be given or decide, in the absence of the questioner, that the question will not be dealt with.

14.8 Supplementary question

A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question without notice to the Board Member who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. The Chair may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in Standing Order 14.5 above.

14.9 Written answers

The time allocated for questions at each meeting will be 15 minutes; any questions not answered at the end of that time will be answered in writing. Any question that cannot be dealt with during public question time because of the non-attendance of the Board Member or member of staff able to answer the question, will be dealt with by a written answer.

14.10 Reference of question to the Director of Derby Homes or a committee

Unless the Chair decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question, but any Board Member may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the Director of Derby Homes or the appropriate committee, once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.

SO16 Disturbance

Removal

If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chair will warn the person concerned. If he/she continues to interrupt, the Chair will order his/her removal from the meeting room.

Clearance of part of meeting room

If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to members of the public, the Chair may call for that part to be cleared.

SO19 Access to Information

19.3 Rights to attend meetings

Members of the public may attend all general meetings and meetings of the Board and its committees subject only to the exceptions in these Standing Orders.

SO20 Exclusion of access to meetings

20.1 Confidential information

Members of the public must be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that confidential information would be disclosed.

Part V Operational Board Constitution (paragraph 15)

Meetings of the Operational Board are open to the public subject to limitations imposed by the size of the venue. Participation in the business of the meeting, but not voting, may be extended to non-members at the discretion of the Operational Board Chair. The Operational Board may exclude members of the public from any part of a meeting where it considers the business is private. The Operational Board must exclude any member of the public from any meeting at which a possible benefit to him/her is being considered.

Seating Arrangements:

There is reference to Board Members and staff sitting at the meeting table (SO27 Conduct of Business 27.6, 27.7) but there is no mention of seating arrangements for members of the public.