

# **MODEL CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE FOR LOCAL COUNCILS IN NSW**

**2018**

Adopted by Council 23 May 2019  
Resolution 155/2019  
Amended 24 September 2020  
Resolution 259/2020

## **Table of Contents**

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>MEETING PRINCIPLES .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>BEFORE THE MEETING.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>COMING TOGETHER.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>THE CHAIRPERSON.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>MODES OF ADDRESS.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>RULES OF DEBATE .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>VOTING .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS TO THE PUBLIC .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>KEEPING ORDER AT MEETINGS.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>CONFLICTS OF INTEREST .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>AFTER THE MEETING.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>COUNCIL COMMITTEES.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>IRREGULARITIES .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>36</b>

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Meeting Code) is made under section 360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (the Regulation).

This code applies to all meetings of councils and committees of councils of which all the members are councillors (committees of council). Council committees whose members include persons other than councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the council determines otherwise.

Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

A council's adopted code of meeting practice may also incorporate the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code and other supplementary provisions. However, a code of meeting practice adopted by a council must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of this Model Meeting Code.

A council and a committee of the council of which all the members are councillors must conduct its meetings in accordance with the code of meeting practice adopted by the council.

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, joint organisations should adapt it to substitute the terms "board" for "council", "chairperson" for "mayor", "voting representative" for "councillor" and "executive officer" for "general manager".

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, county councils should adapt it to substitute the term "chairperson" for "mayor" and "member" for "councillor".

## **MEETING PRINCIPLES**

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

*Transparent:* Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.

*Informed:* Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.

*Inclusive:* Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.

*Principled:* Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.

*Trusted:* The community has confidence that councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.

*Respectful:* Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.

*Effective:* Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.

*Orderly:* Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

## **BEFORE THE MEETING**

### Timing of ordinary council meetings

3.1 The council shall, by resolution, set the frequency, time, date and place of its ordinary meetings.

### Extraordinary meetings

3.2 If the mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least three (3) councillors, the mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The mayor can be one of the two councillors requesting the meeting.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

### **Notice to the public of council meetings**

- 3.3 The council must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of committees of the council.
- 3.4 For the purposes of clause 3.3, notice of a meeting of the council and of a committee of council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the council's website, and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.
- 3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.3, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

### **Notice to councillors of ordinary council meetings**

- 3.6 The general manager must send to each councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the council, a notice specifying the time, date and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.
- 3.7 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to councillors in electronic form, but only if all councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

### **Notice to councillors of extraordinary meetings**

- 3.8 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the council in cases of emergency.

### **Giving notice of business to be considered at council meetings**

- 3.9 A councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted 8 business days' business days before the meeting is to be held.
- 3.10 A councillor may, in writing to the general manager, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 3.11 If the general manager considers that a notice of motion submitted by a councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the general manager may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council.
- 3.12 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the general manager must either:
- (a) prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council, or
  - (b) by written notice sent to all councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

### **Questions with notice**

- 3.13 A councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.9, ask a question for response by the general manager about the performance or operations of the council.
- 3.14 A councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.13 that comprises a complaint against the general manager or a member of staff of the council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the general manager or a member of staff of the council.
- 3.15 The general manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.13 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the council or orally at the meeting.

### **Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings**

- 3.16 The general manager must cause the agenda for a meeting of the council or a committee of the council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 3.17 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the council states:
- (a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the council, and
  - (b) if the mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
  - (c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and
  - (d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.7.
- 3.18 Nothing in clause 3.16 limits the powers of the mayor to put a mayoral minute to a meeting under clause 9.5.
- 3.19 The general manager must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the general manager, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The general manager must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the council.
- 3.20 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public, the general manager must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:
- (a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and
  - (b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.
- 3.21 The general manager must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public, and must not be disclosed by a councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

### **Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public**

- 3.22 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the council and committees of council, are to be published on the council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the council.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 3.23 Clause 3.22 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the general manager has identified under clause 3.20 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.
- 3.24 For the purposes of clause 3.22, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to councillors.
- 3.25 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.22, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

### **Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings**

- 3.26 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.
- 3.27 Despite clause 3.26, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the council, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:
- (a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
  - (b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.
- 3.28 A motion moved under clause 3.27(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.
- 3.29 Despite clauses 9.20–9.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.27(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 3.30 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.27(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

## **COMING TOGETHER**

### **Attendance by councillors at meetings**

- 4.1 All councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the council and of committees of the council of which they are members.
- 4.2 A councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the council or of a committee of the council unless personally present at the meeting.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 4.3 Where a councillor is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the council, the councillor should request that the council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a councillor from making an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.
- 4.4 A councillor's request for leave of absence from council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.
- 4.5 The council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a councillor's request for a leave of absence.
- 4.6 A councillor's civic office will become vacant if the councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the council without prior leave of the council, or leave granted by the council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.
- 4.7 A councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the general manager at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

### **The quorum for a meeting**

- 4.8 The quorum for a meeting of the council is a majority of the councillors of the council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.
- 4.9 Clause 4.8 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the council.
- 4.10 A meeting of the council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:
- (a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or
  - (b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or
  - (c) at any time during the meeting.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 4.11 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date and place fixed:
- (a) by the chairperson, or
  - (b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the councillors present,  
or
  - (c) failing that, by the general manager.
- 4.12 The general manager must record in the council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the council, together with the names of the councillors present.
- 4.13 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the safety and welfare of councillors, council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster (such as, but not limited to flood or bushfire), the mayor may, in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.
- 4.14 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 4.13, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.2.

### **Entitlement of the public to attend council meetings**

- 4.15 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the council and committees of the council. The council must ensure that all meetings of the council and committees of the council are open to the public.
- 4.16 Clause 4.15 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.
- 4.17 A person (whether a councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council if expelled from the meeting:
- (a) by a resolution of the meeting, or
  - (b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

### **Webcasting of meetings**

- 4.18 All meetings of the council and committees of the council are to be webcast on the council's website.
- 4.19 Clause 4.18 does not apply to parts of a meeting that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.
- 4.20 At the start of each meeting the chairperson is to make a statement informing those in attendance that the meeting is being webcast and that those in attendance should refrain from making any defamatory statements.
- 4.21 A recording of each meeting of the council and committee of the council is to be retained on the council's website for a minimum of 12 months. Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

### **Attendance of the general manager and other staff at meetings**

- 4.22 The general manager is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee of the council of which all of the members are councillors.
- 4.23 The general manager is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.
- 4.24 The general manager may be excluded from a meeting of the council or a committee while the council or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the general manager or the terms of employment of the general manager.
- 4.25 The attendance of other council staff at a meeting, (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

## **THE CHAIRPERSON**

### **The chairperson at meetings**

- 5.1 The mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the mayor, the deputy mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the council.
- 5.2 If the mayor and the deputy mayor (if any) are absent, a councillor elected to chair the meeting by the councillors present presides at a meeting of the council.

## Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018

### Election of the chairperson in the absence of the mayor and deputy mayor

- 5.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.
- 5.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:
- (a) by the general manager or, in their absence, an employee of the council designated by the general manager to conduct the election, or
  - (b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the general manager nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no general manager or designated employee.
- 5.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.
- 5.6 For the purposes of clause 5.5, the person conducting the election must:
- (a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and
  - (b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.
- 5.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.
- 5.8 Any election conducted under clause 5.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

### Chairperson to have precedence

- 5.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the council:
- (a) any councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and
  - (b) every councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

## **MODES OF ADDRESS**

- 6.1 If the chairperson is the mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 6.2 Where the chairperson is not the mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.
- 6.3 A councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.
- 6.4 A council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms [surname].

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- 7.1 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of the council shall be:
- 01 Opening meeting
  - 02 Acknowledgement of country
  - 03 Remembrance
  - 04 Apologies and applications for a leave of absence by councillors
  - 05 Disclosures of interests
  - 06 Confirmation of minutes
  - 07 Reports of committees
  - 08 Mayoral minute(s)
  - 09 Reports to council
  - 10 Correspondence
  - 11 Conclusion of the meeting
- 7.2 The order of business as fixed under clause 7.1 may be altered for a particular meeting of the council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.
- 7.3 Despite clauses 9-20–9.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 7.2 may speak to the motion before it is put.

### **CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

#### **Business that can be dealt with at a council meeting**

- 8.1 The council must not consider business at a meeting of the council:
- (a) unless a councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.9, and
  - (b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the councillors in accordance with clause 3.6 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.8 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 8.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:
- (a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the council, or
  - (b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or
  - (c) subject to clause 8.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a mayoral minute, or
  - (d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to, a committee of the council.
- 8.3 Despite clause 8.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the councillors if:
- (a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
  - (b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.
- 8.4 A motion moved under clause 8.3(a) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 9.20–9.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 8.5 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 8.3(b).

### **Mayoral minutes**

- 8.6 Subject to clause 8.9, if the mayor is the chairperson at a meeting of the council, the mayor may, by minute signed by the mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the council, or of which the council has official knowledge.
- 8.7 A mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the council's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the chairperson is the mayor) may move the adoption of a mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.
- 8.8 A recommendation made in a mayoral minute put by the mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.
- 8.9 A mayoral minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent, or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

## Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018

- 8.10 Where a mayoral minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the mayoral minute does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

### Staff reports

- 8.11 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

### Reports of committees of council

- 8.12 The recommendations of a committee of the council are, so far as they are adopted by the council, resolutions of the council.
- 8.13 If in a report of a committee of the council distinct recommendations are made, the council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

### Questions

- 8.14 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.9 and 3.13.
- 8.15 A councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another councillor about a matter on the agenda.
- 8.16 A councillor may, through the general manager, put a question to a council director about a matter on the agenda. Council employees are only obliged to answer a question put to them through the general manager at the direction of the general manager.
- 8.17 A councillor or council director to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to documents. Where a councillor or council director to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the council.
- 8.18 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 8.19 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a councillor or council director.

### **RULES OF DEBATE**

#### **Motions to be seconded**

- 9.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

#### **Notices of motion**

- 9.2 A councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.9 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.
- 9.3 If a councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.9 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to councillors, the councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the council.
- 9.4 In the absence of a councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the council:
- (a) any other councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or
  - (b) the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the council.

#### **Chairperson's duties with respect to motions**

- 9.5 It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.
- 9.6 The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.
- 9.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 9.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.
- 9.8 Any motion, amendment or other matter that the chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

**Motions requiring the expenditure of funds**

- 9.9 A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

**Amendments to motions**

- 9.10 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.
- 9.11 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.
- 9.12 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain an uncertainties in the proposed amendment provided it has been seconded.
- 9.13 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before council at any one time.
- 9.14 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.
- 9.15 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.
- 9.16 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the councillor who moved the original motion.

**Foreshadowed motions**

- 9.17 A councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.

## Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018

- 9.18 Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the council at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.
- 9.19 Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

### Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

- 9.20 A councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.
- 9.21 A councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.
- 9.22 A councillor must not, without the consent of the Chair, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.
- 9.23 Despite clause 9.22, the chairperson may permit a councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.
- 9.24 Despite clause 9.22, the council may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.
- 9.25 Despite clauses 9.20 and 19.21, a councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:
- (a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or
  - (b) if at least two (2) councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) councillors have spoken against it.
- 9.26 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 9.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 9.27 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 9.20.
- 9.28 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.
- 9.29 All councillors must be heard without interruption and all other councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another councillor is speaking.
- 9.30 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

### **VOTING**

#### **Voting entitlements of councillors**

- 10.1 Each councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.
- 10.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.
- 10.3 Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

#### **Voting at council meetings**

- 10.4 A councillor who is present at a meeting of the council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion.
- 10.5 If a councillor who has voted against a motion put at a council meeting so requests, the general manager must ensure that the councillor's dissenting vote is recorded in the council's minutes.
- 10.6 The decision of the chairperson as to the result of a vote is final, unless the decision is immediately challenged and not fewer than two (2) councillors rise and call for a division.
- 10.7 When a division on a motion is called, the chairperson must ensure that the division takes place immediately. The general manager must ensure that the names of those who vote for the motion and those who vote against it are recorded in the council's minutes for the meeting.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 10.8 When a division on a motion is called, any councillor who fails to vote will be recorded as having voted against the motion in accordance with clause 10.4 of this code.
- 10.9 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the council may resolve that the voting in any election by councillors for mayor or deputy mayor is to be by secret ballot.

### **Voting on planning decisions**

- 10.10 The general manager must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the council), the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.
- 10.11 For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the council or a council committee.
- 10.12 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.
- 10.13 Clauses 10.10 – 10.12 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

- 11.1 The council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the council.
- 11.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the council when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.
- 11.3 The general manager or, in the absence of the general manager, an employee of the council designated by the general manager, is responsible for reporting to the council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.

- 11.4 The council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the council's minutes. However, the council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

## **CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS TO THE PUBLIC**

### Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

- 12.1 The council or a committee of the council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:
- (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors),
  - (b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
  - (c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
  - (d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
    - (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
    - (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or
    - (iii) reveal a trade secret,
  - (e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
  - (f) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property,
  - (g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
  - (h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,
  - (i) alleged contraventions of the council's code of conduct.
- 12.2 The council or a committee of the council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

### **Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public**

- 12.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 12.1:
- (a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security, and
  - (b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the council or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.
- 12.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 12.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:
- (a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the council or committee is involved, and
  - (b) are clearly identified in the advice, and
  - (c) are fully discussed in that advice.
- 12.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 12.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 12.1.
- 12.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:
- (a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or
  - (b) the discussion of the matter may:
    - (i) cause embarrassment to the council or committee concerned, or to councillors or to employees of the council, or
    - (ii) cause a loss of confidence in the council or committee.
- 12.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the council or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

**Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases**

- 12.8 Part of a meeting of the council, or of a committee of the council, may be closed to the public while the council or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.20 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:
- (a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 12.1, and
  - (b) the council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 12.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:
    - (i) should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and
    - (ii) should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

**Representations by members of the public**

- 12.9 The council, or a committee of the council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.
- 12.10 A representation under clause 12.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.
- 12.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.20 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 12.9, members of the public must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications must be received by two (2) days before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.
- 12.12 The general manager (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 12.11. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- 12.13 No more than two (2) speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 12.9.
- 12.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 12.9, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 12.9, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the council.

## Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018

- 12.15 The general manager (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.
- 12.16 Where the council or a committee of the council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.20 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 12.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than two (2) speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.
- 12.17 Each speaker will be allowed five (5) minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

### Expulsion of non-councillors from meetings closed to the public

- 12.18 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.
- 12.19 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

### Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

- 12.20 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:
- (a) the relevant provision of section 10A (2) of the Act,
  - (b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,
  - (c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

**Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public**

- 12.21 If the council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.
- 12.22 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 12.21 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

**KEEPING ORDER AT MEETINGS**

**Points of order**

- 13.1 A councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.
- 13.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.
- 13.3 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

**Questions of order**

- 13.4 The chairperson, without the intervention of any other councillor, may call any councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.
- 13.5 A councillor who claims that another councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.
- 13.6 The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the council.
- 13.7 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

**Motions of dissent**

- 13.8 A councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.
- 13.9 If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.
- 13.10 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

**Acts of disorder**

- 13.11 A councillor commits an act of disorder if the councillor, at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council:
- (a) contravenes the Act or any regulation in force under the Act or this code, or
  - (b) assaults or threatens to assault another councillor or person present at the meeting, or
  - (c) moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the council or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the council or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or
  - (d) insults or makes personal reflections on or imputes improper motives to any other council official, or alleges a breach of the council's code of conduct, or
  - (e) says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.
- 13.12 The chairperson may require a councillor:
- (a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 13.11(a) or (b), or
  - (b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 13.11(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or
  - (c) to retract and apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 13.11(d) and (e).

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

- 13.13 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

- 13.14 All chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council are authorised under this code to expel any person other than a councillor, from a council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act. Councillors may only be expelled by resolution of the council or the committee of the council.
- 13.15 Clause 13.14 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to expel a person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting, under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.
- 13.16 A councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 13.12. The expulsion of a councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the councillor for the act of disorder concerned.
- 13.17 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.
- 13.18 Where a councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 13.19 If a councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

**Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings**

- 13.20 Councillors, council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the council and committees of the council.
- 13.21 A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council without the prior authorisation of the council or the committee.
- 13.22 Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 13.21, may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.
- 13.23 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- 14.1 All councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the council and committees of the council in accordance with the council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

**DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL**

**Council decisions**

- 15.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the council.
- 15.2 Decisions made by the council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

**Rescinding or altering council decisions**

- 15.3 A resolution passed by the council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.9.
- 15.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.
- 15.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.9.
- 15.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.
- 15.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.
- 15.8 The provisions of clauses 15.5–15.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.
- 15.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 15.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.10 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.
- 15.10 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved on the report of a committee of the council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the council.

## **AFTER THE MEETING**

### **Minutes of meetings**

- 16.1 The council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the council.
- 16.2 At a minimum, the general manager must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the council's minutes:
- (a) details of each motion moved at a council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
  - (b) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
  - (c) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
  - (d) such other matters specifically required under this code.
- 16.3 The minutes of a council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the council.
- 16.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.
- 16.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.
- 16.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.
- 16.7 The confirmed minutes of a council meeting must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

### **Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting**

- 16.8 The council and committees of the council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 16.9 Clause 16.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.
- 16.10 Clause 16.8 does not apply if the council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.
- 16.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 16.9 and 16.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

### **Implementation of decisions of the council**

- 16.12 The general manager is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council.

## **COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

### **Application of this Part**

- 17.1 This Part only applies to committees of the council whose members are all councillors.

### **Council committees whose members are all councillors**

- 17.2 The council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.
- 17.3 A committee of the council is to consist of the mayor and such other councillors as are elected by the councillors or appointed by the council.
- 17.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the council is to be:
- (a) such number of members as the council decides, or
  - (b) if the council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

### **Functions of committees**

- 17.5 The council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established, but may from time to time amend those functions.

### **Notice of committee meetings**

- 17.6 The general manager must send to each councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:

- (a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and
- (b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

- 17.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

### **Attendance at committee meetings**

- 17.8 A committee member (other than the mayor) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:

- (a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences, or
- (b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

- 17.9 Clause 17.8 does not apply if all of the members of the council are members of the committee.

### **Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings**

- 17.10 A councillor who is not a member of a committee of the council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the councillor is not entitled:

- (a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or
- (b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
- (c) to vote at the meeting.

**Chairperson and deputy chairperson of council committees**

17.11 The chairperson of each committee of the council must be:

- (a) the mayor, or
- (b) if the mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the council, or
- (c) if the council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.

17.12 The council may elect a member of a committee of the council as deputy chairperson of the committee. If the council does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a deputy chairperson.

17.13 If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson of a committee of the council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting chairperson of the committee.

17.14 The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

**Procedure in committee meetings**

17.15 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the council unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.

17.16 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal, the chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 17.15.

17.17 Voting at a council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

## Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018

### Closure of committee meetings to the public

- 17.18 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the council to the public.
- 17.19 If a committee of the council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended, and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.
- 17.20 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 17.19 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

### Disorder in committee meetings

- 17.21 The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the council.

### Minutes of council committee meetings

- 17.22 Each committee of the council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:
- (a) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
  - (b) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
  - (c) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
  - (d) such other matters specifically required under this code.
- 17.23 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.
- 17.24 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.
- 17.25 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

- 17.26 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.
- 17.27 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the council must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the council on its website prior to their confirmation.

### **IRREGULARITIES**

- 18.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a council or a council committee are not invalidated because of:
- (a) a vacancy in a civic office, or
  - (b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any councillor or committee member, or
  - (c) any defect in the election or appointment of a councillor or committee member, or
  - (d) a failure of a councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a council or committee meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct, or
  - (e) a failure to comply with this code.

**Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

**DEFINITIONS**

the Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
act of disorder	means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.11 of this code
amendment	in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion
audio recorder	any device capable of recording speech
business day	means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales
chairperson	in relation to a meeting of the council – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this code, and in relation to a meeting of a committee – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.11 of this code
this code	means the council's adopted code of meeting practice
committee of the council	means a committee established by the council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this code (being a committee consisting only of councillors) or the council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1
council official	has the same meaning it has in the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW
day	means calendar day
division	means a request by two councillors under clause 11.7 of this code requiring the recording of the names of the councillors who voted both for and against a motion
foreshadowed amendment	means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.18 of this code during debate on the first amendment
foreshadowed motion	means a motion foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.17 of this code during debate on an original motion
open voting	means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means

## **Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – 2018**

planning decision	means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act
performance improvement order	means an order issued under section 438A of the Act
quorum	means the minimum number of councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting
the Regulation	means the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</i>
webcast	a video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time
year	means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June

**Adopted by Council 23 May 2019 – Resolution 155/2019**

**Amended by Council 24 September 2020 – Resolution 259/2000 Clause 4.21**