



GUIDELINES FOR REPRESENTATIONS TO COUNCIL MEETINGS

MADE UNDER CLAUSE 19.1 OF THE COMMUNITY LOCAL LAW NO. 2 MEETINGS PROCEDURES & USE OF COMMON SEAL LOCAL LAW 2016

Introduction

Clause 19.1 of the Meetings Procedures and Use of Common Seal Local Law 2016 states that:

“Council may develop guidelines relating to public addresses to Council to assist with the promotion of public involvement in Council meetings and the orderly operation of Council meetings.”

These Guidelines are created under this Clause and are designed to assist Council, Council Staff and members of the community to understand the various means through which members of the public can participate in Council meetings.

Community participation at Council meetings

Council encourages members of the community to be actively involved in Council meetings through:

- presentations to Council to express gratitude, appreciation or to recognise a significant contribution to the Shire and its community;
- presentations from Council to members of the public, groups and organisations to express thanks and to recognise their contributions to the Shire and its community;
- the receipt of joint letters/petitions;
- deputations from those with direct interest in any Item listed on the Agenda; and
- the provision of up to 30 minutes of public question time at the end of each Council meeting.

Order of Business

Council acknowledges that an opportunity must be provided for members of the community interested in a particular item on the Council Agenda to present their views prior to Council making an informed decision on that matter.

Deputations on Agenda Items, including those from Applicants and Objectors/Submitters relating to items for planning permit applications and planning scheme amendments, will be heard immediately after the Chair has introduced the item and before the Officer provides a brief overview of the report.

Speaking times and order

Three (3) minutes will be provided for each speaker, which may be extended at the discretion of the Chair.

The Chair will ask if there is anyone wishing to speak to Items on the Agenda after each item has been introduced.

When it is your turn to make your deputation to the Council, you will be asked by the Chair to come forward and state your name.



You are requested to briefly summarise your key points on the matter as Councillors have already read the Council Officer report and seen any objections, submissions or petitions.

If you wish to circulate photographs or other hard copy documents to Councillors at the meeting, you are requested to bring seven (7) copies with you. A Council officer will distribute the material for you while you speak.

Please note that Councillors may ask you questions of clarification after your presentation.

How will I know when a report on an issue will be considered by Council?

Everyone who has made a written submission on an Item will receive an invitation to attend the meeting a minimum of five (5) business days before the meeting is to be held.

It would be appreciated that you notify the relevant Council officer as soon as possible that you wish to speak at the meeting on the issue.

A copy of the Council Agenda will be available on Council's website from the Friday prior to the date of the Council meeting at www.mansfield.vic.gov.au under About Council → Council Meetings → Council Agendas and Minutes.

For those who have signed or have organised a petition or joint letter, please note that Clause 19 the Local Law states that the spokesperson for a petition/joint letter will be notified of the time, location and date of the Council meeting at which the document shall be presented. It is the duty of that spokesperson to inform all signatories of Council's response to the petition.

Behaviour at Council Meetings

Council understands that people are passionate about their community and the issues that matter most to them. However, those making representations to Council must respect both Councillors and Council officers at all times during a Council meeting.

The Local Law provides guidance around behaviour at Council meetings:

- Any person addressing the Chair should refer to the Chair as:
 - Madam Mayor; or
 - Mr Mayor; or
 - Madam Chair; or
 - Mr Chair, as the case may be.
- All Councillors, other than the Mayor, should be addressed as Cr ...(name).
- Officers should be addressed as Mr, Ms ...(name)
- Any Councillor or other person who addresses a Meeting must do so in a courteous manner.

Please remember that once you have made your presentation and resume your seat in the gallery, you are not able to ask further questions of Council and must not interject during Council's deliberation of the item. You must also not make comment or interject during any other party's deputation to Council and respect the principles of natural justice and everyone having a fair hearing without feeling intimidated by others.



Role of the Chair

The role of the Chair during Council meetings is to ensure the orderly conduct of the meeting, that there is public and Councillor participation during the meeting and that the principles of natural justice are applied at all times. The Local Law provides the Chair with some specific powers to ensure that he or she is able to achieve this.

- The Chair may disallow any petition or joint letter which is considered to:
 - a) relate to a matter beyond the power or duties of Council;
 - b) be defamatory, indecent, offensive, abusive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or nature;
 - c) relate to a confidential, or legal, matter;
 - d) repeat a question or petition already answered, whether at the same or any previous meeting;
 - e) be aimed to embarrass a Councillor or Council officer;
 - f) relate to personnel matters;
 - g) relate to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer;
 - h) relate to matters affecting the security of Council property; or,
 - i) relate to any other matter that Council considers would prejudice the Council or any other person.

- The Chair may disallow any question which is considered to:
 - a) relate to a matter beyond the power or duties of Council;
 - b) be defamatory, indecent, offensive, abusive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or nature;
 - c) relate to a confidential, or legal, matter;
 - d) repeat a question or petition already answered, whether at the same or any previous meeting;
 - e) be aimed to embarrass a Councillor or Council officer;
 - f) relate to personnel matters;
 - g) relate to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer;
 - h) relate to matters affecting the security of Council property; or,
 - i) relate to any other matter that Council considers would prejudice the Council or any other person.

The Chair may also remove any person who disrupts a meeting or fails to comply with a direction from the Chair.