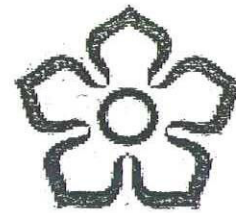


July 2010



Leicester
City Council

LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL ETIQUETTE GUIDE

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Full Council - Etiquette Guide

1.	<p>Who is invited to attend the pre council buffet?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can I attend? • Can I take a visitor to the tea? • Who do I contact to get permission? • What time does it start? 	<p>The buffet before Council in the Tea Room is for Councillors, senior officers and invited guests of the Lord Mayor.</p> <p>It is not usual to take guests to the Tea Room as that is where some of the pre-council discussion takes place between members.</p> <p>Sometimes the Lord Mayor will agree to visitors if there is a special occasion.</p> <p>The buffet is available from 4pm.</p>
2.	<p>Where do I sit in the Council Chamber?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I allowed to move seats? 	<p>Your Group Whip will usually allocate the seats at the start of the municipal year (May) or when any changes take place in membership of committees or cabinet.</p> <p>The Cabinet usually sit in the first section of the Chamber. Labour Group sit on the left side facing the front, the main opposition (Conservative) sit on the right side facing the front. Liberal Democrats sit in the next section beside the opposition and any independent councillors sit next to them.</p> <p>The microphones and webcasting are set up for each meeting according to the seating plan.</p> <p>If you want to change seats you should speak to your Group Whip.</p>
3.	<p>Am I allowed to bring visitors into the Council Chamber?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do I have to ask for permission 	<p>Usually it is only councillors, senior officers and the press who sit downstairs. Members of the public can sit in the public gallery.</p> <p>Sometimes the Lord Mayor will allow other guests to sit downstairs – permission needs to be sought</p>

		<p>from him in advance of the meeting and you need to tell the front desk to expect your guest if the Lord Mayor agrees to it.</p> <p>People attending for the Lord Mayor's announcements will also be present in the Chamber – again permission will need to be sought in advance from the Lord Mayor.</p>
4.	Do I have to stand up in the meeting?	Those of you who are able should stand up when the Lord Mayor comes into and goes out of the Chamber. Take your lead from the Civic Attendant. Sit down when the Lord Mayor invites you to do so.
5.	<p>If I'd like to speak at Council in response to something –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When am I allowed to? • What do I do? • Do I have to get permission? 	<p>You can speak to ask a question of a Cabinet Member if you have submitted it in advance.</p> <p>You can speak during a debate if you are a proposer or seconder of a motion, or if you want to take part in the debate. During the debate slightly raise your hand to catch the Lord Mayor's attention and he/she will add you to the speakers list. Sometimes Groups decide in advance who will speak on issues.</p>
6.	<p>How do I ask a question?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can I ask a question about? 	<p>You can ask a question of the Cabinet Leads about anything to do with the Council and its services. Questions need to be submitted in writing to Democratic Support Team by 10 am the day before the Council meeting. This gives time for an answer to be prepared.</p>

7.	<p>How can I speak during a debate?</p>	<p>You will need to put your hand up to indicate to the Lord Mayor that you want to speak.</p> <p>The Lord Mayor will invite you to speak. You then have 5 minutes to put forward your point. There are lights at the front of the Chamber – Green means you have time, Amber means one minute to go and Red means you have had your 5 minutes.</p>
8.	<p>Do I have to stand up to speak?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When do I stand up? • How do I use the microphone? • Can someone show me how the microphone works? 	<p>Yes, you need to stand up to speak. You will need to indicate to the Lord Mayor by raising your hand that you want to speak. You must press the button on the microphone base before you speak and remember to switch the microphone button off when you have finished speaking and have sat down.</p> <p>There will be someone available before the Council meeting to show you how the microphone works.</p>
9.	<p>Is there anything I have to say as I speak?</p>	<p>It is customary for councillors to start by saying “Thank you my Lord Mayor”</p>
10.	<p>Do I have to stay for the whole duration of the meeting or can I leave at any time?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can I take a comfort break or get a drink and go back to the meeting – if so what do I do? 	<p>Usually members stay for the whole meeting unless they have made arrangements with their Group Whip to leave early.</p> <p>You can take a comfort break or go to the Tea Room for a drink and then go back to the meeting.</p> <p>Sometimes the Lord Mayor stops for a recess part way through the meeting. At this point the Lord Mayor will stand. At this point everyone must stand and stay in</p>

		their seat until the civic party have left the Chamber. You are then allowed to sit or take a comfort break or go to the Tea Room for a drink before you go back into the Chamber.
11.	Is there a dress code for the Council Meeting?	There is no set dress code, but some Groups require their members to dress smartly. Ask your Group Whip for more information.
12.	As the meeting is being webcast is there anything I should be aware of?	Regardless of whether the meeting is being webcast members should respect other members. There is a meeting protocol attached to the Council script. You should not reveal any confidential information at the meeting.
13.	Why do they have Lord Mayor's announcements?	The announcements are a chance to celebrate success or be informed of important things coming up. If you have something you thing should be announced you can speak with the Lord Mayor, however they may decide not to add it to the announcements.
14.	What is the correct response for the Lord Mayor?	"My Lord Mayor"
15.	Could I ask for a mentor from my Group to show me the ropes for my first meeting? If so, who do I speak to?	Speak to your Group Whip or to John Thorpe in the Democratic Support Team. They will talk you through the proceedings.
16.	Am I allowed to take refreshments into the meeting?	You can take drinks into the Council Chamber but not food.

17	<p>Am I allowed to bring my laptop into Meeting and work at the same time?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any wifi connections? • Is it allowed? 	<p>It is not common practice to bring a laptop into the Chamber – some members might consider it to be disrespectful. Members do, however, use their blackberries. Twitter is permitted to be used during the meeting.</p>
18	<p>How do I take a petition to Council?</p>	<p>Petitions must be with Democratic Services not later than 3 clear days before the meeting so they can be included on the agenda. You will have to present the petition to Council and it will be referred to the Director of Corporate Governance to determine the most appropriate course of action. When presenting the Petition you must make sure you read out in full the correct wording for the purposes of our webcasting. There is no debate about petitions at Council meetings when they are presented. For more information on petitions please contact Francis Connolly on 2298811.</p>
19	<p>How does Council make a decision?</p>	<p>At the end of a debate a vote is taken. This can be by the Lord Mayor saying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “All those in favour say aye” • Show of hands • Recorded vote – 5 people need to stand up and ask the Lord Mayor for a recorded vote. The names of the councillors are read out and you need to say “for”, “against” or “abstain”. <p>The Lord Mayor will then announce the decision.</p>

20	If I disagree with a decision at Council what do I do?	Speak to your Group Whip. Decisions are made based on a vote by councillors.
21	<p>If I have some constituents that would like to sit in the public gallery to watch a particular item be discussed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is that allowed? • Who do I speak to, to get this arranged? • Where do they go? • Who do they report to? • Can they attend for one item or do they have to stay for the whole meeting? 	<p>Anyone can go into the public gallery. The entrance is on Bowling Green Street and is open from 4.30 pm. Seating is subject to availability. Commissionaires are always on standby to guide members of the public.</p> <p>People can stay for as long or as short a time as they wish.</p>
22	If there are hecklers in the public gallery and they are directing insults at me what do I do?	<p>There is always a commissionaire in the gallery who will keep people in order.</p> <p>If this doesn't work, the Lord Mayor will call for order and can ask for the person to be removed from the gallery.</p>
23	If I don't feel well at Council is there anyone I could go to for assistance?	Speak to your Group Whip or to one of the Commissionaires on duty – they are first aid trained.

