



CP9 – COUNCIL FORUM POLICY

MANAGEMENT PRACTICE: N/A

DELEGATION: N/A

INTRODUCTION

This Policy ensures that any meetings held outside formal Council Meetings comply with the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act).

POLICY OBJECTIVE

To guide Elected Members and Shire Officers on holding Council Forums with transparency and accountability.

Council Forums enable Elected Members and the Administration to meet informally to exchange information, discuss strategic concepts, develop mutual understanding and consensus views as set out in the Local Government Guideline Number 5 – Council Forums.

POLICY SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Council Forums involving Elected Members and Shire Officers.

DEFINITIONS

Key Documents: Integrated Planning Strategies, Budgets, Reports, Strategic Plans, Project Briefs, Financial Plans, Asset Management Plans, Officer Reports, Delegation Register, Policies and Frameworks.

Council Forum Program: Provides the order of matter for discussion at a forum and is named as such so that a distinction can be made between a Council Forum program where no decisions are made by Council and a Council meeting agenda where decisions are made by Council in the form of Council Resolutions.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Council Forums will be held to exchange information between Elected Members, senior staff, management staff and committees –
 - a) Prior to the Ordinary Council Meeting, or
 - b) When called by the President or CEO, as necessary.
2. Council Forums are closed to the general public.
3. The purpose of a Council Forum is to –
 - a) Provide an opportunity for Elected Members to request information, ask questions or make comment on specific issues, or on issues in general,
 - b) Discuss conceptual issues as considered appropriate by Elected Members or staff,

- c) Disseminate information from staff to Elected Members,
 - d) Coordinate questions from Elected Members to staff.
4. Council Forum Information Paper –
- a) The CEO is to prepare an Information Paper for each Council Forum,
 - b) The Council Forum Information Paper is to be distributed with the Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda, or as able for irregular Council Forums.
5. Financial, proximity and impartiality interests –
- a) Elected Members, employees, consultants, and other participants shall disclose their interests in matters to be discussed
 - b) Interests are to be disclosed in accordance with the provisions of the Act and associated regulations at the time information is provided or discussion commences on an issue.
6. Conduct of Council Forums –
- a) The Shire President or other person nominated by the Shire President is to be the Presiding Member for Council Forums, or in the Shire President's absence another Elected Member.
 - b) All questions and discussions are to be directed through the Presiding Member and there will be no debate style discussion.
 - c) Being outside the statutory decision making framework, Elected Members at a Council Forum must not vote, indicate their voting intentions, make, or imply any collective or collaborative decision is to be made, other than the CEO may agree to take an action that is of an administrative nature.
 - d) Items listed on the current Council Meeting Agenda may be clarified on matters of procedure or fact, but are not to be debated or resolved/agreed in any way.
 - e) Any additional written information not included with the Council Meeting Agenda is only to be distributed to the meeting at the discretion of the Presiding Member.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

Protocols and Procedures

The following meeting procedures apply:

1. Adverse Reflection
 - a) Do not criticise Council decisions; the character or actions of others or use offensive or objectionable language against another Member or employee.
 - b) If anyone does use such language they must take it back and apologise to the Presiding Member.
2. Preserve Order
 - a) The Presiding Member keeps order and can call any Member to order.
 - b) Members must stay quiet and be seated when the Presiding Member speaks.
3. Presiding Member
 - a) The Shire President chairs Council Forums. If absent, the Deputy President or another appointed Member will chair.

4. Disclosure of Interests
 - a) Members and Shire Officers must disclose any financial or proximity interests related to matters discussed at Council Forums.
 - b) Those with such interests must leave the room during discussions.
5. Debate
 - a) No debates or decisions are made at Council Forums.
6. Additional Matters
 - a) Members can request to include matters at a Council Forum through the Shire President and/or the CEO.
 - b) Members can ask questions, give feedback, or suggest ideas, on other matters.
7. Frequency of Meetings
 - a) Council sets the date and time of monthly Council Forums when adopting its annual schedule. Other dates may be scheduled as needed at the discretion of the CEO and/or at the request of the Shire President to the CEO.
8. Conduct
 - a) Members must follow the Shire of Jerramungup Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates.
 - b) Shire Officers must follow the Shire of Jerramungup Worker's Code of Conduct.
9. Quorum
 - a) A quorum is not required for Council Forums but the CEO, in consultation with the Shire President may reschedule if necessary.
10. Managing Conflicts of Interest
 - a) No Member or Shire Officer should raise matters if they have or may perceive to have a Financial or Proximity Interest.
 - b) Members and Shire Officers must disclose interests in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995* and the relevant Shire of Jerramungup Code of Conduct.
 - c) Members must make written disclosures of Interest to the Presiding Member at all Council Forums.
 - d) Officers must make written disclosures of Interest to the CEO at all Council Forums.
 - e) If the interest is Financial, or Proximity related, the Member or Shire Officer must leave the room during the discussion.

Relevant Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996</i>
Related Documents:	Department of LG Operational Guideline – Council Forums Department of LG Operational Guideline – Disclosures of Interest Strategic Community Plan Record Keeping Plan Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates Code of Conduct for Employees
Related Local Law:	N/A
Related Policies:	AP4 – Records Management Policy
Adopted:	27 August 2025
Last Reviewed:	N/A
Next Review Date:	2027