

PUBLIC GALLERY ATTENDANCE PROTOCOLS



BACKGROUND

- Hunters Hill Council encourages members of the public to observe the proceedings of open meetings and be aware of relevant decision-making processes.
- The rules for Council meetings are contained within the Code of Meeting Practice.¹
- Unless advised otherwise to the contrary, meetings will be held at the Chambers, located on the ground floor of the Council's Administrative Centre at 22 Alexandra Street, Hunters Hill.
- If you are experiencing any mobility issues or require other assistance, please feel free to contact Council on (02) 9879 9400. A staff member will be able to help you.

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Members of the gallery should at all times be respectful of Councillors, staff and other members of the public.
- If you are feeling unwell, please stay at home and feel free to watch proceedings via YouTube.
- Once the legal maximum occupancy limit (and for the avoidance of doubt in compliance with all applicable legislation and regulations) with respect to Council's Administrative Centre is reached you may be asked to watch proceedings elsewhere.
- DO NOT interrupt the meeting or engage in any other form of disruptive conduct. If necessary, the Chair can exclude members of the public pursuant to the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- Please turn off mobile phones and electronic devices or switch settings to silent during proceedings.
- Filming or recording of a Council meeting, either through audio or visual means is not permitted without prior written permission of Council.

¹ In the event of any ambiguity or conflict (real, perceived or otherwise) in relation to the interpretation of the Code of Meeting Practice and any provision contained within this document, the provisions of the Code of Meeting Practice shall take precedence.

- With the exception of water, please do not bring any food or drink into the Chamber.

PUBLIC ADDRESS TO COUNCIL MEETING

- Speakers must register using the prescribed form, noting that they are subject to a time limit and their application may be refused by the Mayor.
- Applications must be received by 12 noon on the day of the relevant meeting.
- Council accepts no responsibility for comments made by members of the public made either in person or via audio-visual link.
- Members of the public who are addressing a meeting either in person or via audio-visual link consent to the broadcasting, recording and storage of their image, voice and statements made during proceedings.
- Note there may be legal consequences if a member of the public makes any comments or remarks that can be interpreted or construed as discriminatory, defamatory, offensive or otherwise contrary to the spirit of an orderly Council meeting pursuant to the *Local Government Act 1993* and associated regulations.

CLOSED SESSION

- Pursuant to Section 10A of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council may deliberate on certain agenda items that are deemed confidential in a closed session.
- For the duration of the closed session, all members of the media and public gallery are required to leave the chamber.
- Members of the public can make an application to request that an agenda item be debated in an open meeting as opposed to the closed session. This application must be received by 12 noon on the day of the relevant meeting.

HOUSE KEEPING RULES PRIOR TO HOLDING COUNCIL MEETINGS: EVACUATION PROCEDURES

- In the event of a fire or emergency, please prepare to evacuate.
- The closest fire exit is from this point is via the front door at reception. In the event of a fire, the alarm will sound and instruct evacuation.
- For your safety, the meeting point is at the Hunters Hill Club on Madeline Street.
- Please obey all instructions from Council staff to make your way to the meeting point and wait for further directions prior to re-entering the Council building.