



Public Question Time

Approved by	Council
First Approved	21/01/2008 (CNC210108/17.2.4)
Review Frequency	Within 12 months of General Council Elections
Last Reviewed	16/12/2019 (CNC196/19-20)
Next Review	within 12 months of the 2020 General Election
Document Number	POL20163162
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Policies Related	Code of Practice – Access to Council Meetings, Council Committees and Council Documents Community Engagement and Consultation Policy
Applicable Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 1999</i> Local Government (Procedures at Meetings) Regulations 2013

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Corporation of the Town of Walkerville is committed to open, transparent and accountable government and as such welcomes public participation in ordinary Council meetings.
- 1.2 Council meetings are formally governed by the *Local Government Act 1999* and the Local Government (Procedures at Meetings) Regulations 2013.
- 1.3 The ordinary Council Meeting agenda provides members of the gallery the opportunity to ask questions of Council through the Presiding Member.

2. Public Question Time

- 2.1 Public question time will be limited to thirty minutes per ordinary Council meeting.
- 2.2 Public question time will not be held during special meetings of Council unless so determined by the Presiding Member.
- 2.3 In order to ensure effective and equitable use of the time available each person will be allocated a maximum of five (5) minutes to have their question(s) addressed. A person may ask a maximum of two (2) questions.
- 2.4 The preamble to questions should be kept brief to ensure that questions are able to be answered within the time limit provided.
- 2.5 No debate or discussion will be permitted on any question or response.

3. Procedure for Asking Questions

- 3.1 Council welcomes questions from members of the gallery, subject to the following procedure:
 - 3.1.1 A person wishing to ask a question(s) must be present at the meeting and the question must

be provided in writing, to the Chief Executive Officer prior to the commencement of the meeting.

3.1.2 Prior to asking their question the person must state their full name and address.

3.2 Questions relating to matters appearing on the Council agenda will be asked first in order to ensure Councillors may hear the question and answer before deciding on a matter.

3.3 Councillors may seek further clarification on questions through the Presiding Member.

4. Responding to Questions Asked

4.1 The Presiding Member may reject a question, if in the view of the person presiding, the question:

- is offensive or defamatory in nature
- relates to the competence or personal affairs of an Elected Member or a member of the Administration
- relates to contractual matters
- relates to confidential matters, legal advice, legal proceedings or legal processes
- is vague in nature or irrelevant to the business of Council
- relates to any other matter that the Presiding Member considers would prejudice Council or any person.
- has been responded to by earlier questions or an answer has been provided at a meeting held within the previous six (6) months.

4.2 The Presiding Member may defer to a member of the Administration to provide the response to the question.

4.3 Questions asked at a meeting will be recorded in the Council minutes of that meeting.

4.4 Where a verbal response is unable to be provided at a meeting a written response will be provided to the person asking the question(s) and a copy of this response will be made public via the minutes of the Council meeting.

4.5 The Presiding Member shall have absolute discretion in exercising this policy.

4.6 Once the allocated time of thirty minutes has passed, the Presiding Member will declare public question time ended.

4.7 The Presiding Member may seek to extend the allocated question time if and only if a person(s) has not had the opportunity to ask their question within the allocated 30 minutes.

4.8 Should the Presiding Member chose not to extend the allocated question time, any person(s) who have not had the opportunity to ask their question, will be invited to submit their question in writing to be presented at the next ordinary meeting of Council.

5. Availability of the Policy

This Policy will be available for inspection at the Council's Civic & Community Centre, 66 Walkerville Terrace, Gilberton during opening hours and on Council's website www.walkerville.sa.gov.au. Copies will be provided to interested parties upon request for the payment as per Councils Fees & Charges Schedule. .

6. Review

Council will review the Public Question Time policy within 12 months after the conclusion of each general election. However, Council has the ability to review this policy at any time if considered desirable.

7. Community Involvement in the Development of the Policy

Council will undertake public consultation prior to alteration or substitution of the policy in accordance with Council's Community Engagement and Consultation Policy. A copy of that policy can be viewed or obtained at the Council's Civic & Community Centre during normal business hours or downloaded from Council's website.