



# Code of Meeting Practice

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## **ACTION ON RESOLUTIONS**

Business arising from the meetings of Council is to be acted on as soon as practicable following the meeting and the following timeframe is regarded as the maximum acceptable period in which action is to be initiated:

- matters arising from reports and correspondence contained in the business paper: seven days following the meeting, and
- matters arising from business without notice: ten days following the meeting.

A monthly report is to be submitted outlining the action that has been taken on resolutions. Any request for action to be undertaken by staff, including the preparation of reports, shall be authorised by a Council resolution.

## **BUSINESS PAPER DEADLINE**

Items for inclusion in the business paper must be submitted by to the Council no later than the close of business on the Tuesday immediately prior to the Council meeting. When the item is such that it will require investigation and report by Council staff, the item must be submitted sufficiently early to allow the investigation and report to be completed by the close of work on the Wednesday immediately preceding the meeting.

## **BUSINESS PAPER ITEMS**

Where a member of the public submits an item with the request that it be submitted to Council, the request will be complied with unless, in the opinion of the General Manager, the content of the item makes it inappropriate for publication. If the item requires no action on Council's part, it may be included in the items for information circulated with the business paper.

## **CLOSURE OF MEETING – OBJECTION TO**

In accordance with section 10a (4) of the Local Government Act, the Council shall allow members of the public to make representations before any part of a meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed. Representations by a member of the public as to whether a part of a meeting should be closed to the public are limited to two minutes for each member making such a submission.

## **CORRESPONDENCE NOT TO BE PRESENTED AT MEETINGS**

On receipt of a letter or petition, a councillor should hand the document to the General Manager to enable it to be registered and dealt with in the normal manner, including, where appropriate, inclusion in a meeting business paper. Letters should not be presented or read by Councillors at meetings.

## **DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS**

Declarations of interest and the nature of such interest shall be declared:

- at ordinary meetings of Council, immediately following the confirmation of minutes and matters arising from those minutes, and
- at committee meetings, as the first item of business.

A Councillor declaring pecuniary interest at a meeting is required to vacate the chamber while the matter is under consideration.

A councillor with a non-pecuniary interest who intends to participate in the debate or vote on an issue, is to make that intention known at the time interest is declared.

## **EXTRAORDINARY MEETING**

The mayor is delegated authority to call an extraordinary meeting of Council provided the requirements relating to notice of meeting are observed.

Section 366 of the Local Government Act provides that the mayor must call an extraordinary meeting if he/she receives a written request signed by at least two councillors. The extraordinary meeting is to be held within 14 days after receipt of the request.

## **MEMBERS OF PUBLIC ADDRESSING A MEETING**

A person other than a councillor or appropriate staff member wishing to address a meeting on a matter in the business paper may do so provided proper notice is given. The preferred form of notice is a written request received in sufficient time to be noted in the business paper, that is, one week prior to the meeting.

A resolution of the Council is required to allow a member of the public to address a meeting of Council. This does not apply if the notice of such address is contained in the business paper for the meeting.

Unless invited by the Council or Committee to speak a second time, members of the public will be allowed to speak only once to the matter under discussion and to answer questions from councillors or staff.

All members of the public addressing a meeting are to address the chair and maintain proper decorum.

## **MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

Minutes of Council meetings are to contain only the record of attendance, the declarations of interest and the resolutions of such meetings (including mover and seconder), any expressions of dissent, voting in a division, reports of the Committee of the Whole or the Council during meetings closed to the public, and the grounds for closing part of the meeting.

## **NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

The notice of meetings and the business paper for ordinary meetings of Council are to be circulated to councillors by the Thursday preceding the meeting.

In the case of an extraordinary meeting of Council, notice is to be given to all councillors at least three days prior to the meeting unless circumstances and the urgency of the situation require a notice of a shorter period to be given.

## **NOTICE OF MOTION**

Notices of motion are to be submitted in writing at least one week prior to the meeting at which they are to be presented and are to be signed by the councillor or councillors submitting the motion.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS**

Supplementary reports are not to be presented to meetings of Council unless deemed by the General Manager to be a matter of urgency and notice of the issue has been included in the meeting business paper.

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The order of business for a council meeting shall be:

1. prayer
2. apologies
3. confirmation of minutes
4. matters arising from minutes
5. declarations of interest
6. mayoral minutes
7. question time (members of public & media representatives)
8. general managers report
9. reports of committee meetings
10. business with notice – (notices of motions)
11. business without notice ruled to be of great urgency
12. matters to be dealt with in a closed meeting

## **QUESTION TIME** (Inserted 26/7/05 – Minute No 1265)

A question time of up to thirty (30) minutes is scheduled during each ordinary meeting to allow questions to be asked of Council by representatives of the media and members of the general public. The question time shall be scheduled to take place immediately following the consideration of any mayoral reports.

Any person asking a question is to observe the same rules and decorum followed by councillors. Question time is a forum for the asking of genuine questions rather than the expression of personal opinions. It is not to be used as a means of making unsubstantiated complaints or allegations against individuals.

Questions are to be directed to the chairperson who in turn may refer it to it to a particular councillor or senior staff matter to reply.

Questions should be directed to the Council as a whole. Questions asking why a councillor voted in a certain manner on a particular issue are considered to be inappropriate and not in keeping with the intent of Question Time.

In cases where it is not be possible to provide an immediate response Council reserves the right to take the question on notice and either respond at the next meeting or provide a written reply.

## **STAFF REPORTS TO MEETINGS**

When a report is requested on a subject it shall be the normal practice for the report to be submitted to the next meeting of council or the committee at which the request originated unless an earlier or latter meeting is specified.

Requests for reports are required to be authorised by a resolution of the council rather than a request from an individual councillor.

Reports are to be accurate, containing relevant information that is clear, concise, complete and correct. Each clause is, as far as practicable, to contain a precise and decisive recommendation.

## **TIME OF MEETINGS**

Ordinary meetings of Council are to be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The starting time for Council meetings is 1.00pm.