

Our customer service advisors are here to help. If you need to speak to a manager, they will put you through.

If you want your views heard about an issue coming up for a decision, the officer preparing the report will be happy to talk to you.

It could be that your point of view can be taken on board in the report which goes to Councillors. If the officer still feels they should propose something against your wishes, they will explain the reasons for this. This means you would be 'in the picture' if you go on to speak at the decision making meeting.

Consulting on issues before the report is on the table for decision helps us make sure that proposals are well considered and sensible – even if they might be controversial!

## Where can I find out more?

You can find out about the key issues coming up for decision over the next four months on the 'Key Decisions Notice' which the Council publishes.

This is updated monthly. It is on the website at [www.burnley.gov.uk](http://www.burnley.gov.uk) and available for inspection at Burnley Town Hall.

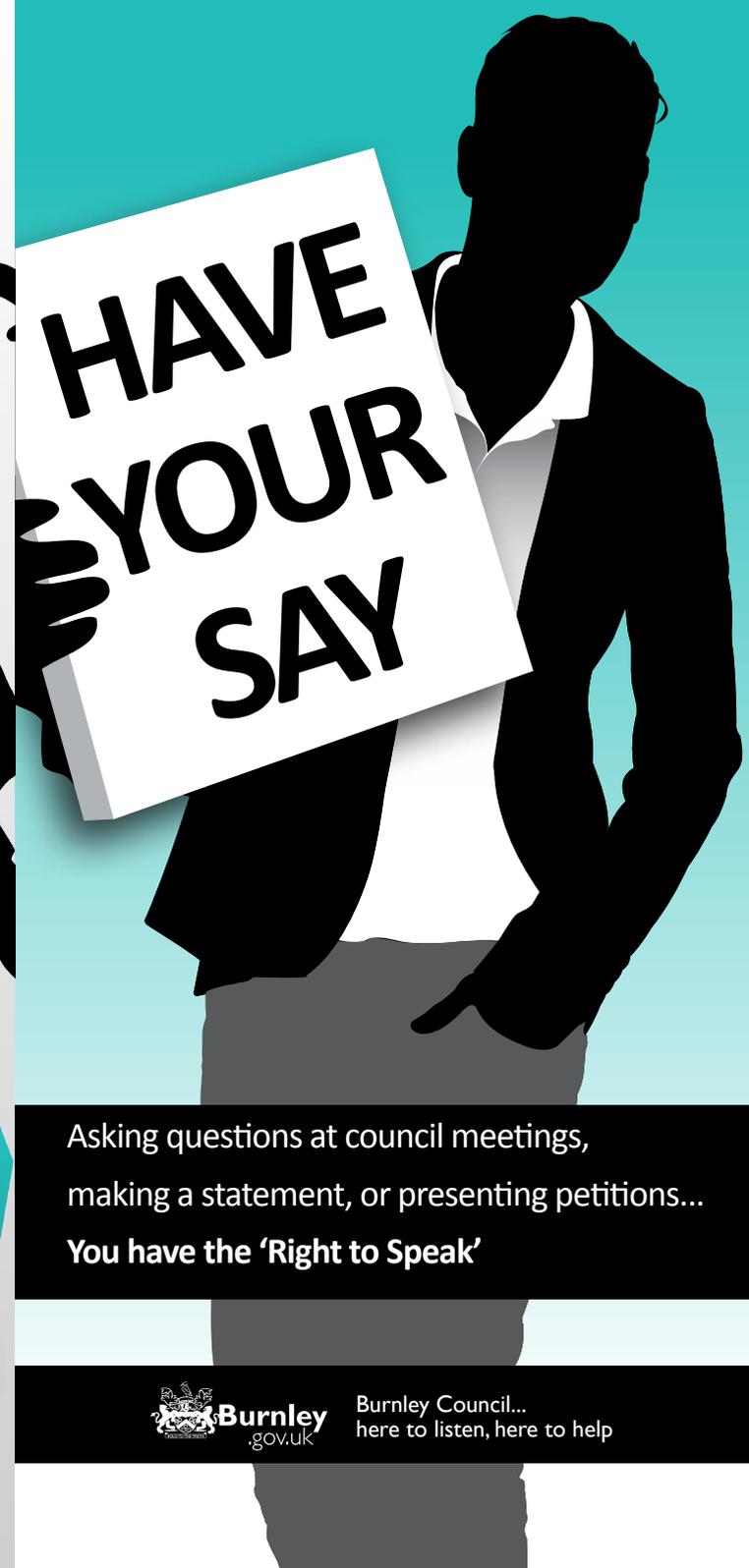
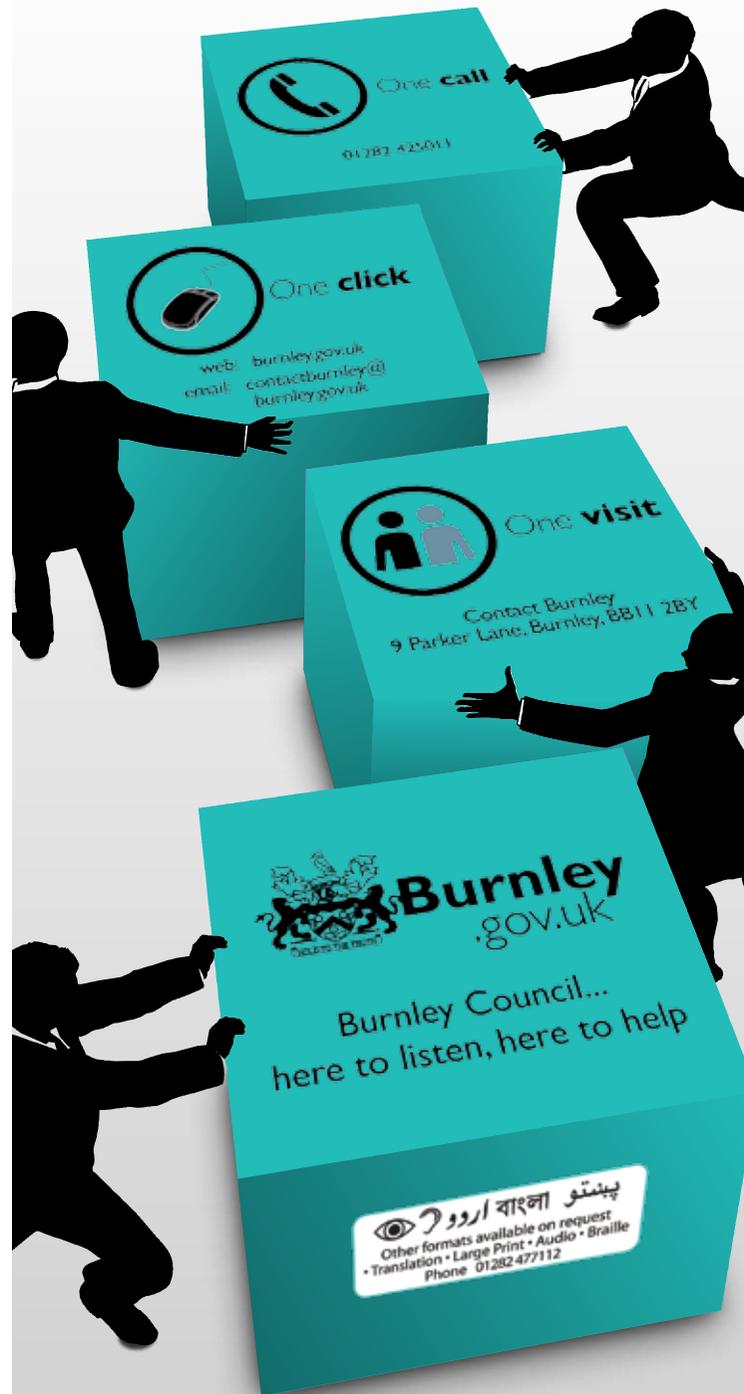
Agendas and reports for all our meetings are published on the website five working days before the meeting happens.

If there is any issue which you think needs to be discussed by Councillors, you can contact your local ward representative and raise it with them.

Or come along to one of the Council Leader's regular surgeries or our neighbourhood events.

More information on Councillors, Leader's surgeries, agendas and reports:

Online: [burnley.gov.uk](http://burnley.gov.uk)  
Phone: 01282 477256  
Call in: Burnley Town Hall, Manchester Road, Burnley, BB11 1JA



Asking questions at council meetings,  
making a statement, or presenting petitions...

**You have the 'Right to Speak'**



Burnley Council...  
here to listen, here to help



## What is 'the Right To Speak'?

Burnley Council makes decisions on all kinds of things that affect you. For example:

- How Council services are run
- Planning permission
- Deciding what different areas of land can be used for
- Regeneration activity
- Charges for leisure activities
- New initiatives to keep our streets tidy
- Work in our parks

## Are these decisions made in secret, behind closed doors?

No.

Every key decision is made at a Town Hall meeting which you are very welcome to attend.

There is a meeting of the Full Council every

eight weeks or so. In between these, there are meetings of the decision-making Executive, the Scrutiny Committees, and the Licensing and Development Control (planning) Committees.

Please note that there are sometimes a few items of business that have to be dealt with in private. These usually involve confidential details on individuals, or commercially sensitive information. The reason for any item being 'private' is always explained.

Anyone interested in any issues under discussion can arrange to have their say.

Members of the public may ask a question, make a statement, or present a petition relating to any item on the agenda - or on any matter covered by the committee or Council.

## What are the arrangements?

You need to give notice that you want to speak by giving in a form in the weeks or days before the meeting.

Your form needs to be with us by 5 pm the day before an Executive, Council or Scrutiny meeting, and by 5 pm three working days before Development Control and Licensing meetings.

Once you have booked your slot to speak or ask a question, you will have a 'link officer'.

Their job is to answer any questions you have about the meeting, and the way it runs. Afterwards, they will confirm the outcome of the meeting to you, and ask if you would like to do a short 'feedback' questionnaire. This helps us make sure we are doing things right.

## What happens at the meeting?

At the committee or Council meeting, questions and statements usually come at the beginning.

At Development Control, your Right To Speak comes just before the Committee considers the planning application you are interested in.

There is a set amount of time for your statement or question: this is up to five minutes.

If two or three people want to speak on the same issue, timings may be altered. You may want to 'divide up' the points you make with other people who are speaking in line with your views, so that each of you emphasises a different issue or argument.

Following your speech or questions, there will normally be discussion between the Councillors – "the Members" - leading to a decision. Other than at Council, paid employees of the Council – "the officers" - may be invited to contribute to the discussion. You are not allowed to take part in this discussion.

As with any right, there are responsibilities. When speaking you are asked not to behave in a disruptive manner, make personal attacks on Councillors, Council Officers or other individuals or raise issues which are the subject of a complaint or dispute against the Council. In those circumstances the Chair of the meeting may ask you to stop speaking or leave the meeting.

## Do I need to wait until the meeting before I have my say?

No.

In fact, if you want to have your say on an issue that is coming up before Councillors, or on anything the Council is doing, the best thing is to contact the Council beforehand.

If your issue is about a service we are delivering, please get in touch for information or to give us feedback.

We welcome all your comments, queries and suggestions, and always take complaints and concerns seriously, investigate them and get back to you.

