

Agenda items

If you have come to speak on a topic that is listed on the agenda, you can make your comments at the start of the meeting. However, the Chair may later invite you to speak during the meeting if what they think you have to say is relevant. If you want to make a point, raise your hand and the chair can call you into the discussion. The clerk will record what you say and remind councillors of it when they reach the appropriate part of the meeting.

Once the Public Participation section has been completed, the chair will then review what happened at the previous meeting, and ask councillors if they agree with the record of minutes.

Voting in meetings like this is usually done with a show of hands. Because all councillors take responsibility for the decisions made, we do not record individual votes and no separate record is kept. The Chair will then progress through the remainder of the agenda.

Finally

Remember, you can leave the meeting at any time, and if you want to read a record of what happened, the minutes of the meeting will be published a week later on the council's website. Any points you have raised in the meeting will be recorded there.

Contact	Menheniot Parish Council
Email	clerk@menheniotparishcouncil.co.uk
Phone	01579 342437
Web	menheniotparishcouncil.org.uk

Your Questions Answered



What we do at public meetings

Residents and visitors are always welcome to attend meetings of the parish council. It is an important part of local democracy that you should be able to attend meetings where decisions are taken, and where appropriate, be able to take part in any debate or discussion.

Meetings of the Council are formal occasions where councillors report back to the rest of the Council. They are governed by Standing Orders which make sure that they are conducted in an orderly, efficient way.

The start time for meetings is confirmed on the meeting agenda and is usually 7.30pm. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month. You can get dates and download a calendar of all council meetings from our website.

Meetings are held in The Old School in Menheniot village centre (PL14 3QY) Check the latest agenda for the location of your meeting in case it has changed. Please arrive ten minutes before the scheduled start time so that your attendance can be recorded. If there are a number of people in your group, please nominate one person to speak on your behalf. This helps make sure that all your points are made clearly and councillors get the best opportunity to understand your arguments.

Parking is available close to the building: please park with consideration for our neighbours, especially if you are leaving late in the evening.

At the meeting, the Parish Clerk will make a note of issues raised during the discussion and produce a set of minutes. These set out the council's decisions and are available to members of the public on our web site.

Accessibility

Premises are accessible for wheelchair users, and we have accessible toilets in the Old School. If you have any specific access needs, please contact the Clerk's Office beforehand and we will do our best to support you.

Agenda

All of the matters to be discussed at meetings of the council are listed in an agenda published at least three working days before the date of that meeting. You can find details on the council's main website (search for 'The Council' then 'Meetings') or look on the parish noticeboards in Menheniot village (outside the Spar shop), Pengover Green, Merrymeet, Island Shop, Dodycross and Lower Clicker.

How the meeting works

Councillors meet around an oblong table and behind them, there are seats for members of the public. No seats are reserved, so you can sit wherever you like. If all you want to do is observe what happens at the meeting, you are free to come and go as you please. There is no need to ask permission from anyone: we just ask that you move quietly so as not to disturb the speakers.

Order of the meeting

The chair of the meeting will start by welcoming everybody. Councillors will be asked if they have any personal interest or conflicts of interest in what they are due to discuss. This is always made in public so that everyone knows if there could be a bias in what is being decided.

Public Participation

There is a general open session shortly after the beginning of all public meetings. This is an opportunity to ask your Councillors or council officers questions or to make a statement. Councillors put aside 15 minutes at the start of each meeting for visitors to speak.

Ask your question (or make your statement) in a straightforward way. There is no need to make elaborate speeches or arguments. Councillors appreciate simple and direct questions. You are limited to 3 minutes for your speech unless the chair agrees a longer time. If you are unable to attend, you can send a question or prepared statement beforehand, and the Clerk will read it out on your behalf. We won't read out your name unless you have given us your permission.