

Public Forum Information Sheet

What is Council's policy?

Members of the public may address Council on matters listed on the Council agenda at a Council Meeting.

If you wish to speak at a Council meeting, you need to apply and your application must:

- State the agenda item(s) you wish to speak on
- State whether you will speak 'for' or 'against' the item, and
- Be received by 5pm the Tuesday prior to the Council meeting you wish to attend.

You can apply to speak on up to two items of business on the council meeting agenda.

Before the public forum

You need to register with Council any written, visual or audio material and notify us of any equipment you need one full business day before the meeting. You should also provide 14 copies of relevant documents to give to both Councillors and senior staff.

Where should I wait prior to the meeting?

Public forums start at 5pm and you are required to be seated in the public gallery shortly before.

How will I know when to address Council?

After the meeting starts, the Mayor or Chair will call individuals to address the Council. When you are called, make your way to the front of the Chamber and sit where directed by the Chair or staff.

When can I commence my address?

The Mayor or Chair will greet you and ask you to start your address, which is limited to five minutes.

Should I stand or be seated and should I speak into the microphone?

You may remain seated during your address. Before speaking, check that the microphone is on (the red light should be on) so the Councillors, staff and members of the gallery can hear you through the public speaker system.

General conduct

When addressing council, you must comply with all relevant council codes, policies and procedures. You are not to use your address to lodge complaints or grievances where there are other ways available within Council's policies and procedures.

You must not engage in disorderly conduct, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, nor publicly allege breaches of the council's code of conduct, or make other potentially defamatory statements.

You are not permitted to ask questions of the Councillors or council staff and you must not digress from the agenda you applied to speak on.

Remember that all Council meetings, including public forums, are recorded and live audio streamed.

What protocol should be observed?

During your address, you must maintain accepted protocol, which means you speak to the Mayor or Chair and refer to the elected members as “Councillor” or “Mayor/Chair”.

Will any questions be asked of me?

When you have finished your address, the Mayor or Chair will ask the Councillors if they have any questions for you. When responding to these questions, you are to speak to the Mayor or Chair.

What should I do at the end of my address?

The Mayor or Chair will thank you for your address and you may either return to the public gallery area or leave the chamber.

When will the matter be considered by Council?

Items on the agenda which are the subject of a public forum are usually considered in the early stages of the agenda.

Further information

More information on public forums, refer to Council’s [Code of Meeting Practice](#).