

Title	Council Meetings
Policy Number (Governance Purpose)	



Policy Type

Council

Policy Purpose

This policy establishes the requirements and standards for Council Meetings and Standing Committee Meetings which apply in accordance with the Local Government Act (Part 5) and the City of Cockburn Standing Orders Local Law 2016 (as amended).

Policy Statement

This policy applies to Council Meetings and Council Standing Committee Meetings.

All Council Standing Committee Meetings will be held in accordance with the adopted Terms of Reference of the particular Committee, or as otherwise determined by Council resolution.

(1) Meeting Times

1. Ordinary Council Meetings will be conducted on the second Thursday of each month at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber and are open to the public.
2. The Council meeting will consider matters as listed on the Council Agenda paper.
3. An Ordinary Council Meeting is not conducted during January of each year and any required business will be conducted as a Special Council Meeting during this specific period.
4. Any further variation to the date, place and/or time of Council Meetings will be subject to the resolution of Council.

(2) Provision of Committee Business Papers to Elected Members

Council appoints Committees under the Local Government Act, 1995, the Business Papers for which are to be provided to all Elected Members of Council in advance of relevant Committee meetings being conducted.

1. Upon a meeting of a Committee established by Council being called in accordance with Council's Standing Orders Local Law, a notice of the meeting will be forwarded to:
 - a. all Committee members, and
 - b. other Elected Members who are not a member of the Committee for information

Title	Council Meetings
Policy Number (Governance Purpose)	



2. The Business Papers for the Committee, including the Agenda, related attachments and where applicable, the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee, shall be forwarded to all Committee members with the Notice of Meeting, if possible, at least 72 hours prior to the commencement of the Meeting.
3. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Policy, any Elected Member may request a copy of Committee documentation to be provided to them.

(3) Seating Arrangements

Following the election of a new Council from time to time, the seating arrangements in the Council Chamber will be allocated on the following basis:

1. The elected Mayor will be seated at the head of the table, facing the public gallery.
2. The CEO will also be seated at the head of the table, immediately to the left of the Mayor.
3. The elected Deputy Mayor will be seated immediately to the right of the Mayor.
4. The Mayor will be responsible for the allocation of the remaining Councillors (with Ward members grouped together, wherever possible) who are to be seated in the Council Chamber.

(4) Reports

It is critical that reports prepared by staff for Council contain adequate information on which the Council can make an informed decision.

1. Principles

Reports prepared by officers for the Council's consideration are to:

- a. be according to law;
- b. take account of any State or Council Policy;
- c. have regard for the Council's Strategic Community Plan;
- d. be balanced and objective;
- e. be technically correct;
- f. be properly researched using relevant information and data;
- g. ensure procedural fairness;
- h. include options, consequences and associated impacts where appropriate; and
- i. include expert opinion or advice where necessary

2. Recommendations

Recommendations prepared by officers for the Council's consideration are to:

- a. be clear and unambiguous;
- b. be implementable;
- c. be professional and ethical;

Title	Council Meetings
Policy Number (Governance Purpose)	



- d. not expose the Council to unreasonable risk or liability;
- e. have regard for the interests of the applicant/submitter as well as the wider community; and
- f. include the administrative actions to enable implementation of the Council's decision

(5) Proposed Amendments by Elected Members to recommendations for Council Meeting

Elected Members are encouraged to provide suggested alternatives to officer recommendations to the Administration in advance of the relevant Council meeting, to enable consistency and clarity in terminology being proposed, as well as ensuring the legality of any proposed amendments.

1. Any proposed amendments to officer recommendations contained in the Council Agenda Paper are to be made personally by the Elected Member either with or without input from the relevant staff member.
2. All proposed amendments are to be forwarded to the Minute Clerk following the distribution of the Agenda Paper to Elected Members, by no later than 10.00am on the day of the Council Meeting. A copy of the proposed amendment will be circulated to all other Elected Members.
3. A reason for the proposed amendment must be included with the information provided in accordance with Clause (5) 2 above.
4. Elected Members proposing amendments of a similar nature on the same item(s) may consult with each other in order to achieve a consensus position on any item and agree to withdraw any amendment, or part thereof, or to agree to provide an alternative of similar meaning and/or wording to one, or another, of the presented amendments.
5. Having received all proposed amendments in accordance with this Policy, a listing will be compiled with all proposed amendments received, together with relevant reasons, for provision to the Council Meeting. Where there are multiple proposed amendments for the same item, they will be listed in the order they have been received from Elected Members.
6. When called upon to do so at the relevant time during the Council Meeting by the Presiding Member, the CEO will inform the Meeting of the items on the Agenda Paper for which notice of a proposed amendment/s has been received.
7. At the relevant point of the Council Meeting, the Presiding Member shall invite the Elected Member proposing the amendment(s) to move the alternative motion accordingly. In the case where more than one proposal has been received, the Presiding Member shall call for the amendment(s) to be put in order of their receipt as per Clause (5) 5 above and thereafter dealt with in accordance with Council's Standing Orders.

Title	Council Meetings
Policy Number (Governance Purpose)	



(6) Voting at Council and Standing Committee Meetings

1. When called upon to do so by the Presiding Member, all Elected Members present at a formal meeting of the Council or Standing Committee are required to vote on each item put to the Meeting, unless required to leave the Meeting after declaring a financial or proximity interest in the item;
2. Voting may be called by the Presiding Member by way of a show of hands, or by any electronic system installed for this purpose; and
3. Once the votes have been cast, the Presiding Member shall ensure that the names of all elected members voting for and against a motion are recorded in the Minutes of the Meeting, unless there is a unanimous decision on a motion, which shall be recorded in the Minutes as such.

Strategic Link:	Corporate Governance Charter
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