

COUNCIL FORUMS AND WORKSHOPS

Preamble

Council Forums are a component of the Shire of Plantagenet's (the Shire's) Council Decision-Making Framework. Council Forums provide an opportunity for Councillors and employees to discuss strategies, policy and concepts without the constraints of Standing Orders and the requirement for public participation.

Purpose

This policy seeks to ensure that Council Forums maintain standards of behaviour, probity and public accountability, by detailing policy parameters and procedures for Council Forums.

Scope

No decisions can be made in Council Forums.

Instead, Council Forums are useful for (including, but not limited to):

- discussing strategic ideas;
- discussing policy ideas;
- reviewing services;
- workshops on informing strategies;
- seeking feedback on a notice of motion;
- alerting each other about emerging issues;
- hearing presentations from stakeholders;
- providing updates on significant projects;
- providing progress on Corporate Business Plan priorities;
- discussing service delivery; and
- providing information on operational matters.

Policy

1. Calling Council Forums and Workshops

- a) The Shire President or Chief Executive Officer may call a Council Forum or Workshop.

2. Presentations

- a) In consultation with the Shire President, the CEO may approve a request for a presentation to a Council Forum or Workshop on issues considered of special significance to the Shire.

3. Agenda

- a) The CEO shall prepare an agenda for each Council Forum or Workshop.
- b) Council members may submit agenda items for a Council Forum by email up to one week prior.

4. Notice

- a) The CEO shall give Council Members at least one-week written notice of a Council Forum or Workshop unless the CEO, in consultation with the Shire President, agrees to provide a lesser period of notice in urgent or exceptional circumstances.

5. Presiding Person

- a) The Shire President shall preside at Council Forums or Workshops. The Shire President may nominate another person to be the presiding person.

6. Disclosure of Interests

- a) Those provisions in the Code of Conduct dealing with Conflict of Interests shall apply to Council Forums and Workshops.

7. Notes of Meetings

- a) The CEO will cause notes to be kept of each Council Forum and workshop.
- b) These notes will include the date, attendance and title of the subjects addressed.
- c) These notes will record any actions that the CEO intends to take regarding the subjects addressed.

8. Decisions

- a) As these meetings are outside the statutory framework of the *Local Government Act 1995* and are not intended to replace ordinary council meetings, Council cannot make decisions at Council Forums or Workshops.

9. Voting Intentions

- a) Council Members must not indicate their voting intentions at a Council Forum or Workshop.

10. Council Forums

- a) Council Forums provide an opportunity for Council Members to discuss ideas, strategies and concepts for the development of the Shire or projects that are in the early planning stage and are some time away from being presented to Council for a decision. They provide an opportunity for staff or consultants to present information to Council Members on the concept or project.
- b) They allow Council Members to ask questions of relevant staff or consultants and enables Council Members to discuss aspects of the concept or project.

11. Council Forum – Procedure

- a) Council Members may ask questions of relevant staff or consultants and must address their questions and all discussion through the presiding person.
- b) The CEO may provide background briefing notes prior to the Council Forum to inform discussion.
- c) Council Members must limit their discussion about issues arising in the Council Forum to brief statements on relevant matters. Council Members must not enter into debate.
- d) Council Forums will be limited to two hours and any remaining agenda items will be carried over to the next agenda.

12. Council Forum – Public Attendance

- a) Council Forums are generally closed to the public.

13. Workshops

- a) Workshops provide an opportunity for Council Members to have input into the development of a strategy, policy, concept or project scope. They allow Council Members to explore different options with relevant staff and to participate more fully in the development of a strategy, policy, concept or project scope.

14. Workshops – Procedure

- a) Council Members may ask questions of relevant staff and may address their questions through the presiding person or directly to the person concerned.
- b) Council Members must not debate their voting intentions at a Workshop.

15. Workshops – Public Attendance

- a) Workshops are generally closed to the public.

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