

Public Forum Information Sheet

What is Council's procedure?

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

If you wish to take part in a public forum, 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 relevant Council meeting.

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

How do I address Council?

A public forum can be presented in person or by providing a written statement to be read to Council on the speaker's behalf.

General conduct for public forums

Presentations and written statements must comply with all relevant council codes, policies and procedures. Statements are not to be used to lodge complaints or grievances where there are other ways available within Council's policies and procedures.

Presentations and written statements must not include any intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, nor publicly allege breaches of the Council's code of conduct, or make other potentially defamatory statements.

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

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

In person presentations

If providing a public forum in person then the following applies:

Written, visual or audio material

You need to register any written, visual or audio material with Council 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 before the meeting?

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

When do I address Council?

Once 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.

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.

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.

Written Statements

If providing a written statement, then the following applies:

Submitting written statements

If providing a written statement, then the statement must:

- Be typed
- Be no more than two A4 pages
- Use Arial size 12 font
- Not exceed five minutes as the remaining part might not be read out
- Be submitted to Council by no later than 12:00pm of the day of the Council Meeting,

If written statements do not meet these requirements it might not be read out.

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](#).

