

S-G9-P Public Question time – Council Meeting Procedure

Purpose	To outline how Council implements Public Question Time at Ordinary Council Meetings.	
Department	Governance	
File No.	COU/0600	
Council Meeting Date	21 August 2024	
Minute Number	199.08.2024	
Next Review Date	Four (4) years from Council Resolution Date	
Review History	66.04.2017	20 April 2017
	213.10.2020	20 October 2020

1. Introduction

Regulation 31 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015 provides for Public Question Time at Ordinary Council Meetings, which allows members of the public to ask questions of the Council on matters relating to Flinders Council.

This procedure details additional guidelines that complement the requirements of regulation 31.

2. Procedure

Members of the public may ask questions of Council on the following basis:

2.1. Questions in writing

A member of the public may give written notice to the General Manager, at least seven days before an Ordinary Council Meeting, of a question to be asked at that meeting.

2.2. Questions asked in person at the meeting

2.2.1. All questioners are encouraged to register their intent to question with the General Manager before the meeting. Preference will be given to those who have registered. Registration of intent to submit a question should be sent to:

- governance@flinders.tas.gov.au; or
- 4 Davies Street, Whitemark, Tasmania 7255.

2.2.2. All questions must be in writing to be recorded in the minutes and be addressed through the Chair (being the Mayor in normal circumstances) who will answer them as she/he sees fit. If refusing to accept a question, the Chairperson is to give reasons for doing so.

2.2.3. Under no circumstances will members of the gallery be permitted to address or question either elected members or officers of the Council. The Chair may delegate answers to the appropriate Councillor or staff member if appropriate.

2.2.4. Persons addressing the Chair must state their name and pay the respect due to that office. Failure to do so may mean their address is terminated without notice.

2.2.5. Where a copy of the question is provided in writing and an answer is given at the meeting, the question and answer will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

2.2.6. Where the answer cannot be provided immediately, it will be taken on notice, with a response provided in writing within 14 days and tabled in the Agenda at the following Ordinary Council Meeting.

2.2.7. Extensive introductory speeches/information are not encouraged and will not be recorded in either the minutes or agendas.

2.2.8. Question time shall extend longer than 30 minutes at the Chair's discretion.

2.2.9. The timing of the session is to be immediately after the confirmation of the previous meeting's minutes and advertised as such with the notice of meeting.

2.2.10. Questions being asked by Councillors on behalf of a community member are considered a Public Question and will be dealt with under Public Questions.

3. Related Legislation, Regulations and Policies

Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015 r.31

4. Responsibilities

The responsibility of this procedure rests with the General Manager.