



Public Question Time

To enable active participation by the public at Council meetings, the Agenda includes an item for Public Question Time. The allocated 15 minute Public Question Time has been provided to give members of the public the opportunity to ask specific questions of the Council relating to the Local Government or on topics covered in the Agenda for a particular meeting, at that meeting. Persons wishing to address Council on a specific issue are requested to complete this form and submit to the Chief Executive Officer no later than 15 mins prior to the scheduled commencement of a meeting, but preferably during the month preceding the Council meeting.

INFORMATION TO ASSIST THE PUBLIC

1. Members of the public are most welcome at Council meetings.
2. All questions should be requested in writing by completing a Public Question Time form.
3. If a question is raised at a meeting without prior written notice, it is less likely to be answered at the time of the meeting.
4. A limited number of Agendas are provided at the meeting.
5. The Agenda allows for Public Question Time at Items 3 and 4.
6. The public will be invited to ask their question by the Shire President and each question and explanation will be no more than five (5) minutes in duration.
7. A member of the public who raises a question during question time will stand to ask the question, state his or her name and address, and will be seated immediately on either the completion of the question or at the Shire President's direction.
8. A question may be taken on notice by the Council or Committee for later response.
9. When a question is taken on notice, a response is to be given to the member of the public in writing by the Chief Executive Officer and a summary of the question raised and the response given are to be included in the Agenda and Minutes of the next meeting of the Council or Committee as the case requires.
10. Not more than two (2) persons in support of, or against a proposal, may ask a question on any single Agenda Item, unless ruled otherwise by the Shire President.
11. Council is not required to:
 - a. answer a question that does not relate to a matter affecting the Local Government; or
 - b. answer a question at a special Council meeting that does not relate to the purpose of the meeting.
12. Similarly, there is no requirement at an open Committee meeting to answer a question that does not relate to a function of the Committee.

Should the Council or Committee be unable to answer a question immediately due to further research being required, a reply in writing will be forwarded to the questioner as soon as practicable.



Rules Relating to Public Question Time

Rules relating to Public Question Time for the public are covered in the Local Government Act 1995, Section 5.24(1) and Regulations 5, 6 and 7 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996.

Extracts from the Local Government (Administration) Regulations

5. Question time for public, meetings that require prescribed (Act s. 5.24)

For the purposes of section 5.24(1)(b), the meetings at which time is to be allocated for questions to be raised by members of the public and responded to are —

- (a) every special meeting of a council;*
- (b) every meeting of a committee to which the local government has delegated a power or duty.*

6. Question time for public, minimum time for (Act s. 5.24(2))

(1) The minimum time to be allocated for the asking of and responding to questions raised by members of the public at ordinary meetings of councils and meetings referred to in regulation 5 is 15 minutes.

(2) Once all the questions raised by members of the public have been asked and responded to at a meeting referred to in subregulation (1), nothing in these regulations prevents the unused part of the minimum question time period from being used for other matters.

7. Question time for public, procedure for (Act s. 5.24(2))

(1) Procedures for the asking of and responding to questions raised by members of the public at a meeting referred to in regulation 6(1) are to be determined —

- (a) by the person presiding at the meeting; or*
- (b) in the case where the majority of members of the council or committee present at the meeting disagree with the person presiding, by the majority of those members,*

having regard to the requirements of subregulations (2), (3) and (5).

(2) The time allocated to the asking of and responding to questions raised by members of the public at a meeting referred to in regulation 6(1) is to precede the discussion of any matter that requires a decision to be made by the council or the committee, as the case may be.

(3) Each member of the public who wishes to ask a question at a meeting referred to in regulation 6(1) is to be given an equal and fair opportunity to ask the question and receive a response.

(4) Nothing in subregulation (3) requires —

- (a) a council to answer a question that does not relate to a matter affecting the local government; or*
- (b) a council at a special meeting to answer a question that does not relate to the purpose of the meeting; or*
- (c) a committee to answer a question that does not relate to a function of the committee.*

(5) If, during the time allocated for questions to be raised by members of the public and responded to, a question relating to a matter in which a relevant person has an interest, as referred to in section 5.60, is directed to the relevant person, the relevant person is to —

- (a) declare that he or she has an interest in the matter; and*
- (b) allow another person to respond to the question.*

[Regulation 7 amended in Gazette 28 Jun 2002 p. 3079.]

Public Question Time



Question to the Shire President

Date:

Name:

Telephone:

Address:

Question type:

- General Question*
- My question relates to item number: _____*

Question:

Please deliver to the Chief Executive Officer for referral to the Shire President 15 mins before the meeting commences