

PROCEDURE FOR ADDRESSING COUNCIL MEETINGS

OVERVIEW

Anyone can request permission to address a meeting of the Council or one of its committees about an issue or matter on the Agenda for that meeting, providing the number of speakers is limited to three in support of any particular proposal and three against.

Smart casual dress is the minimum standard acceptable.

A request to address the meeting can be lodged with the General Manager, Public Officer or the Governance Coordinator up until 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

Before the meeting, the person wishing to address the meeting must:

- provide a written statement of the points they will cover during their address in sufficient detail to inform the Councillors of the substance of the address
- sign the 'Addressing the Meeting' Declaration.

Speakers do not have absolute privilege (parliamentary privilege). Permission to speak may be withdrawn if they make inappropriate comments. A speaker who makes any potentially offensive or defamatory remarks about any other person may render themselves open to legal action.

Anyone who wishes to address a Council meeting should be aware that Council meetings (except confidential sessions of the meetings) are recorded and will be placed on Council's website.

The Public Officer, Governance Coordinator or Minute Clerk will speak to each person who has requested permission to address the meeting approximately 15 minutes before the meeting start time.

It is up to the Council or Committee to decide if the request to address the meeting will be granted. Where permission is granted, the Council or Committee, at the appropriate time, will suspend only so much of the Standing Orders as required to allow the address.

The Chair will then call the person up to the lectern or speaking area.

The person addressing the meeting needs to clearly indicate:

- their name
- the organisation or group they are representing (if applicable)
- the issue they will address and the item number of the relevant report in the Business Paper
- whether they are opposing or supporting the issue/matter (if applicable) and the action they would like the meeting to take, and
- their interest (eg affected person, neighbour, applicant, applicant's spokesperson, interested citizen etc).

Each person then has five minutes to speak to the written statement they have submitted. Permission to address Council is not to be taken as an opportunity to refute or support the points made by previous speakers on the same issue.

The Council or Committee has the discretion to extend this time if they consider it appropriate.

Councillors may have questions about the address so people are asked to remain at the lectern or in the speaking area until the Chair has thanked them, and then return to their seat.

ADDRESSING THE MEETING DECLARATION

Please complete this declaration, sign it in front of a witness and give it to Council's Governance Coordinator or Public Officer (or their representative) before the meeting you wish to address.

I (full name) _____ understand that the meeting

I intend to address on (date) _____ is a public meeting.

I also understand that should I say anything inappropriate or present any material that is inappropriate, I may be subject to legal action. I acknowledge that I have been advised to obtain my own legal advice about the appropriateness of the material I intend to present at the meeting.

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Signature _____ Date _____

