

Guidelines for addressing a Council Meeting

Attending the meeting

Council Meetings are held at the Council Chamber located at Rockdale Town Hall, L1, 448 Princes Highway, Rockdale. Council Meetings are usually held on the second Wednesday of the month, commencing at 7.00 pm.

A schedule of meeting dates is located on Council's Website at www.bayside.nsw.gov.au.

Persons who have lodged a "Community Access – Request to Speak at a Council Meeting" form to address a Council Meeting must be in attendance 15 minutes prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Addressing the Mayor

The Mayor is the Chairperson of the Council meeting and should be addressed as "Mr Mayor" as appropriate. The Mayor will call those who have registered to speak by name and invite them to the lectern.

Speakers should note that Council Meetings are audio recorded for the purposes of minute taking and live streamed to the community via Council's Facebook page, in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

Prior to commencing their address, the Mayor will ask the speaker to state:

- Their name
- The organisation, group or party they represent (if applicable)
- The item number on the Business paper that they wish to speak on
- The interest they have as an Applicant, applicant's spokesperson, neighbour, affected person
- Whether they are opposing or supporting the matter and the outcome they are seeking

Speakers should limit their address to providing information they believe will serve to extend the Council's understanding of the issues involved. The person may be asked to answer questions raised by the Mayor in order to gain a better understanding of the issues involved or to clarify a particular point. **Speakers are not entitled to ask questions of the Mayor, Councillors, General Manager or any Council Officers.**

Speakers must address a Council Meeting in a respectful and civil manner. Failure to do so may result in the permission to speak being withdrawn. There is no absolute privilege (defence against a defamation action) applied to a person making an address. A person who makes any potentially offensive or defamatory remarks about any other person may render themselves open to legal action. Individuals should seek their own independent legal advice in relation to this matter.

At the conclusion of an address and following any questions from the Mayor, the speaker will be asked to resume their seat in the public gallery and shall take no further part in the deliberations unless invited to do so by the Mayor. Failure to do so may result in the person being required to leave the meeting.

How do I find out the decision made by Council?

Once all speakers have made addresses, the meeting will consider items on the business paper, usually in the order they appear on the agenda. Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting are placed on Council's website, once they have been authorised for publication.

Further Information

Further information may be obtained by contacting Council's Governance staff on 1300 581 299.

Extract from Council's Code of Meeting Practice



8.1 Public Forum

- 8.1.1 The Council shall make provision for members of the public to address the Council meeting on matters that are raised in the Business Paper.
- 8.1.2 Applications to address the Council:-
- must be made no later than noon on the day of the Council Meeting to the General Manager or nominee who receives applications;
 - must state the name and address of the applicant, a contact telephone number, and general details of the nature of the address;
 - will be listed with a copy given to the Mayor immediately prior to the commencement of the meeting. The Mayor shall give first speaking preference to those persons who have an interest in a matter before the Council that evening.
- 8.1.3 The Council shall give consideration to allowing opposing points of view to be presented prior to determining a matter.
- 8.1.4 Subject to 8.1.5, fifteen (15) minutes will be allocated for discussion on any one item, with preference given to the arrangement where one person speaks for the motion and one speaks against the motion. Groups are encouraged to nominate a representative to make the presentation to the Council on behalf of the group.
- 8.1.5 Where two speakers have registered on the one subject, five (5) minutes will be given to each speaker. Where more than two speakers have registered to speak on the same item, the Chairperson will determine the equal allocation of time between speakers.
- 8.1.6 When making a presentation:-
- Subject to 8.1.5, each presentation shall be limited to five (5) minutes, and the Council may extend the presentation by a further three (3) minutes if considered appropriate. The maximum time for all presentations on each subject will be limited to fifteen (15) minutes.
 - Where it is considered that a particular matter requires further discussion, the Council may wish to resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole in accordance with clause 5.1.
 - Speakers shall conduct themselves with due respect to the Council and observe the rules of order and meeting procedure as contained in the Code of Meeting Practice.
- 8.1.7 Councillors may, through the Chairperson, ask questions of the speakers at the conclusion of their address.

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