

COUNCIL POLICY LG519

COUNCIL FORUMS, BRIEFINGS AND WORKSHOPS

KEY FOCUS AREA LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the scheduling and running of Agenda Briefing Forums, Concept Forums and any Council Member workshops or briefing sessions.

2. Policy

The following principles apply:

- 2.1 All Council Members will have access to the same information to support informed decision-making.
- 2.2 All Council Members will be given a fair and equal opportunity to participate.

3. Agenda Briefing Forums

- 3.1 An Agenda Briefing Forum will be held before each Ordinary Council Meeting, unless the Mayor and CEO decide otherwise.
- 3.2 Agenda Briefing Forums are used to brief Council Members and gather any feedback on matters that will be considered at an upcoming Council Meeting,
- 3.3 Agenda Briefing Forums are for information and questions only. They are not decision-making meetings, and agenda items are not to be debated.
- 3.4 Council Members must not state or discuss how they intend to vote, or otherwise commit themselves to a position, at an Agenda Briefing Forum.
- 3.5 The Mayor presides at Agenda Briefing Forums. Council Members will only ask questions through the Mayor. If the Mayor is unwilling or unable to preside, the Deputy Mayor will chair the Forum. If the Deputy Mayor is also unwilling or unable to preside, Council Members are to choose a person to preside for that Agenda Briefing Forum.
- 3.6 During Agenda Briefing Forums, Council Members and Town staff must comply with their respective Codes of Conduct.
- 3.7 Agenda Briefing Forums are closed to the public.

3.8 External parties may attend with the approval of the Mayor and CEO.

4. Concept Forums

4.1 Concept forums are informal meetings where Council Members and staff discuss early ideas for the Town. These ideas may relate to goals, plans, strategies or possible projects. Concept forums usually occur early in planning, and it may be some time before a matter is brought to Council for a decision. Staff use the forum to seek high-level guidance from Council Members to help shape further work and future reports.

4.2 Concept Forums will be held on the first Monday of each month. If that day is a public holiday, the forum will be held on the second Monday of that month.

4.3 Concept Forums are closed to the public. The CEO may invite external persons to attend and present on specific agenda items.

4.4 Staff attendance is generally limited to the Executive and selected managers (i.e. Manager of Governance). The CEO may invite other staff to attend to provide information on a specific agenda item.

4.5 Agenda items must be strategic and/or relate to delivery of the Strategic Community Plan. "Information only" items must be approved by the CEO and must be considered contentious, high-risk, or likely to have significant community impact.

4.6 Discussion is limited to items listed on the agenda. There is no "general business" item.

4.7 Council forums are not decision-making meetings. To avoid any perception that decisions are being made, the CEO will preside at the forum.

4.8 Minutes are not taken. Instead, the CEO will cause notes to be taken and circulated to Council Members within 10 working days.

4.9 Council Members may request that an item be included on a future forum agenda. Such requests must be received by the CEO at least one week before the forum. The CEO will determine whether the proposed item meets the criteria in clause 4.5. If included, the agenda will note that it is a Council Member item.

4.10 The agenda will be circulated no later than the Friday before the forum. Agendas will be brief to support discussion. Where required, attachments and other pre-forum reading will be circulated to Council Members with the agenda.

4.11 Standing Orders do not apply to concept forums. However, expected standards of behaviour and conduct still apply. Discussion is informal, and there is no set limit on how many times a Council Member may speak on an item.

4.12 Remote attendance is permissible, provided notice is given in advance.

5. Workshops and Briefings

- 5.1 Council Members may request a workshop or briefing session through the Mayor, or by a majority of Council Members submitting a request.
- 5.2 The CEO may convene workshops and briefing sessions to provide information and support Council Members to:
- explore options and discuss ideas;
 - discuss and contribute to strategic direction;
 - receive updates on key projects; and
 - provide input before significant resources are committed or reports are prepared for Council.
- 5.3 External parties and Town employees may attend with the approval of the CEO.

Document Control Box			
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Local Government Administration Regulations 1996</i> <i>Town of Claremont Meeting Procedure Local Law 2018</i>		
Organisational:	Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates Employee Code of Conduct		
Version #	Decision:	OCM Date:	Resolution Number:
1.	Adopted	19 March 2013	47/13
2.	Reviewed	10 December 2013	360/13
3.	Reviewed	9 December 2014	203/14
4.	Reviewed	15 December 2015	226/15
5.	Reviewed	13 December 2016	206/16
6.	Reviewed	18 December 2018	228/16
7.	Reviewed	20 April 2021	043/21
8.	Amended	25 July 2023	094/23
9.	Amended	24 February 2026	15/26