



Public Forums and Deputation Guidelines

Portfolio:	Office of the CEO
Department:	Governance and Policy
Responsible Officer:	Manager Governance and Policy
Last Reviewed:	April 2020
Next Review Date:	April 2023
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1. Purpose

Council has an agenda item as part of its standard meeting agenda to allow members of the public to make representation to the Council meeting. This guideline provides clarity and ensures public forums and deputations run as smoothly as possible. The Guidelines may be varied to suit specific circumstances at the discretion of the Presiding Member.

2. Applies To

- All members of the public wishing to speak to Council under these options.
- Governance and Policy staff
- Mayor / Presiding Member

3. References

This procedure supports Council's strategic directions in its desire to have open and transparent governance with community involvement. Having a documented guideline will assist Council in delivering this strategic direction in a professional manner. This document should be read in conjunction with the [Code of Practice for Meeting Procedures](#).

4. Definitions

Nil

5. Procedure

Electronic Participation in Council Meetings: Public Health Emergency (Notice No 1)

On 15 March 2020, the Chief Executive of the Department for Health and Wellbeing in the State of South Australia, pursuant to section 87 of the *South Australian Public Health Act 2011*, declared that an emergency which threatens to cause the death of, or injury or other damage to the health of any person is occurring or about to occur in relation to the transmission of COVID-19, and declared the emergency to be a public health emergency.

On 22 March 2020, the State Co-ordinator for the State of South Australia declared, pursuant to section 23 of the *Emergency Management Act 2004*, that a Major Emergency is occurring in respect of the outbreak of the Human Disease named COVID-19 within South Australia.

On 30 March 2020 the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government issued a notice pursuant to section 302B of the *Local Government Act 1999* (**Notice No 1**) varying or suspending the operation of the specified provisions of the *Local Government Act 1999* as set out in Schedule 1 to Notice No 1 which commenced operation on 31 March 2020.

For the period Notice No 1 has effect (as provided for in Notice No 1), Council's Code of Practice for Council and Committee Meeting Procedures. This will have effect on how Public Forums and Deputations will be undertaken during this period.

Process of Public Forums

The following basic principles will form the basis of this guideline during the period of Notice No. 1:

- a) The Public Forum sessions will be limited to a maximum of 10 minutes per meeting. Each speaker will be restricted to a maximum time of 2 minutes in which to make their statements (unless otherwise determined in accordance with the Code of Practice for Meeting Procedures).
 - Where there are more registered speakers than time allocated the Presiding Member will have the right to limit the number of speakers as he or she sees fit, or may extend the time accordingly.
 - Where community interest is known, or suspected before the meeting starts, or multiple speakers have indicated they wish to speak on the same topic, the Presiding Member may request a ballot system be implemented, with the names drawn indicating people who can speak in the forum.

- b) A person or persons wishing to speak in the Public Forum session at a meeting must make a request to the CEO in writing (including email) prior to the meeting. A person or persons wishing to speak in the Public Forum session at a meeting may appear by electronic means.
- c) The speaker must complete the [online form](#) with the following information:
 - The speakers name
 - The speakers address
 - A telephone contact number
 - The subject matter about which the speaker wishes to address the meeting. (Note: Operational matters should be referred to Council Customer Service during normal business hours)
- d) When a request has been approved, the CEO will advise the person of the outcome of their request and indicate the method by which the person or persons are to appear at the meeting.
- e) The list of speakers will be provided to the Presiding Member at the commencement of the meeting.

Process of Deputations

The following basic principles will form the basis of this guideline during the period of Notice No. 1:

- a) A person or persons wishing to speak in the Deputation session at a meeting must make a request to the CEO in writing (including email) by 5pm Wednesday of the week prior to the meeting.
- b) The speaker must complete the [online form](#) with the following information:
 - The speakers name
 - The speakers address
 - A telephone contact number
 - The subject matter about which the speaker wishes to address the meeting and time of Deputation (restricted to a maximum of 10 minutes). (Note: Operational matters should be referred to Council Customer Service during normal business hours)
- b) When a request has been approved, the CEO will advise the person of the outcome of their request and indicate the method by which the person or persons are to appear at the meeting.
- c) The list of Deputations will be provided in the Council Agenda.
- d) Any external party wishing to use PowerPoint, DVD or similar electronic forms of a presentation aid must make the presentation available to Council prior to the meeting. These presentations should be delivered to the coordinating staff member prior to 3.00pm on the day of the meeting.

- e) This will result in the presentation being available on the day of the meeting from 3.00pm for testing and familiarisation with Council equipment and the meeting room. External presenters are expected to have tested their presentations on the Council equipment prior to the meeting. External USB sticks are not to be inserted into any Council computers without prior approval from Council.

Guidelines for speaking at a meeting

- a) All deputations and public forums are expected to have complied with these guidelines and persons making deputations are expected to be available at the commencement of the meeting, noting that the Presiding Member may change the order of the Agenda at their discretion.
- b) Each speaker, when invited to speak by the Presiding Member will address the meeting through the Presiding Member or Mayor and will address the Presiding Member as “Mr/Ms Presiding Member” and the Mayor as “Mayor (*Name of the Mayor*)”.
- c) The speaker is to introduce his or herself – name, suburb and subject for the benefit of the meeting and the minute taker. The Presiding Member has absolute discretion as to allow or refuse a person to continue to speak.
- d) Speakers are required to speak to the meeting with respect, and the meeting is required to listen with respect.
- Only use appropriate language and do not speak down to, harass or make racist, sexist or unnecessary critical remarks about people or organisations.
 - All information being disclosed must be truthful and not lead to any unfair damage or distress to a third party.
 - This includes making allegations, which may damage any person’s reputation by exposing them to hatred, ridicule or contempt, or lower a person in the estimation of others.
 - All allegations must be stated as allegations and should be supported by some factual evidence.
 - All comments should be fair and based on stated facts.
 - The Presiding Member will have the authority to terminate any deputation or public forum at anytime where it fails to conform to these guidelines or any other reasonable request of the Presiding Member.
- e) Each Deputation session should relate to policy, strategic type matters or items that are currently before the Council. Operational matters should be referred to Council’s Customer Services during normal business hours.
- f) The Presiding Member may consider the following options when responding to a speaker:
- Thank the speaker for their comments and make no further comment,
 - Refer the matter to a Councillor if it is in regard to a Councillor issue,
 - Seek advice from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the CEO may refer the matter to a Senior Executive

- Advise the speaker that the response needs either further investigation or discussion and a staff member will contact them regarding their specific issue.

- g) As a general rule, the meeting will not debate matters raised from the Public Forum at the same meeting when it is first raised. Elected Members may ask questions of the speaker for clarification at the discretion of the Presiding Member. Elected Members may, at a later date, call for a report through a Notice of Motion or seek to ask a Question on Notice to progress matters raised.
- h) The Minutes of the meeting will include the name of each speaker and a brief description of the matter presented and how they participated.

CITY OF TEA TREE GULLY

REGISTER OF PUBLIC FORUM

On matters relating to Policy, Strategic Matters or Items that are currently before the meeting

Meeting:

Date:

NAME	ADDRESS	CONTACT DETAILS	SUBJECT