

Relevant Information for Council

FILE: S051923 **DATE:** 12 December 2025

TO: Lord Mayor and Councillors

FROM: Kirsten Morrin, Executive Director Legal and Governance

THROUGH: Emma Rigney, A/Chief Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Information Relevant To Item 6.5 – Post Exhibition - Code of Meeting Practice

Alternative Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note the submissions received from the community on the draft Code of Meeting Practice as outlined in the engagement report shown at Attachment A to the subject report ***and at Attachment A to the subject Information Relevant To memorandum (for submissions received between 27 November 2025 to 10 December 2025);***
- (B) Council adopt the revised City of Sydney Code of Meeting Practice as shown at Attachment B to the subject report, subject to any amendment of section 422 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 to defer the time of commencement of the new Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils;
- (C) Council endorse that if section 422 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 is amended to defer the mandating of the new Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Council, Council's current Code of Meeting Practice remain in force until further resolution of Council;
- (D) Council fix the order of business of meetings of council as the following:
 - (i) opening of the meeting;
 - (ii) acknowledgement of country;
 - (iii) prayer at the discretion of the Chair;
 - (iv) apologies and applications for a leave of absence by councillors;
 - (v) confirmation of minutes;

- (vi) statement of ethical obligations and disclosures of interest;
 - (vii) minutes by the Lord Mayor;
 - (viii) memoranda by the Chief Executive Officer;
 - (ix) matters for tabling;
 - (x) reports of committees;
 - (xi) reports to council;
 - (xii) questions on notice;
 - (xiii) supplementary answers to previous questions;
 - (xiv) notices of motion; and
 - (xv) conclusion of the meeting;
- (E) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the Code of Meeting Practice in order to correct any minor drafting errors and finalise design, artwork and accessible formats for publication;
- (F) Council endorse the City of Sydney Public Forum Guidelines as shown at Attachment C to the subject report ***subject to the following amendment:***
- Guidelines for City of Sydney Public Forums
- Public forums will be held from ~~1pm~~ **2pm** for up to one hour, with meetings of committees of the council to commence at ~~2pm~~ **3pm**.
- (G) Council note that the Public Forum Guidelines can be amended from time to time by Council;
- (H) ***Council endorse and adopt the revised Functions, Delegations, Policies and Procedures of Council Committees, as shown at Attachment B to the subject Information Relevant To memorandum***
- (I) Council note that public notification and communications will be undertaken in early 2026 (unless deferred) to advise members of the public of the Public Forum Guidelines and how they can address Council going forward.

Purpose

To provide an Alternative Recommendation which notes the additional submissions received on the draft Code of Meeting Practice and adjusts the commencement time of public forums (and consequently Council Committees)

Background

At the meeting of the Corporate, Finance, Properties and Tenders Committee on 8 December 2025, further information was sought on the following:

Councillor attendance at public forums

It is noted that the Office of Local Government (OLG) has previously advised that there are no quorum requirements for public forums.

Council could consider including rules in the public forum guidelines regarding expectations/requirements for Councillor attendance at public forums.

Timing of public forums / Committee and Council meetings

In accordance with section 9(1) of the Local Government Act 1993, a council must give notice to the public of the times and places of its meetings and meetings of those of its committees of which all the members are councillors.

As per clause 20.2 of the Code of Meeting Practice, the council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

On 16 December 2024, Council resolved to adopt meeting times, functions, policies and procedures of the following Committees:

- Corporate, Finance, Properties and Tenders Committee
- Environment and Climate Change Committee
- Cultural, Creative and Nightlife Committee
- Equity and Housing Committee
- Community Services and Facilities Committee
- Innovation, Business and Economy Committee
- Transport, Heritage and Planning Committee

Given the proposed introduction of public forums, it is recommended that the functions of Council Committees be revised to a 3pm commencement time.

The requirements of section 9(1) of the Local Government Act 1993 do not allow for committees to start earlier than the stated time (i.e. if a public forum is not required due to no registered speakers or does not take up the full allocated hour).

How members of the public can address public forums

The City's public forum guidelines:

- (a) Where possible and practicable, enable similar practice to how members of the public currently address meetings of committees of the council.
- (b) Are intended to be flexible and enable the chairperson to conduct the public forum in the most appropriate way given the particular matters for consideration and Council to vary the rules as required from time to time to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of the public forums.

For members of the public that cannot attend public forums, submissions (including video messages) can be made to Secretariat who will then provide to Councillors for consideration.

It is recommended that the public forum guidelines be reviewed throughout 2026 and adjusted as required to ensure best practice and that members of the community are able to address Council appropriately. This could include how members of the public can address forums.

The OLG has confirmed that further public exhibition is not required of the public forum guidelines which will enable Council to adopt new guidelines by way of resolution if required.

Memo from Kirsten Morrin, Executive Director Legal and Governance

Prepared by: Erin Cashman, Manager OCEO

Attachments

Attachment A. Engagement Report - Code of Meeting Practice (Additional Submissions received between 27 November 2025 to 10 December 2025)

Attachment B. Revised Functions, Delegations, Policies and Procedures of Council Committees

Approved



EMMA RIGNEY

A/Chief Executive Officer