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Code of Meeting Practice (Model)

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Code of Meeting Practice (Model)

1. 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 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 the event of an inconsistency between the Code and the Act or the Regulation, the Act or the Regulation (as the case may be) prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

Notes in the text of this Code are explanatory notes and do not form part of this Code. They are provided to assist understanding or provide reference to relevant legislation.

2 Meeting Principles

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

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| 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. |

3 Before the Meeting

Timing of ordinary council meetings

- 3.1 Council meetings are normally held alternatively at either the Council Chambers Civic and Cultural Centre, Tumbulgum Road, Murwillumbah or the Harvard Room at the Tweed Heads Administration Building, Brett Street, Tweed Heads. It is up to the council to decide when and where to have the meeting.

These meetings are open to the public. Confidential items are considered in closed session, which excludes press and public.

Council will meet in the following format:

- a) A Planning Committee meeting (comprising all seven councillors) to only discuss planning related matters on the first Thursday of the month. The Planning Committee will include Community Access on the items on the Planning Agenda, with a Council Meeting to follow, to specifically adopt the recommendations of the Planning Committee; and
- b) A Council Meeting on the third Thursday of the month, where all other items are considered, including any planning matters that may have been deferred from the Planning Committee Meeting. This Council Meeting will include consideration of Notices of Motion, Questions on Notice, Mayoral Minute and all other reports. A Community Access session will be held at the commencement of the Council Meeting for members of the public to discuss pertinent matters other than planning matters.

- 3.2 Ordinary council meetings are held on a regular basis, as decided by the council. Each council must meet at least ten (10) times a year, with each meeting being in a different month.

The Act Sec 365

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

Extraordinary meetings

- 3.4 If the mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) 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.

The Act Sec 366

Notice to the public of council meetings

- 3.5 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.

- 3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.5, 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.
- 3.7 For the purposes of clause 3.5, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to councillors of ordinary council meetings

- 3.8 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.

The Act Sec 367(1)

- 3.9 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.

The Act Sec 367(3)

Notice to councillors of extraordinary meetings

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

The Act Sec 367(2)

Giving notice of business to be considered at council meetings

- 3.11 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 provided to the general manager, in the appropriate format, before 2.00pm on the Wednesday of the week preceding the Tuesday electronic upload of Council meeting agenda so as to be listed on the Orders of the Day Agenda.

(Adopted by Council 20 February 2014)

- 3.12 Notices of Motion shall be submitted in the format of the Notice of Motion form.

(Adopted by Council 22 January 2015)

- 3.13 All motions put before Council which are not exactly as presented on the agenda are to be supplied, in writing, to the Chairperson before the mover may proceed.

(Adopted by Council 6 July 1994)

- 3.14 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.

- 3.17 All late arriving/departing correspondence and all memoranda relevant to a matter in the Business Papers, is to be immediately communicated to all Councillors unless there is compelling reason(s) for departure from this rule.
- 3.18 No matter is to be unreasonably held back by Council's staff so as to cause a matter to become urgent. An explanation for any departure from this rule will be provided by the general manager.
- 3.19 Items relating to Development Applications are to clearly indicate the options available to Council, including the concise, practical and legal ramifications of each option.
- 3.20 Suggested amendments to a previous draft Development Control Plan, s94 Plan, Conditions of Consent and the like are to be incorporated into the complete document (by italics or underlining) to enable the amendments to be read in context.

(Adopted by Council 3 May 2000)

Questions with notice

- 3.21 A councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.11, ask a question for response by the general manager about the performance or operations of the council.
- 3.22 A councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.21 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.
- 3.23 The general manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.21 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the council or orally at the meeting.
- 3.24 Questions on Notice shall be limited to five (5) questions per Councillor per Council meeting and be limited to 100 words or less and be succinct and without argument in the format of the question.

(Adopted by Council 16 February 2010)

- 3.25 If not dealt with by Council as a matter of urgency the general manager is required to provide to the next Ordinary meeting a response to the question. If a high level of research is required to satisfy all aspects of the question the report is to indicate an approximate cost and resource requirements. Council is then to consider, if the brief response is adequate or if it is prepared to commit or reallocate resources to complete a detailed response.
- 3.26 For items deemed to be of high community interest, Councillors are encouraged to raise the matter directly with the general manager or appropriate Director at the time of the concern.

(Adopted by Council 16 February 2010)

Petitions

- 3.27 A petition can be presented to Council in writing (other than pencil), or in electronic form.
- 3.28 Petitions submitted to council must include:
- A clear and concise statement covering the subject matter of the petition. The statement should state what action petitioners want Council to take; and
 - The name, address and signature or email address in the case of electronic petitions of any person supporting the petition.
- 3.29 To qualify as a 'petition' there must be at least five signatories or email addresses of residents or ratepayers of the Tweed Shire.
- 3.30 The petition must contain the name, address and contact details of the main petition contact. This is the person Council will contact to explain how Council will respond to the petition. If no contact person is identified Council will assume the first signatory or email address to the petition is the main petition contact.
- 3.31 Council's ability to respond to some petitions may be affected by State legislation including laws related to development assessment, tendering or electoral laws during the time immediately before an election. In such cases, Council will contact the main petition contact to explain and discuss any timeframe issues that apply.
- 3.32 Petitions received by Councillors or forwarded to the general manager will be tabled at a meeting.
- 3.33 Council may resolve to accept a petition and outline Council's preferred action or response in relation to the petition, which could include to receive and note, or request a report or workshop in relation to the petition request and its implications on Council's adopted Integrated Planning Reporting Framework documents.
- 3.34 A petition will not be published in Council's Business Papers, other than to state the name of the Petition and the number of signatories so as to accord with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* with respect to the use and communication of personal information contained in petitions.
- 3.35 If a petition, relates to an operational matter, Council must refer it to the general manager for consideration.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

- 3.36 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.
- 3.37 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 3.11.

3.38 Nothing in clause 3.37 limits the powers of the mayor to put a mayoral minute to a meeting under clause 9.5.

3.39 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.

3.40 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.

The Act Sec 9(2A)(a)

3.41 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.

3.42 Development application requests for call up and determination by Council, which are under the current delegated authority of staff, be requested in writing by two Councillors.

(Adopted by Council 20 February 2014)

3.43 In preparation for the meeting, Councillors are expected to have read and familiarised themselves with the Business Paper Reports.

(Adopted by Council November 2012)

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

3.44 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.

The Act Sec 9(2) and (4)

3.45 Clause 3.44 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the general manager has identified under clause 3.40 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

The Act Sec 9(2A)(b)

3.46 For the purposes of clause 3.44, 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.

The Act Sec 9(3)

3.47 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.44, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

The Act Sec 9(5)

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

3.48 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.

3.49 Despite clause 3.48, 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.

3.50 A motion moved under clause 3.49(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.

3.51 Despite clauses 9.20–9.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.49(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

3.52 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.49(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

4 Public Forums

4.1 The council may hold a public forum prior to each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums may also be held prior to extraordinary council meetings and meetings of committees of the council.

4.2 Public forums are to be chaired by the mayor or their nominee.

4.3 To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the public forum must be received by 12.00pm on the Wednesday immediately preceding the meeting on which the public forum is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.

- 4.4 A person may apply to speak on more than one item of business on the agenda of the council meeting. The general manager will review applications to speak on more than one item of business on the agenda of the council meeting, and determine whether in the context of other applications, it is possible for one person to speak on more than one item of business on the agenda. If a person applies to speak on a matter that is not an item of business on the agenda or applies to speak on more than one item on the agenda of the council meeting, the general manager, may allow that person to speak if timeslots have not been exhausted by those applying to speak on agenda items.
- 4.5 Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak at a public forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the public forum.
- 4.6 The general manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- 4.7 More than one speaker is permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the council meeting.
- 4.8 If more than the one speaker applies to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business. To the extent possible, a balance of speakers 'for' or 'against' any item will be maintained.
- 4.9 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business. If the public forum is not fully subscribed, and there is time remaining, the Chairperson may permit additional speakers.
- 4.10 Approved speakers at the public forum are to register with the council any visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the council at the public forum, and to identify any equipment needs no more than 12.00pm on the Wednesday immediately preceding the public forum. The general manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented. If an approved speaker brings any visual or audio material to present on the night and has not registered it in accordance with this clause, the mayor may allow the late material to be presented.
- 4.11 The order of speakers at the public forum is the order in which applications are received.
- 4.12 Each speaker will be allowed **five** minutes to address the council. An extension of time for up to a further five minutes may be permitted by the Chairperson.

- 4.13 Speakers at public forums must not digress from the item on the agenda of the council meeting they have applied to address the council on. 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.
- 4.14 A councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.
- 4.15 Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.14. Answers by the speaker to questions is to be limited to **two** minutes.
- 4.16 Speakers at public forums cannot ask questions of the council, councillors or council staff.
- 4.17 The general manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the council for up to **five** minutes in response to an address to the council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.
- 4.18 Where an address made at a public forum raises matters that require further consideration by council staff, the general manager may recommend that the council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matters.
- 4.19 When addressing the council, speakers at public forums must comply with this code and all other relevant council codes, policies and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the council's code of conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.
- 4.20 If the chairperson considers that a speaker at a public forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.19, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.
- 4.21 Clause 4.20 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.
- 4.22 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.19, the general manager or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for such a period as the general manager or their delegate considers appropriate.
- 4.23 Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address at a public forum, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at public forums and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

Note: Public forums should not be held as part of a council or committee meeting. Council or committee meetings should be reserved for decision-making by the council or committee of council. Where a public forum is held as part of a council or committee meeting, it must be conducted in accordance with the other requirements of this code relating to the conduct of council and committee meetings.

5 Coming Together

Attendance by councillors at meetings

5.1 All councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the council and of committees of the council of which they are members.

Note: A councillor may not attend a meeting as a councillor (other than the first meeting of the council after the councillor is elected or a meeting at which the councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

The Act Sec 233A

5.2 A councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the council or of a committee of the council unless personally present at the meeting.

5.3 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.

5.4 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.

5.5 The council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a councillor's request for a leave of absence.

5.6 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.

The Act Sec 234(1)(d)

5.7 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

- 5.8 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.
The Act Sec 368(1)
- 5.9 Clause 5.8 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.
The Act Sec 368(2)
- 5.10 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.
- 5.11 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.
- 5.12 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.
- 5.13 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.
- 5.14 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.13, 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 3.4.

Entitlement of the public to attend council meetings

- 5.15 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.
The Act Sec 10(1)
- 5.16 Clause 5.15 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

- 5.17 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.

The Act Sec 10(2)

Note: If adopted, clauses 14.14 and 14.15 confer a standing authorisation on all chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council to expel persons from meetings. If adopted, clause 14.14 authorises chairpersons to expel any person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting. Alternatively, if adopted, clause 14.15 authorises chairpersons to expel persons other than councillors from a council or committee meeting.

Webcasting of meetings

- 5.18 All meetings of the council and committees of the council are to be webcast on the council's website.

Note: Councils must include supplementary provisions in their adopted codes of meeting practice that specify whether meetings are to be livestreamed or recordings of meetings uploaded on the council's website at a later time. The supplementary provisions must also specify whether the webcast is to comprise of an audio visual recording of the meeting or an audio recording of the meeting.

- 5.19 Clause 5.18 does not apply to parts of a meeting that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.
- 5.20 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.
- 5.21 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 four years. Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

Recording of Meeting of Council or Committee Prohibited Without Permission

- 5.22 A person may use a recording device to record the proceedings of a meeting of the Council or a Committee of the Council only with the authority of the Council or Committee.
- 5.23 The Council or Committee may, by resolution, expel from the place where it is holding a meeting any person who uses a recording device in contravention of this Clause.

- 5.24 If any such person, after being notified of such a resolution, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised by the Council for the purpose, may remove the person from, and, if necessary, restrain the person from re entering, that place.
- 5.25 In this Clause, recording device includes a video camera and any electronic device capable of recording speech.
- 5.26 Recording of meeting also extends to photographs.

(Adopted by Council 18 February 2016)

Attendance of the general manager and other staff at meetings

- 5.27 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.
- The Act Sec 376(1)
- 5.28 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.
- The Act Sec 376(2)
- 5.29 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.
- The Act Sec 376(3)
- 5.30 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.

6 The Chairperson

The chairperson at meetings

- 6.1 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.
- The Act Sec 369(1)
- 6.2 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.
- The Act Sec 369(2)

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

- 6.3 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.

- 6.4 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.
- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, 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.
- 6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.
- 6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

- 6.9 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.

7 Modes of Address

- 7.1 If the chairperson is the mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.
- 7.2 Where the chairperson is not the mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.
- 7.3 A councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.
- 7.4 A council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms [surname].

8 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 3.11, and
 - (b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the councillors in accordance with clause 3.8 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.10 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.
- 8.2 Clause 8.1 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 1.1, 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).

Order of business for ordinary council meetings

- 8.6 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of the council shall be:
- 1 Acknowledgement of country
 - 2 Prayer
 - 3 Apologies and applications for a leave of absence by councillors
 - 4 Confirmation of minutes
 - 5 Disclosures of interests
 - 6 Items to be moved from Confidential to Ordinary / Ordinary to Confidential
 - 7 Schedule of Outstanding Resolutions
 - 8 Mayoral minute(s)
 - 9 Receipt of Petitions
 - 10 Orders of the Day
 - 11 Questions on Notice
 - 12 Reports through general manager from the general manager and directors

- 13 Delegates Reports
- 14 Reports of Sub-Committees/Working Groups
- 15 Confidential Items for Consideration

8.7 The order of business as fixed under clause 8.6 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.

Mayoral minutes

8.8 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.

8.9 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.

8.10 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.

8.11 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.

8.12 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

8.13 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

8.14 The recommendations of a committee of the council are, so far as they are adopted by the council, resolutions of the council.

8.15 If in a report of a committee of the council distinct recommendations are made, the council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

- 8.16 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 3.11 and 3.15.
- 8.17 A councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another councillor about a matter on the agenda.
- 8.18 A councillor may, through the general manager, put a question to a council employee 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.
- 8.19 A councillor or council employee 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 employee 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.
- 8.20 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.
- 8.21 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a councillor or council employee.

9 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 3.11 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 3.11 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 10.6, 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 any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.
- 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.
- 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 council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than **five** minutes at any one time. Where the consent of the Chairperson is given for an extension of time, a councillor may not speak for longer than a further **two** minutes.
- 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** 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 9.21, 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.
- 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.

10 Voting

Voting entitlements of councillors

- 10.1 Each councillor is entitled to one (1) vote. The Act Sec 370(1)
- 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. The Act Sec 370(2)
- 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.

- 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.
- 10.10 All voting at council meetings, (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.
- 10.11 No debate is to be allowed on Outstanding Resolutions. Any changes to or debate on Outstanding Resolutions should only be by way of a Notice of Motion or a report to Council.
(Adopted by Council 4 August 2004)
- 10.12 Notwithstanding anything in this Code the Chairperson may not accept a motion that the motion be put while a Councillor is speaking in accordance with this Code, nor while a question, properly asked by a Councillor, awaits a response in accordance with a direction of the Chairperson.
(Adopted by Council 18 February 1998)

Voting on planning decisions

- 10.13 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.
The Act Sec 375A
- 10.14 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.
The Act Sec 375A
- 10.15 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.
The Act Sec 375A
- 10.16 Clauses 10.13–10.15 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.
The Act Sec 375A

11 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.

12 Dealing With Items by Exception

- 12.1 The council or a committee of council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.
- 12.2 Before the council or committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 12.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.
- 12.3 The council or committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 12.1 that a councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.
- 12.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 12.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the council or committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.7.
- 12.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 12.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.
- 12.6 Items of business adopted under clause 12.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.
- 12.7 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 12.1 in accordance with the requirements of the council's code of conduct.

13 Closure of Council Meetings to the Public

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

- 13.1 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.

The Act Sec 10A(1) and (2)

13.2 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.

13.3

The Act Sec 10A(3)

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

13.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 13.1:

- (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.

The Act Sec 10B(1)

13.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 13.1(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.

The Act Sec 10B(2)

- 13.5 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 13.2), 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 13.1.

The Act Sec 10B(3)

- 13.6 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.

The Act Sec 10B(4)

- 13.7 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.

The Act Sec 10B(5)

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

- 13.8 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 3.40 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 13.1, and
- (b) the council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 13.9, 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.

The Act Sec 10C

Representations by members of the public

- 13.9 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.

The Act Sec 10A(4)

- 13.10 A representation under clause 13.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of

the meeting is moved and seconded.

- 13.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.40 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 13.9, members of the public must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications must be received by 12.00pm on the Wednesday immediately preceding the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.
- 13.12 The general manager (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 13.11. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- 13.13 No more than one speaker are to be permitted to make representations under clause 13.9.
- 13.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 13.9, 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 13.9, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the council.
- 13.15 The general manager (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.
- 13.16 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 3.40 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 13.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than **one** speaker for and one against to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.
- 13.17 Each speaker will be allowed five 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

- 13.18 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.
- 13.19 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

- 13.20 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.

The Act Sec 10D

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

- 13.21 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.
- 13.22 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 13.21 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

14 Keeping Order at Meetings

Points of order

- 14.1 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.
- 14.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.
- 14.3 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

- 14.4 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.
- 14.5 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.

- 14.6 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.
- 14.7 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

- 14.8 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.
- 14.9 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.
- 14.10 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

- 14.11 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.
- 14.12 The chairperson may require a councillor:
- (a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 14.11(a) or (b), or
 - (b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 14.11(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 14.11(d) and (e).

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

- 14.13 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

- 14.14 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.
- 14.15 Clause 14.14, 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.
- 14.16 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 14.12. 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.
- 14.17 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.
- 14.18 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.
- 14.19 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

- 14.20 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.
- 14.21 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.
- 14.22 Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 14.20, may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.
- 14.23 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.

Public Gallery Etiquette

- 14.24 All signs and masks be prohibited from the public gallery and Civic Centre.
- 14.24 While Council acknowledges the democratic right to protest, a designated area 5outside the Civic Centre be established to allow citizens to neatly leave all signs and all masks before entering the Civic Centre.
- 14.26 A copy of the Code of Meeting Practice (being suitably bound) be placed alongside the business papers and/or any other public information as available to the general public and be left ad infinitum within the public gallery desk area and updated as changes occur to the Policy Document.

15 Conflicts of Interest

- 15.1 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.
- 15.2 When a Councillor expresses an interest in an Item on the Agenda and leaves the Chamber that Councillor be asked to return to the Chamber before Council/Committee proceeds to the next item of business.

(Adopted by Council 4 August 2004)

- 15.4 Councillors who aren't allowed to take part in a discussion because of a pecuniary interest cannot escape this by addressing the meeting as a 'resident' or 'ratepayer'. Section 451(2) of the Act states that a councillor must not be present at or in the sight of the meeting of council at any time during which the matter (for which the councillor has declared a pecuniary interest) is being considered, discussed or voted on. This has been interpreted as excluding councillors in both their official capacity and as a member of the public. Councillors should refer to Part 3 of this Code or Part 4 of the Code of Conduct for guidance.

(Adopted by Council 16 February 2010)

16 Decisions of the Council

Council decisions

16.1 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.

The Act Sec 371

16.2 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

16.3 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 3.11.

The Act Sec 372(1)

16.4 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.

The Act Sec 372(2)

16.5 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 3.11.

The Act Sec 372(3)

16.6 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.

The Act Sec 372(4)

16.7 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.

The Act Sec 372(5)

16.8 The provisions of clauses 16.5 - 16.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

The Act Sec 372(7)

16.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 16.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.14 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

16.10 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application must be submitted to the general manager no later than 2.00pm on the next business day after the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

- 16.11 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.

The Act Sec 372(6)

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

- 16.12 Despite the provisions of this Part, a councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:
- (a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the council's resolution, or
 - (b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.
- 16.13 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 16.12(a), the councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.
- 16.14 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 16.12(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.
- 16.15 A motion moved under clause 16.12 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 9.20–9.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 16.12 can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 16.16 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 16.12.
- 16.27 A motion moved under clause 16.12 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

17 Time Limits on Council Meetings

- 17.1 Meetings of the council and committees of the council are to conclude no later than 10.30pm (with a meal break between 7.00pm and 7.45pm).
- 17.2 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at 10.30pm, the council or the committee may, by resolution, extend the time of the meeting.
- 17.3 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at 10.30pm, and the council does not resolve to extend the meeting, the chairperson must either:
- (a) defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next ordinary meeting of the council, or
 - (b) adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the chairperson.
- 17.4 Clause 17.3 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.
- 17.5 Where a meeting is adjourned under clause 17.3 or 17.4, the general manager must:
- (a) individually notify each councillor of the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene, and

- (b) publish the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene on the council's website and in such other manner that the general manager is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the time, date and place of the reconvened meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

18 After the Meeting

Minutes of meetings

- 18.1 The council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the council.
The Act Sec 375(1)
- 18.2 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.
- 18.3 The minutes of a council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the council.
The Act Sec 375(2)
- 18.4 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.
- 18.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.
The Act Sec 375(2)
- 18.6 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.
- 18.7 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

- 18.8 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.
The Act Sec 11(1)
- 18.9 Clause 18.8 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.
The Act Sec 11(2)

18.10 Clause 18.8 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.

The Act Sec 11(3)

18.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 18.9 and 18.10 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

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

The Act Sec 335(b)

19 Council Committees

Application of this Part

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

Council committees whose members are all councillors

19.2 The council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

19.3 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.

19.4 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.

Functions of committees

19.5 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

19.6 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.

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

Attendance at committee meetings

- 19.8 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.
- 19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if all of the members of the council are members of the committee.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

- 19.10 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

- 19.11 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.
- 19.12 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.
- 19.13 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.
- 19.14 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

- 19.15 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.

- 19.16 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 19.15.
- 19.17 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).

Closure of committee meetings to the public

- 19.18 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.
- 19.19 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.
- 19.20 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 19.20 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in committee meetings

- 19.21 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

- 19.22 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.
- 19.23 All voting at meetings of committees of the council (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.
- 19.24 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

- 19.25 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.
- 19.26 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.
- 19.27 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.
- 19.28 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.

20 Irregularities

- 20.1 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.

The Act Sec 374

21 Workshops

- 21.1 The frequency of workshops:
- (a) will be conducted as required.
 - (b) A programmed councillor only discussion session will conducted as required.
- 21.2 That a record of all requests for workshops to be reported to council indicating those for and against.
- 21.3 Council can hold a workshop, which is an informal gathering of councillors, council officers and invited participants to discuss issues, based on the provision of background information on the relevant issue.
- 21.4 A workshop shall not used to reach agreement and /or a (de-facto) decision made.
- 21.5 Councillors, Council Officers and invited participants may attend workshops.

There is no obligation on Councillors to attend workshops.

- 21.6 The meeting procedures in the Act and the Regulation apply only to meetings of the council and its committees made up of councillors only. As workshops are not meetings of the council or its committees, the meeting procedures in the Act and the Regulation do not apply.
- 21.7 The workshop may be chaired by the mayor and/or general manager or another senior officer.
- 21.8 The non-disclosure provisions of Sections 664(1) and 664(2) of the Local Government Act 1993, apply to workshops, but as workshops cannot be closed under Section 10A of the Local Government Act 1993, the confidentiality provisions of Section 664(1A) and 664(1B) do not apply.

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22 Definitions

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| 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 |

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| 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 |

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