

Meeting Procedures and Standing Orders for Informal Meetings

Fraser Coast Regional Council 2023

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DICTIONARY

Audio Link means facilities, including telephone, that enable reasonably contemporaneous and continuous audio communication between persons at different places.

Audio Visual Link means facilities, including closed-circuit television, that enable reasonably contemporaneous and continuous audio and visual communication between persons at different places

Chairperson means:

- (a) A person presiding or acting in the position of chairperson pursuant to these Standing Orders; or
- (b) The person who controls the order of the meeting.

Chief Executive Officer means the person appointed and employed by the Council as its Chief Executive Officer pursuant to section 194 (Appointing a Chief Executive Officer) of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

Concept Forum means an Informal Meeting to consider and discuss strategic and policy matters.

Councillor refers to an individual duly elected as a Councillor or Mayor to the Fraser Coast Regional Council in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Councillor Briefing Session means an Informal Meeting to provide Councillors with information in relation to the achievement, delivery, or other matters impacting (or likely to impact) the strategic, policy, capital or operational performance of Council.

Councillor Workshop means an Informal Meeting of Councillors to consider matters of strategy or policy including, but not limited to, Budgets, Corporate and Operational Plans.

Council Agenda Forum means an Informal Meeting of Councillors to provide information to Councillors about the Agenda of an Ordinary Council Meeting.

Council Meeting means the Ordinary or Special Meeting of the full Council.

Declarable Conflict of Interest refer *Local Government Act 2009*, Chapter 5B, Part 3.

Inappropriate Conduct refer *Local Government Act 2009*, section 150K.

Informal Meeting means a Council Agenda Forum, Concept Forum, Councillor Workshop or Councillor Briefing Session which has been resolved by the Council or through agreement between the Mayor and CEO. For clarity, an Informal Meeting does not include an ordinary meeting or a special meeting of Council, or a meeting of a standing committee, special committee or advisory committee of Council.

LGA means *Local Government Act 2009*

LGR means *Local Government Regulation 2012*

Mayor means the Mayor of the Council and includes any person acting in the position of the Mayor pursuant to the *Local Government Act 2009* or these Standing Orders.

Ordinary business means matters such as:

- The Councillors interest is no greater than a significant proportion of other community members (e.g. all people in a suburb, all people in a small town, all business owners, all dog owners)
- Councillor remuneration, expenses, superannuation or insurance
- Adoption of budget, rates and charges and cost-recovery fees

- Planning scheme or amendments for the whole council area
- Appointment of mayor, deputy mayor, councillor, committee member, or council representative of board or association

Point of Order means an objection to an action.

Prescribed Conflict of Interest refer *Local Government Act 2009*, Chapter 5B, Part 2.

Procedural Motion means a motion set out in section 18 of these Standing Orders and is a specific resolution to control the conduct of the meeting to aid the effective conduct of the meeting.

Teleconferencing includes the use of a telephone, video conferencing equipment or other means of instant communication that allows a person to take part in a discussion as it happens.

PART A – MEETING PROCEDURES – INFORMAL MEETINGS

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Meeting Procedures is to set out certain procedures to ensure the Local Government Principles are reflected in the conduct of Informal Meetings of Councillors including Council Agenda Forums, Concept Forums, Councillor Briefing Sessions and Councillor Workshops.

These Meeting Procedures only apply to Informal Meetings of Councillors and do not apply to Council meetings or meetings of a standing committee, special committee or advisory committee of Council.

PROCESSES

1 INFORMAL MEETING TIMES

Subject to any resolution of Council, meeting times for Informal Meetings are as follows:

- 1.1 Council Agenda Forums - 10.00am on the third Wednesday of each month, or as determined by agreement between the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer (with Councillors being given at least five business days' notice of the meeting).
- 1.2 Concept Forums – 10.00am on the first and second Wednesday of each month, or as determined by agreement between the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer (with Councillors being given at least five business days' notice of the meeting).
- 1.3 Councillor Workshops – As determined by agreement between the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, or by resolution of Council, with Councillors being given at least five business days' notice of the meeting.
- 1.4 Councillor Briefing Sessions – 10.00am each Monday or as determined by agreement between the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer (with Councillors being given at least three business days' notice of the meeting).

2 INFORMAL MEETING AGENDAS

Agendas for Informal Meetings are to be dealt with as follows:

- 2.1 Council Agenda Forum agendas and the reports associated with the agenda are to be made available to each Councillor at least three business days before the scheduled meeting. The agenda is to be made available to the public on the Council's website by 5pm on the business day after it is given to the Councillors.
- 2.2 Concept Forum agendas are to be made available to each Councillor at least three business days before the scheduled meeting. A list of agenda topics are to be made available to the public on the Council's website by 5pm on the business day after it is given to the Councillors.
- 2.3 Councillor Workshop agendas are to be made available to each Councillor at least three business days before the scheduled meeting. A list of agenda topics are to be made available to the public on the Council's website by 5pm on the business day after it is given to the Councillors.
- 2.4 Councillor Briefing Session agendas are to be made available to each Councillor at least three business days before the scheduled meeting. A list of agenda topics are to be made available to the public on the Council's website by 5pm on the business day after it is given to the Councillors.

3 RECORD OF MATTERS DISCUSSED AT INFORMAL MEETINGS

Records of matters discussed at Informal Meetings must be made available to the public on the Council's website within five business days of the meeting and listed on the next practicable agenda of the Ordinary Meeting of Council.

4 DEALING WITH UNSUITABLE CONDUCT BY A COUNCILLOR IN AN INFORMAL MEETING

When dealing with an instance of unsuitable conduct by a Councillor in an Informal Meeting, the following procedures must be followed:-

- 4.1 The Chairperson must reasonably believe that unsuitable conduct has been displayed by a Councillor at a meeting.
- 4.2 If the Chairperson decides the unsuitable conduct has occurred, the Chairperson may consider the severity of the conduct and whether the Councillor has had any previous warnings for unsuitable conduct issued. If the Chairperson decides the conduct is of a serious nature or another warning is unwarranted, subclause 4.7 applies.
- 4.3 If the Chairperson decides unsuitable conduct has occurred but is of a less serious nature, the Chairperson may request the Councillor take remedial actions such as:
 - 4.3.1 Ceasing the unsuitable conduct and refraining from exhibiting the conduct.
 - 4.3.2 Apologising for their conduct.
 - 4.3.3 Withdrawing their comments.
- 4.4 If the Councillor complies with the Chairperson's request for remedial action, no further action is required.
- 4.5 If the Councillor fails to comply with the Chairperson's request for remedial action, the Chairperson may warn the Councillor that failing to comply with the request could result in an order for unsuitable meeting conduct being issued.
- 4.6 If the Councillor complies with the Chairperson's warning and request for remedial action, no further action is required.
- 4.7 If the Councillor fails to comply with the Chairperson's request for remedial actions, the Chairperson may take the following actions:
 - 4.7.1 Lodge a complaint with the Office of the Independent Assessor for inappropriate conduct.
 - 4.7.2 Request the Councillor to leave the place of the meeting and stay away from the place for the duration of the meeting.
 - 4.7.3 Adjourn or close the meeting.

5 PRESCRIBED CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Councillors are ultimately responsible for informing of any prescribed conflict of interest on matters to be discussed at an Informal Meeting. When dealing with a prescribed conflict of interest, Councillors must abide by the following procedures:

- 5.1 A Councillor with a prescribed conflict of interest must inform the meeting (including an Informal Meeting) of their prescribed conflict of interest and set out the nature of the interest, including:
 - 5.1.1 if it arises because of a gift, loan or contract, the value of the gift, loan or contract;
 - 5.1.2 if it arises because of an application or submission, the subject of the application or submission;

- 5.1.3 the name of any entity other than the Councillor that has an interest in the matter;
 - 5.1.4 the nature of the Councillor's relationship with the entity that has an interest in the matter;
 - 5.1.5 details of the Councillor's and any other entity's interest in the matter.
- 5.2 The Councillor must then leave the place of the meeting and stay away while the matter is being discussed, unless the subject Councillor has written notice of approval from the Minister to participate in the matter.
- 5.3 A Councillor who has a prescribed conflict of interest in a matter, other than an ordinary business matter, must not influence, or attempt to influence, another Councillor to vote on the matter in a particular way at a meeting of the Council or any of its committees.
- 5.4 A Councillor who has a prescribed conflict of interest in a matter, other than an ordinary business matter, must not influence, or attempt to influence, a local government employee or a contractor of the local government who is authorised to decide or otherwise deal with the matter to do so in a particular way.
- 5.5 Once the Councillor has left the area where the meeting is being conducted, the Informal Meeting can continue discussing the matter at hand.
- 5.6 If a Councillor at an Informal Meeting reasonably believes, or reasonably suspects that another Councillor has a conflict of interest relating to a matter that may be a prescribed conflict of interest, and that Councillor is participating in a decision to be discussed at the meeting and has not informed the meeting about the interest, the Councillor must advise the Chairperson of the meeting, as soon as practicable, about their belief or suspicion, and the facts and circumstances that form the basis of the belief or suspicion.
- 5.7 The Chairperson then should ask the relevant Councillor with the suspected conflict of interest whether they have any prescribed or declarable conflict of interest in the matter. If the Councillor accepts that a prescribed conflict of interest exists the Councillor must follow the above procedures from section 5.1. If the Councillor does not accept that a prescribed conflict of interest exists then the Councillor must inform the meeting of that belief and their reasons for that belief. This must then be recorded in the records of matters discussed for the meeting.
- 5.8 Where a Councillor informs an Informal Meeting of a prescribed conflict of interest in a matter, the Chairperson must ensure that the records of matters discussed for the meeting include:
- 5.8.1 The name of the Councillor who has a prescribed conflict of interest in the matter;
 - 5.8.2 The prescribed conflict of interest, including the particulars mentioned by the Councillor regarding the interest;
- 5.9 Councillors are, at all times, required to comply with section 150EZ of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

6 DECLARABLE CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Councillors are ultimately responsible for informing of any declarable conflict of interest on matters to be discussed at Informal Meetings (other than ordinary business matters). When dealing with a declarable conflict of interest, Councillors must abide by the following procedures:

- 6.1 A Councillor who becomes aware that they have a declarable conflict of interest, must stop participating in the decision on the matter and must not further discuss the matter with any other person who might be participating in the decision making process. Those other persons will include not only other councillors, but also the CEO and any other Council officer who is involved in providing information to a Council meeting, to allow the Council to make a decision on the matter.

- 6.2 A Councillor with a declarable conflict of interest must inform the meeting (including an Informal Meeting) of their declarable conflict of interest and set out the nature of the interest, including:
- 6.2.1 The nature of the declarable conflict of interest.
 - 6.2.2 If it arises because of the Councillor's relationship with a related party:
 - i. the name of the related party to the Councillor
 - ii. the nature of the relationship of the related party to the Councillor
 - iii. the nature of the related party's interest/s in the matter.
 - 6.2.3 If it arises because of a gift or loan from another person to the Councillor or a related party:
 - i. the name of the other person
 - ii. the nature of the relationship of the other person to the Councillor or related party
 - iii. the nature of the other person's interest in the matter
 - iv. the value of the gift or loan and the date the gift or loan was made
- 6.3 A Councillor who has a declarable conflict of interest in a matter, other than an ordinary business matter, should consider leaving the place of the Informal Meeting and stay away from the place while the matter is discussed. A Councillor may request the Council do not discuss the item at the Informal Meeting until the declarable conflict of interest has been determined at the Ordinary Council Meeting by moving a procedural motion "that the meeting proceed to the next item of business".
- 6.4 If a Councillor at an Informal Meeting reasonably believes, or reasonably suspects that another Councillor has a conflict of interest relating to a matter that may be a declarable conflict of interest, and that Councillor has not informed the meeting about the interest, the Councillor must advise the Chairperson of the meeting as soon as practicable, about their belief or suspicion, and the facts and circumstances that form the basis of the belief or suspicion.
- 6.5 The Chairperson then should ask the relevant Councillor with the suspected conflict of interest whether they have any declarable conflict of interest in the matter. If the Councillor accepts that a declarable conflict of interest exists the Councillor must follow the above procedures from section 6.1 above. If the Councillor does not accept that a declarable conflict of interest exists then the Councillor must inform the meeting of that belief and their reasons for that belief. This must then be recorded in the records of matters discussed for the Informal Meeting.
- 6.6 Where a Councillor informs an Informal Meeting of a conflict of interest in a matter, the Chairperson must ensure the records of matters discussed include:
- 6.6.1 The name of the Councillor who has declared the conflict of interest.
 - 6.6.2 The nature of the interest, as described by the Councillor.
 - 6.6.3 Whether the Councillor participated in the Informal Meeting.
- 6.7 A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter, other than an ordinary business matter, must not influence, or attempt to influence, another Councillor to vote on the matter in a particular way at a meeting of the Council or any of its committees.
- 6.8 A Councillor who has a conflict of interest, in a matter, other than an ordinary business matter, must not influence, or attempt to influence, a local government employee or a contractor of the local government who is authorised to decide or otherwise deal with the matter to do so in a particular way.

6.9 Councillors are, at all times, required to comply with section 150EZ of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

7 CLOSED INFORMAL MEETINGS

- 7.1 Councillor Concept forums, Councillor Workshops, and Councillor Briefing Sessions are closed meetings, unless otherwise resolved by Council.
- 7.2 A Council Agenda Forum meeting may resolve that the meeting be closed to the public if its Councillors consider it necessary.
- 7.3 If a closed session includes attendance by teleconference, the Councillor/s attending by teleconference must maintain confidentiality by ensuring no other person can hear their conversation while in the closed meeting (a failure to do so could be a contravention of section 171(3) of the LGA).
- 7.4 To take an issue into a closed session, the Meeting must first pass a resolution to do so.
- 7.5 In the interest of accountability and transparency, the Meeting must specify the nature of the matter to be discussed and the reasoning of the Councillors for going into closed session.
- 7.6 If the matter is known in advance, the agenda should clearly identify that the matter will be considered in closed session and name the topic to be discussed and a brief explanation of why it is deemed necessary to take the issue into closed session.
- 7.7 The record of matters discussed at a Council Agenda Forum Meeting must detail the matter discussed and reasoning for discussing the matter in closed session.

PART B – STANDING ORDERS – INFORMAL MEETINGS

8 INTRODUCTION

- 8.1 These Standing Orders apply to all Informal Meetings of Councillors including Council Agenda Forums, Concept Forums, Councillor Workshops and Councillor Briefing Sessions.
- 8.2 These Standing Orders only apply to Informal Meetings of Councillors and do not apply to Council meetings or meetings of a standing committee, special committee or advisory committee of Council.
- 8.3 Any provision of these Standing Orders may be suspended by resolution of an Informal Meeting. However, sections 15, 21.1 and 21.2 of these Standing Orders must not be suspended by resolution of an Informal Meeting.
- 8.4 A separate resolution is required for any such suspension and must specify the application and duration of each suspension.

PROCEDURES FOR INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

9 Presiding Officer

- 9.1 The Mayor will preside at Informal Meetings of Council.
- 9.2 If the Mayor is absent or unavailable to preside, the Deputy Mayor will preside at the meeting. If neither is present the meeting must choose a councillor to preside.
- 9.3 The Mayor may, at his absolute discretion, delegate to the Deputy Mayor the authority to preside at the meeting.

10 ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 10.1 Before proceeding with the business of the meeting, the presiding officer at the meeting will undertake the acknowledgement and/or greetings deemed appropriate by the Chairperson.
- 10.2 The order of business will be determined by the Chairperson. A motion to alter the order of business may be moved without notice.
- 10.3 The record of matters discussed at a preceding Informal Meeting will be taken into consideration in order that such records may be confirmed and no discussion will be permitted with respect to such records except with respect to their accuracy as a record of the matters discussed.

11 AGENDAS

- 11.1 The Chief Executive Officer determines the business paper content for any Informal Meeting, including items declared as confidential.
- 11.2 Matters not on the Agenda, or not fairly arising from the Agenda, shall not be considered at a Council Agenda Forum or Concept Forum or Councillor Workshop.
- 11.3 The Chief Executive Officer must prepare, or have prepared, an Agenda for each Informal Meeting.

12 MATTERS WITH DUE NOTICE

- 12.1 A Councillor is not permitted to give notice of any matters to be considered at a Council Agenda Forum.
- 12.2 Any Councillor wishing to give notice of any matter to be listed on the agenda for an Informal Meeting, other than a Council Agenda Forum, should give written notice to the Chief Executive Officer at least five business days before the commencement of the meeting.

13 BUSINESS ARISING INCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS

- 13.1 A matter arising from the records of matters discussed at a previous meeting may be discussed at an Informal Meeting.

14 DEPUTATIONS

- 14.1 A deputation wishing to attend and address an Informal Meeting of Council shall apply in writing to the Chief Executive Officer before the meeting.

14.1.1 An application for a deputation must include:

- i. The presentation description of the deputation
- ii. The names of all parties presenting the deputation

If any supportive methods (e.g. props, PowerPoint presentations, video) will be utilised.
Supportive methods are subject to approval by the Chairperson.

- 14.2 The Chief Executive Officer, on receiving an application for a deputation shall notify the Chairperson who shall determine whether the deputation may be heard. The Chief Executive Officer shall inform the deputation of the determination in writing. Where it has been determined the deputation will be heard, a convenient time shall be arranged for that purpose, and an appropriate time period allowed.
- 14.3 For deputations comprising three or more persons, only three persons shall be at liberty to address the Informal Meeting unless the Councillors at the meeting determine otherwise by resolution. A deputation shall be given adequate opportunity to explain the purpose of the deputation.
- 14.4 If a member of the deputation other than the appointed speakers interjects or attempts to address the Informal Meeting, the Chairperson may finalise the deputation.
- 14.5 The Chairperson may terminate an address by a person in a deputation at any time where:
- 14.5.1 The Chairperson is satisfied that the purpose of the deputation has been sufficiently explained to the Councillors at the meeting;
 - 14.5.2 The time period allowed for a deputation has expired; or
 - 14.5.3 The person uses insulting or offensive language or is derogatory towards Councillors or staff members.
- 14.6 The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the deputation including that the appointed speaker/s are notified in writing of developments or future actions as appropriate.

14.7 A deputation will not exceed fifteen minutes unless otherwise agreed by the Chairperson.

MOTIONS

15 MOTION TO BE MOVED

15.1 A Councillor at an Informal Meeting may, without the need for a seconder, move 1 or more of the following motions at an Informal Meeting:

15.1.1 Procedural Motions as provided for in these Standing Orders.

15.1.2 Confirmation of the record of matters discussed at a previous meeting.

15.1.3 To alter the order of business.

15.1.4 Allowing more than three people to participate in a deputation as per section 14.3 of these Standing Orders.

15.1.5 To determine if the meeting proceeds after disorder as per section 22.1 of these Standing Orders.

15.1.6 To enter into closed session as per section 7 of these Standing Orders.

15.1.7 That a matter not listed on the agenda be considered as part of general business in accordance with section 11 of these Standing Orders.

15.2 A Councillor at an Informal Meeting may only move 1 or more of the motions provided for in any of sections 15.1, 18.1 and 22.1.

15.3 A Councillor at an Informal Meeting must not move a motion contrary to section 15.2.

15.4 A motion brought before an Informal Meeting of Council in accordance with these Standing Orders will be received and put to the meeting by the Chairperson. The Chairperson may require that a motion be stated in full or be in writing before permitting it to be received.

16 METHOD OF TAKING VOTE

16.1 The Chairperson will call for all Councillors in favour of the motion to indicate their support. The Chairperson will then call for all Councillors against the motion to indicate their objection.

16.2 A Councillor must advise the Chairperson if they intend to abstain from the vote and the reason for abstaining.

16.3 If a Councillor does not vote for or against a motion, they will be taken to have abstained from voting and their vote will be recorded in the negative, i.e. against the motion.

16.4 A resolution shall not be discussed after the vote has been declared.

16.5 The Chairperson for an Informal Meeting may direct that, after a vote has been declared, the vote is recorded in the record of matters discussed at the Informal Meeting.

17 REPEALING OR AMENDING RESOLUTIONS

17.1 A resolution of an Informal Meeting may not be amended or repealed.

18 PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

18.1 A Councillor at an Informal Meeting may, during the discussion of a matter at the meeting, move, as a procedural motion, without the need for a seconder the following motions:

- a. that the question/motion be now put
- b. that the meeting proceed to the next item of business
- c. a motion of dissent against the Chairpersons decision
- d. that Standing Orders be suspended
- e. that Standing Orders be resumed
- f. that the meeting be adjourned
- g. that the meeting be reconvened
- h. that the speaker no longer be heard
- i. a point of order

18.2 A procedural motion, ***that the question/motion be put***, may be moved and where such a procedural motion is carried, the Chairperson will immediately put the question to the motion or amendment to that motion under consideration. Where such procedural motion is lost, discussion on the motion or amendment to that motion will continue.

The Chairperson has the discretion as to whether to accept the motion to ensure that the matter has been reasonably discussed.

18.3 Where a procedural motion, ***that the meeting proceed to the next item*** is carried, discussion on the matter that is the subject of the motion will cease and may be considered again by the Informal Meeting on the giving of notice in accordance with the Standing Orders.

18.4 A procedural motion, ***a motion of dissent against the Chairperson decision***, may be used in relation to a ruling of the Chairperson on a point of order. Where such motion is moved, further consideration of any matter shall be suspended until after a ruling is made. Where a motion of dissent is carried, the matter to which the ruling of the Chairperson was made shall proceed as though that ruling had not been made. Where as a result of that ruling the matter was discharged as out of order, it shall be restored to the business paper and be dealt with in the normal course of business.

18.5 A procedural motion, ***that standing orders be suspended***, may be made by any Councillor in order to permit some action that otherwise would be prevented by a procedural rule. A motion to suspend a rule shall specify the duration of such a suspension. However, sections 15, 21.1 and 21.2 of these Standing Orders must not be suspended by a resolution of an Informal Meeting.

18.6 A procedural motion, ***that standing orders be resumed***, will be made to resume the use of the Standing Orders.

18.7 A procedural motion, ***that the meeting be adjourned***, may be made by any Councillor at the conclusion of

discussion on any matter on the business paper or at the conclusion of a Councillor's time for speaking to the matter, and shall be put without discussion. Such a procedural motion will specify a time for the resumption of the meeting and on resumption of the meeting the Council shall continue with the business before the meeting at the point where it was discontinued on the adjournment.

- 18.8 A procedural motion, ***that the meeting be reconvened***, will be made after an adjournment to identify the recommencement of the meeting.
- 18.9 A procedural motion, ***that the speaker no longer be heard***, may be moved by a Councillor while another Councillor is speaking if the mover of the motion determines that the speaker is being repetitive. Where the Chairperson allows the procedural motion to be put, it will be voted on without discussion. If the motion is carried the speaker will resume their seat and not speak to the motion again.

19 POINT OF ORDER

- 19.1 Any Councillor may ask the Chairperson to decide on a ***point of order*** where it is believed that, at an Informal Meeting, another Councillor:
- 19.1.1 Has failed to comply with the meeting procedures in Part A or the Standing Orders in Part B,
 - 19.1.2 Is in contravention of the Local Government Act/Regulations, or
 - 19.1.3 Is beyond the jurisdiction of Council.
- 19.2 Points of order cannot be used as a means of contradicting a statement made by the Councillor speaking. Where a 'point of order' is moved, consideration of the matter to which the motion was moved will be suspended and the Chairperson will determine whether the point of order is upheld.
- 19.3 Upon the question of order suddenly arising during the process of a discussion, a Councillor may raise a point of order, and then the Councillor against whom the point of order is raised, shall immediately cease speaking. Notwithstanding anything contained in these Standing Orders to the contrary, all questions or points of order at any time arising will, until decided by the Chairperson, suspend the consideration of every other matter to be discussed at an Informal Meeting.

20 CONDUCT DURING MEETINGS

- 20.1 Councillors will conduct themselves in accordance with the principles of the *Local Government Act 2009* and the standards of behavior set out in the Code of Conduct. The Chairperson may observe or be made aware of instances of possible unsuitable conduct.
- 20.2 After an Informal Meeting has started and the business commenced, a Councillor will not enter or leave the meeting without first notifying the Chairperson.
- 20.3 Councillors and Council officers will speak to and of each other during an Informal Meeting by their respective titles or by using their given or surname, and in speaking of or to each other shall confine their remarks to the matter then under consideration.
- 20.4 No Councillor who is speaking will be interrupted except upon a point of order being raised either by the Chairperson or by a Councillor.
- 20.5 When the Chairperson speaks during the process of a discussion, the Councillor then speaking or offering to

speaking will immediately cease speaking, and each Councillor present shall preserve strict silence so that the Chairperson may be heard without interruption.

21 COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS ON AGENDA ITEMS

21.1 Concept Forums, Workshops and Briefing Sessions:

21.1.1 Each Councillor may ask questions and seek clarification on every agenda matter at an Informal Meeting.

21.1.2 A Councillor at an Informal Meeting must not:-

- a. Seek to reach a decision or agreement for a decision on a matter before it; or
- b. Otherwise discharge Council's deliberative and decision making functions, which must be undertaken at an ordinary meeting of Council or a meeting of a committee of Council.

21.1.3 A Councillor may ask a question for reply by a Councillor or an officer of Council, if that question relates to a matter under consideration at the Meeting. The Council officer can be assisted by an external party if deemed necessary to provide clarification to Councillors.

21.1.4 A Council Officer of whom a question is asked, without notice, has the right to take that question as a request for further information and will provide a response to the question prior to the next Informal Meeting.

21.1.5 A Councillor, may speak to matters under consideration at an Informal Meeting, but must comply with section 21.2 of these Standing Orders.

21.1.6 A Council officer of whom a question is asked, without notice, has the right to take that the question be taken on notice for the next meeting or responded to as a Councillor request under the acceptable requests guidelines of Council.

21.1.7 The Chairperson may disallow a question which is considered inconsistent with an acceptable request or good order.

21.2 Council Agenda Forums

21.2.1 Each Councillor may ask questions and seek clarification on every agenda matter at a Council Agenda Forum.

21.2.2 A Councillor at a Council Agenda Forum must not:-

- a. Debate or discuss the merits of any agenda item;
- b. Seek to reach a decision or agreement for a decision on a matter before it; or
- c. Otherwise discharge Council's deliberative and decision-making functions, which must be undertaken at an Ordinary Meeting of Council or a meeting of a Committee of Council.

21.2.3 A Councillor may ask a question for a reply by a Councillor or an officer of Council, if that question relates to a matter under consideration at the Meeting. The Council officer can be assisted by an external party if deemed necessary to provide clarification to Councillors.

21.2.4 A Council Officer of whom a question is asked, without notice, has the right to take that question as a request for further information and will provide a response to the question prior to the Ordinary Council Meeting.

- 21.2.5 The Chairperson may disallow a question which is considered inconsistent with an acceptable request or good order.

MAINTENANCE OF GOOD ORDER

22 DISORDER

- 22.1 The Chairperson may adjourn an Informal Meeting, where disorder arises at the meeting other than by a Councillor. On resumption of the meeting, the Chairperson will move a motion, which will be put without discussion, to determine whether the meeting will proceed. Where such a motion is lost, the Chairperson shall declare the meeting closed, and any outstanding matters referred to a future meeting.

ATTENDANCE AND NON-ATTENDANCE

23 ATTENDANCE OF PUBLIC AND THE MEDIA AT INFORMAL MEETINGS

- 23.1 Members of the public and media may attend Council Agenda Forums.
- 23.2 Members of the public and media may attend all or part of a Concept Forum, Councillor Workshop, or Councillor Briefing session by agreement between the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, or by resolution of Council.
- 23.3 No conversation/ comments among audience members should take place during the meeting. Should conversation/ comments occur which disrupts the meeting, the Chairperson may request the person/s to cease making the submission or comment. The Chair may adjourn the meeting where disorder arises until order has been restored.
- 23.4 An area shall be made available at the place where any Council Agenda Forum is to take place for members of the public and representatives of the media to attend the meeting and as many members of the public as reasonably can be accommodated in that area shall be permitted to attend the meeting.
- 23.5 When the Informal Meeting is sitting in closed session, the public and representatives of the media shall be excluded.

24 QUORUM AND LAPSE OF A QUORUM

- 24.1 A quorum of an Informal Meeting is the majority of Councillors, excluding those Councillors who have been granted a leave of absence by Council.
- 24.2 If during the conduct of an Informal Meeting, the Chairperson becomes aware that a quorum is no longer present, the Chairperson may (but is not obliged to) adjourn the meeting to a date and time to be determined by the Chairperson.
- 24.3 When the conduct of a meeting is interrupted as a result of the loss of a quorum, the business of the resumed meeting must commence at the point in the meeting agenda at which the interruption occurred.

25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

- 25.1 A member of the public may observe the proceedings of a Council Agenda Forum and speak to the meeting only when invited to do so by the Chairperson.
- 25.2 If any address or comment is irrelevant, offensive, or unduly long, the Chairperson may require the person to cease making the submission or comment.

- 25.3 Any person addressing the Council Agenda Forum will stand, act and speak with decorum and frame any remarks using respectful and courteous language.
- 25.4 Any person who is considered by the Chairperson to be unsuitably dressed may be directed by the Chairperson to immediately withdraw from the meeting. Failure to comply with such a request may be considered an act of disorder.

26 TELECONFERENCING OF MEETINGS

26.1 Concept Forums, Workshops and Briefing Sessions:

- 26.1.1 If a Councillor is unable to attend a Concept Forum, Workshop or Briefing Session in person, and a teleconference option has not been made available, the Councillor must apply to the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer to participate by teleconference as soon as practicable once the Councillor becomes aware of their intended absence. The Mayor and Chief Executive Officer may allow a Councillor to participate in a meeting by teleconference.
- 26.1.2 A Councillor that participates at an Informal Meeting via teleconference is taken to be present at the meeting if the Councillor was simultaneously in audio contact with each other person at the meeting. (section 254K(3) of Local Government Regulation 2012) The attendance of the Councillor must be recorded in the minutes as present at the meeting via audio link or audio visual link.

26.2 Council Agenda Forums:

- 26.2.1 If a Councillor wishes to be absent from a Council meeting place during a meeting, the Councillor must apply to the Chairperson to participate by teleconference, at least three business days prior to the meeting or as soon as practicable once the Councillor becomes aware of their intended absence. The Chairperson may allow a Councillor to participate in a meeting by teleconference.
- 26.2.2 A Councillor that participates at an Informal Meeting via teleconference is taken to be present at the meeting if the Councillor was simultaneously in audio contact with each other person at the meeting. (section 254K(3) of Local Government Regulation 2012) The attendance of the Councillor must be recorded in the minutes as present at the meeting via audio link or audio visual link.

27 REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed when related legislation/documents are amended or replaced, other circumstances as determined from time to time by Council or at intervals of no more than two years.

VERSION CONTROL

This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.

Release Notice

Version Number	Date of issue	Amendment details	Responsible officer
01	27/05/2020	Adopted by Council	CEO
02	28/10/2020	Changes due to legislative reform commencing 12 October 2020	Executive Manager Governance and Customer Service
03	13/12/2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alignment with the Departments revised Queensland Model Meeting Procedures and minor administrative amendments. 2. Insert 14.1.1 to clarify the process for deputation applications. 3. Section 21 amended to clearly outline the requirements for Concept Forums, Workshops and Briefing Sessions are separate to Council Agenda Forums. 	Executive Manager Governance and Customer Service