

GO6 – Community Forum Guidelines Review

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Community Forum Guidelines Review

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TRIM 1422

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The purpose of this report is to adopt the Draft Community Forum Guidelines.
- The Draft Community Forum Guidelines have recently been on public exhibition to obtain community feedback. No submissions were received.
- It is recommended that the Draft Community Forum Guidelines be adopted.

REPORT

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 15 February 2016 via a Notice of Motion, Council resolved to:

"review the current community forum guidelines, paying particular attention to the Informal Question/Statement Time for general issues."

A full review of the guidelines and associated documentation was conducted and reported to Council at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 21 March 2016. It was resolved at this meeting:

1. That the Draft Community Forum Guidelines be placed on public exhibition to allow for community submissions.
2. That a report come back to Council following the submission period for the guidelines to be adopted.

The public exhibition process has now closed with no submissions received.

The significant changes recommended to the guidelines are summarised below:

- New submission deadline for the lodging of Question/Statement Forms of 12 pm on the Friday prior to a Community Forum
- A substantial description of what's being spoken to must be provided on all Questions/Statement forms to be accepted
- Evaluation Process for acceptance of Questions/Statements formalised

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- Detail added to the "Community Forum Rules of Conduct" on the expectations on how Council and submitters interact with each other
- Clauses relating to the Limits upon Acceptance of Community or Informal Question/Statement forms collated under Clause 12 of the "Community Forum Rules of Conduct" and expanded upon to account for duplication of submission
- Checklist for the approval/rejection of a Community Forum Question/Statement introduced - "Appendix B".

CONSULTATION

The Draft Community Forum Guidelines were placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days from 30 March 2016 to 26 April 2016. Advertisements were placed in the Bush Telegraph, on Council's website and on the Engage Wollondilly engagement portal. Hard copies were available at the library and from the Administration Building Foyer. Submissions closed on 10 May 2016. No submissions were received.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This matter has no financial impact on Council's adopted budget or forward estimates.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Summary of Changes Table
2. Draft Community Forum Guidelines incorporating the Checklist for Approval/Rejection of a Community Forum Question/Statement at Appendix B.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Draft Community Forum Guidelines be adopted.

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SUMMARY OF CHANGES –COMMUNITY FORUM GUIDELINES

Location in draft document	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
<p>Introduction – Page 3</p>	<p>Council is committed to the establishment of Community Forums in the Wollondilly Shire as a means for any interested party to advise Council of their collective views on matters relevant to Council or the Shire.</p> <p>Council provides information to our wider community by a number of means. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ The Bush Telegraph ▫ Council's website ▫ Public exhibitions ▫ Media releases ▫ Paid advertising ▫ Mobile library and information service ▫ Macarthur community radio ▫ E-kiosks ▫ Community meetings ▫ Social Media <p>The Community Forum will enable Council to receive information on an informal face to face basis.</p> <p>Council recognises the diversity of views, needs and opinions of our community which can often assist in deciding and implementing the best approach to delivering two way communications.</p>	<p>The Community Forum is an opportunity for members of the public to present their views to Councillors on any topic relevant to Council or Wollondilly Shire. They are open to all members of the public and are held in the evenings the week before each Ordinary Meeting of Council.</p> <p>The matters raised help inform Council's decision-making process and may include items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ for information ▫ for consideration ▫ to gain support ▫ to search for a solution/s to a problem ▫ to highlight a concern ▫ to provide positive or negative feedback. 	<p>Introduction condensed and reworded to provide a more concise overview of what the Community is. Changes made in consultation with the Plain English Committee.</p>

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	<p>Community Forums will act to provide an opportunity for people to discuss and present a variety of matters to the Council. The purpose of the Forums can also be varied, for example, someone may raise a matter for information, for consideration, in the search for a solution (or solutions) to a problem, as a concern or to elicit support.</p>		
<p>Objectives – page 3</p>	<p>Objectives</p> <p>The objectives of Community Forums are:</p> <p>To promote community dialogue with Council and to encourage positive relations between Council and our community</p> <p>To identify the needs of residents and landowners and those people who are directly affected by activities of the Council through two way communication</p> <p>To increase the awareness levels of community members regarding actions proposed by Council</p> <p>To ensure that the local community are adequately informed of Council's activities</p> <p>To strengthen the mandate of Council in dealing with bodies outside the Shire such as Federal and State Government</p>	<p>2. Objectives</p> <p>The Aim of the Community Forum is to:</p> <p>Inform through formal presentations and responses to questions/statements raised</p> <p>Be informed by providing the platform for people who live, work, own property or have an interest in the area to regularly communicate face to face with Council</p> <p>Enhance Council's decision-making process and promote the objectives of open transparent governance.</p>	<p>Overview condensed and reworded to provide a simpler overview of the objectives of the Community Forum. Changes made in consultation with the Plain English Committee.</p>

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	and private organisations.		
Aim – was on Page 4	<p>Aim</p> <p>The aim of Community Forums is to assist Wollondilly Shire Council to become more effective, efficient and equitable by encouraging inclusiveness, enhancing understanding of current activities and future needs.</p>		Aim heading deleted and aim incorporated under the heading of objectives.
Schedule of the Meetings – Pages 3-4	<p>Schedule of Community Forums</p> <p>Day held: Second Monday* of the month Doors Open 6.15pm Commencement time:6.30pm Conclusion time:8.30pm</p> <p>Opening & Welcome to Country</p> <p>Formal Community Forum Matters, as per the set agenda.</p> <p>Community Question/Statement Time is on matters relating to the Ordinary Meeting agenda. Question/Statement forms must be submitted before 12 noon on the day of the Forum.</p> <p>Informal Question/Statement Time is for general</p>	<p>3. Schedule of Community Forums</p> <p>Day held: Second Monday* of the month Doors Open6.15pm Commencement time:6.30pm Conclusion time: 8.30pm</p> <p>Opening & Welcome to Country</p> <p>Formal Community Forum Matters - set agenda.</p> <p>Community Question/Statement Time - matters relating to the Ordinary Meeting agenda.</p> <p>Informal Question/Statement Time - general issues.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>Informal discussions</p> <p>The schedule of meetings will be advertised in various formats. Notice will be provided of any amendments to the advertised schedule.</p> <p>*Note: In the event that a</p>	<p>Additional detail removed. Information already included under the relevant headings throughout the document eg Community Question/ Statement Time.</p> <p>Some rewording to make the statement more concise.</p>

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	<p>issues.</p> <p>Question/Statement forms must be submitted before 12 noon on the day of the Forum.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>Informal discussions with our community over tea and coffee</p> <p>*Note: In the event that a Community Forum falls on a Monday which has been designated as a public holiday, the Forum will be held the next day, being on the Tuesday.</p> <p>The monthly schedule of meetings may not allow for the provision of the full course of meetings to be held every month, particularly during the months of January and December. When the full course of meetings cannot be held in a given month, the General Manager will determine those meetings which will be held and notification will be provided accordingly.</p>	<p>Community Forum falls on a Monday which has been designated as a public holiday, the Forum will be held the next day, being on the Tuesday.</p>	
<p>Meeting Rules – Page 4</p>	<p>5.8 Meeting Rules</p> <p>As stated in point 5 of these guidelines titled “Style of Meeting”, it is Council’s intent to provide a Community Forum in the manner as outlined. In the event the Chairperson is required to call the</p>	<p>4. Meeting Rules</p> <p>The Community Forum Guidelines (this document) and associated Rules of Conduct (Appendix A) detail how Community Forums will be run. These meeting rules have been established to ensure forums are effective and efficient and held in an organised and controlled manner. Copies of these documents are available at every Forum and on Councils website –</p>	<p>Heading relocated to the start of the document to emphasize the purpose of this document. Reworded to improve</p>

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	<p>Forum to order, the Chairperson will refer to Council's Community Forum Rules of Conduct.</p> <p>A copy of this document (Community Forum Guidelines) which incorporates the Community Forum Rules of Conduct (as Appendix A) is available at every Forum and on Councils website – www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au.</p>	<p>www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au.</p>	<p>clarity.</p>
<p>Style of the Meeting</p>	<p>Style of Meeting</p> <p>The main difference between Ordinary Meetings of Council and Community Forums is that people speak on a matter in front of Councillors and Staff. This allows for more informed decision making and is not a debate night.</p> <p>Community Forums will not be run according to formal meeting procedures with motions introduced then speakers taking the floor to talk for or against the motion. There are to be no resolutions, recommendations or motions passed at Community Forums.</p> <p>One of the main objectives of Community Forums is to encourage the involvement of all landowners and</p>	<p>5. Style of Meeting</p> <p>A chairperson will guide each forum in order to maintain order and direction however they are not run according to formal meeting procedures therefore no resolutions, recommendations or motions will be passed.</p> <p>Community Forums seek to be welcoming occasions where people can come together and explore matters and question activities or policies that affect them and their community. However, they are not a debate night.</p>	<p>Reworded to be more succinct.</p>

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	<p>residents in providing Council with information on Forum matters. To do this, formal motions supporting or opposing a matter are not to be submitted. A Forum should be a means by which people can come together and explore matters and question activities or policies that affect their community.</p> <p>Community Forums seek to be welcoming and informal occasions. If a meeting is conducted too strictly, many people feel restricted and often too unsure to speak. On the other hand, if a meeting is too informal, it may lack a sense of purpose and direction and people will tend to lose interest hence, a balanced approach will be adopted.</p>		
<p>Chairperson – Page 4 - 5</p>	<p>5.1 Chairperson</p> <p>That the Community Forums be chaired by the Mayor or another Councillor as appointed by the Mayor. The Community Forum Chairperson be selected according to Councillors surname in alphabetical order and any Councillor that declines his/her opportunity will have to wait until their name is called again alphabetically.</p> <p>While Community Forums should be welcoming and informal</p>	<p>5.1 Chairperson</p> <p>Community Forums are chaired by the Mayor or another Councillor as appointed by the Mayor. The Chairperson is selected according to Councillors surname in alphabetical order and any Councillor that declines his/her opportunity will have to wait until their name is called again alphabetically.</p> <p>The Chairperson's role is to maintain control and guide the Forum. The Chairperson will adopt a balanced approach that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allow opportunity for discussion ▪ Ensure that the Forum is 	<p>Minor rewording to improve the way the section reads. Removed references that are not required.</p>

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	<p>occasions, the Chairperson must still maintain the traditional role of controlling and guiding the Forum.</p> <p>A Chairperson will need to adopt a balanced approach that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allow opportunity for discussion ▪ Ensure that the Forum is not dominated by particular persons to the detriment of others present ▪ Be consistent in the application of Forum rules and procedures ▪ Maintain decorum and order ▪ Generate confidence in the Chair <p>In the event the Forum loses its focus or moves away from the aims or purpose of the Forum, the Chairperson has the discretion to apply the Community Forum Rules of Conduct (Appendix A). Please refer to point 5.8 Meeting Rules.</p> <p>The Chairperson is responsible for clearly communicating any discretionary changes to the Community Forum Agenda or procedure to the Minute Taker and Community Forum Participants.</p>	<p>not dominated by particular persons to the detriment of others present</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be consistent in the application of Forum rules and procedures ▪ Maintain decorum and order ▪ Generate confidence in the Chair. <p>In the event the Forum loses its focus or moves away from the aims or purpose of the Forum, the Chairperson has the discretion to apply the <i>Community Forum Rules of Conduct (Appendix A)</i>.</p> <p>The Chairperson is responsible for clearly communicating any discretionary changes to the Community Forum Agenda or procedure to the Minute Taker and Community Forum Participants.</p> <p>Where a question/statement is retracted or amended the Chairperson will advise the participant to provide an alternative question/statement form to Council within 24 hours to be placed into Councils Electronic Document and Record Management System (TRIM).</p>	
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	<p>Where a question/statement is retracted or amended the Chairperson will advise the participant to provide an alternative question/statement form to Council within 24 hours to be placed into Councils Electronic Document and Record Management System (EDRMS).</p>		
<p>Formal Community Forum Matters – Page 5</p>	<p>5.2 Formal Community Forum Matters</p> <p>Formal Community Forum matters will be as per a set Agenda. During this time input from our community is welcomed in an endeavour to maximise community feedback to the Council.</p> <p>An Example of a Formal Community Forum Matter could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public exhibition items ▪ Strategic matters <p>Formal Community Forum matters will be pre-determined by Council and are typically supported by a presentation.</p> <p>The General Manager, Deputy General Managers and the Forum Chairperson will determine the Formal Community Forum matters that are to be placed on the Agenda.</p> <p>The time limit for Presentations is ten (10) minutes which may be extended by a maximum of ten (10) minutes, at the</p>	<p>5.2 Formal Community Forum Matters</p> <p>Formal Community Forum matters will be as per a set Agenda pre-determined by Council and typically supported by a presentation. During this time input from our community is welcomed in an endeavour to maximise community feedback to the Council.</p> <p>An Example of a Formal Community Forum Matter could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public exhibition items ▪ Strategic matters ▪ Community safety. <p>Council's Executive and the Forum Chairperson will determine the Formal Community Forum matters to be placed on the Agenda.</p> <p>The time limit for Presentations is ten (10) minutes which may be extended by a maximum of ten (10) minutes, at the discretion of the Chairperson. The length of time for questions on each presentation is five (5) minutes.</p>	<p>Paragraphs restructured to improve clarity.</p> <p>Information relating to the Record of Proceedings relocated under that heading.</p> <p>Community Safety added as it's now a regular quarterly item on the Agenda.</p>

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	<p>discretion of the Chairperson. The length of time for questions on each presentation is five (5) minutes.</p> <p>The Record of Proceedings will only record the outcome for this section of the Forum, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A presentation was conducted by (Council Officer) ▪ Discussions were held on the matter of (Item discussed) ▪ Members of our community raised questions and these were addressed by Council Officers 		
<p>Community Question/Statement Time – Page 5</p>	<p>5.3 Community Question/Statement Time</p> <p>Community Question/Statement Time will be for those matters that relate to the Ordinary Meeting of Council Agenda, except for those matters which are subject to a Tender process, Expression of Interest, reports in a closed meeting in accordance with Section 10A (1)(2) of the Local Government Act or considered contrary to the public interest.</p> <p>Questions/Statements must be submitted in writing on Councils prescribed question/statement form and must be submitted by 12 noon on the day of the Forum. Late forms will not be accepted. The person or their representative must be in attendance at</p>	<p>5.3 Community Question/Statement Time</p> <p>Community Question/Statement Time will be for those matters that relate to the Ordinary Meeting of Council Agenda.</p> <p>The General Manager will read the Executive Summary for each Item from Council's current Agenda where a question/statement has been submitted.</p> <p>Questions/Statements not supporting a matter will be dealt with in the first instance and the proponent or person speaking in support of a matter will be dealt with in the second instance.</p> <p>The Chairperson will invite each person in turn to present their question/statement, or where requested, the question/statement may be read out on their behalf.</p> <p>Two (2) questions/statements will be accepted for and against each issue, with each speaker allowed a maximum of 5 minutes.</p>	<p>Information re-organised under relevant headings throughout the document to improve clarity and remove duplication.</p> <p>Eg: Limits of acceptance, Acts of Disorder and Record of Proceedings sections.</p> <p>Deadline for submissions amended to by noon on the Friday prior to a</p>

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	<p>the Community Forum. Only items addressed at the Community Forum will be included in the Record of Proceedings.</p> <p>The General Manager will read the Executive Summary for each Item from Councils current Agenda.</p> <p>Questions/Statements not supporting a matter will be dealt with in the first instance and the proponent or person speaking in support of a matter will be dealt with in the second instance.</p> <p>The Chairperson will invite each person in turn to present their question/statement, or where requested, the question/statement may be read out on their behalf. Two (2) questions/statements will be accepted for and against each issue, with each speaker allowed a maximum of 5 minutes. Failure to take direction from the Chairperson when a participants time limit is reached or other forms of disruptive or disrespectful behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with Appendix A, point 9.6 of these guidelines.</p> <p>In this section of the Forum the name of the person raising the Question/Statement, whom they are representing and the matter/item for each written question/statement submitted for the night will be recorded in the Record</p>	<p>In order to address Council at the Forum <u>you must submit</u> a Community Forum Question/Statement Form <u>prior to 12pm</u> on the Friday before to the Community Forum. Further information on how to lodge a Question/Statement Form is detailed at point 9 of these guidelines.</p>	<p>Community Forum.</p>
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	<p>of Proceedings. Any additional documentation handed in on the night will be noted in the Record of Proceedings. No verbal comments from the speaker will be documented.</p> <p>In the event a participant wishes to amend/retract their written question/statement they will be given 24 hours to submit an alternative question/statement form to be placed into Councils Electronic Document and Record Management System (EDRMS).</p> <p>Where a participant is granted the right to speak on the night at the discretion of the Chairperson the Record of Proceedings will only note the participants name and the subject matter.</p>		
<p>Informal Question/ Statement Time – Page 6</p>	<p>5.4 Informal Question/Statement Time</p> <p>Informal Question/Statement Time will be for any general issues as well as those matters that were not raised during the Formal Community Forum section.</p> <p>Informal Questions/Statements will be allowed at the discretion of the General Manager and the Mayor.</p> <p>Questions/Statements must be submitted in writing on Councils</p>	<p>5.4 Informal Question/Statement Time</p> <p>Informal Question/Statement Time will be for any general issues as well as those matters that were not raised during the Formal Community Forum section.</p> <p>The Chairperson will invite each person in turn to present their question/statement, or where requested, the question/statement may be read out on their behalf.</p> <p>Two (2) questions/statements will be accepted for and against each issue, with each speaker allowed a maximum of 5 minutes.</p> <p>In order to address Council at the Forum you must submit a Community Forum Question/Statement Form prior to 12pm on the Friday before to the Community Forum. Further</p>	<p>Information re-organised under relevant headings throughout the document to improve clarity and remove duplication.</p> <p>Eg: Limits of acceptance, Acts of Disorder and Record of Proceedings sections.</p>

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	<p>prescribed question/Statement form and must be submitted by 12 noon on the day of the Forum. Late forms will not be accepted. The person or their representative must be in attendance at the Community Forum. Copies of all questions/statements are given to Councillors for their consideration. Only items addressed at the Community Forum will be included in the Record of Proceedings.</p> <p>The Chairperson will invite each person in turn to present their question/statement, or where requested, the question/statement may be read out on their behalf. Two (2) questions/statements will be accepted for and against each issue, with each speaker allowed a maximum of 5 minutes. Failure to take direction from the Chairperson when a participants time limit is reached or other forms of disruptive or disrespectful behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with Appendix A, point 9.6 of these guidelines.</p> <p>In this section of the Forum the name of the person raising the Question/Statement, whom they are representing and the matter/item for each</p>	<p>information on how to lodge a Question/Statement Form is detailed at point 9 of these guidelines.</p>	<p>Deadline for submissions amended to by noon on the Friday prior to a Community Forum.</p>
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	<p>written question/statement submitted for the night will be recorded in the Record of Proceedings.</p> <p>Any additional documentation handed in on the night will be noted in the Record of Proceedings. No verbal comments from the speaker will be documented.</p> <p>In the event a participant wishes to amend/retract their written question/statement they will be given 24 hours to submit an alternative question/statement form to be placed into Councils Electronic Document and Record Management System (EDRMS).</p> <p>Where a participant is granted the right to speak on the night at the discretion of the Chairperson the Record of Proceedings will only note the participants name and the subject matter.</p>		
<p>The answering of Questions</p>	<p>5.5 The Answering of Questions/Statements</p> <p>Every attempt is made to provide answers on the night. Situations may arise where this is not possible. Councillors are provided with copies of the questions/statements for their information.</p>	<p>5.5 The Answering of Questions</p> <p>Every attempt will be made to provide an appropriate response on the night. If not possible, the question will be taken on notice. The level of detail warranted for each response varies and is largely dependent upon the complexity of the matter. The type of response provided is at the discretion of the General Manager and the Chairperson. On occasion correspondence will be sent to the individual or party concerned. Statements are generally accepted as advice only. Councillors are provided</p>	<p>Greater clarification as to the types of responses to be provided.</p>

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<p>Agendas and Record of Proceedings – Page 7</p>	<p>Agendas and Record of Proceedings</p> <p>The provision of an Agenda and the Record of Proceedings for Community Forums will be as per Council's Community Forum Rules of Conduct.</p> <p>A Notice of Community Forum (Agenda) will be prepared for each Community Forum. The agenda will set out the order of business, which the Chairperson should follow. The General Manager, Deputy General Managers and Chairperson will determine the Formal Community Forum matters that are to be placed on the agenda.</p> <p>Community Forums will be documented, with the Record of Proceedings being the official record of the business that has been conducted at the Forum. The Record of Proceedings will record the name, representative and matter discussed only as per clause 5.3 & 5.4 of these Guidelines. Verbal comments will not be recorded from the floor.</p> <p>Copies of these documents are available from the Council customer service foyer. Alternatively, they can</p>	<p>with copies of all questions/statements submitted for their consideration.</p> <p>6. Agendas and Record of Proceedings</p> <p>A Notice of Community Forum (Agenda) will be prepared for each Community Forum. The agenda will set out the order of business, which the Chairperson should follow.</p> <p>The Record of Proceedings will document the business that has been conducted at the Forum. The information recorded for each section is as follows:</p> <p>Presentations - The outcome, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A presentation was conducted by (Council Officer) - slides from PowerPoint presentations or a brief overview may be included ▪ Discussions were held on the matter of (Item discussed) ▪ Members of our community raised questions and these were addressed by Council Officers and/or answered on the night <p>Community and Informal Question/Statement Times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The name of the person raising the Question/Statement ▪ Whom the person raising the Question/Statement is representing ▪ The matter/item discussed ▪ Note any additional documentation handed in on the night <p>No verbal comments will be recorded from the floor.</p>	<p>Reworded to improve clarity.</p> <p>Collated all relevant information previously contained throughout the document and placed it under this heading.</p>
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	be accessed via Council's website.	<p>Where a participant is granted the right to speak on the night at the discretion of the Chairperson the Record of Proceedings will only note the participants name and the subject matter.</p> <p>Copies of these documents are available on Councils website or from the Customer Service department.</p>	
Promotion – Page 7	<p>Promotion</p> <p>Community Forums may be promoted through the Bush Telegraph, the local media, the Council library, the mobile library and information service and on Council's website, www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au.</p> <p>Council's website has a page entitled Council Meetings which has a link to a Community Forum Page. This page contains the dates of Community Forums, Agendas, the Record of Proceedings and Question/Statement Forms.</p>	<p>7. Promotion</p> <p>Community Forums may be promoted through the Bush Telegraph, the local media, Council's library, the mobile library and information service, on Council's website, www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au and on social media.</p> <p>Council's website has a page entitled <i>Community Forums</i> made available on this page will be the schedule of Community Forum dates, related forms and documents.</p>	<p>Added a reference to social media.</p> <p>Update reference to relevant webpage.</p>
Community Forum Process – was on Page 9	<p>Community Forum Process</p> <p>The Community Forum process is to allow the Council as a Local Government entity to meet the objectives of open transparent governance and community engagement and not for the best interest of any individual.</p>		<p>Deleted – redundant heading information included under Objectives.</p>

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<p>How to lodge a request for a Presentation Topic and/or Question/Statement Form – Page 8</p>	<p>Request for a Presentation Topic and Question/Statement Form</p> <p>All requests to speak at Community Forums are required to be made in writing. Councils prescribed form for submitting a request to address the Community Forum is a multi-purpose form referred to as the Community Forum Question/Statement Form.</p> <p>The form is available online at Councils website for electronic submission or download. Hard copies are also available from Councils Customer Service Centre.</p>	<p>9. How to lodge a request for a Presentation Topic and/or Question/Statement Form</p> <p>All requests to speak at Community Forums are required to be made in writing in advance.</p> <p>Questions/Statements must be submitted on Councils prescribed question/statement form by 12 noon on the Friday prior to the Forum. Late forms will not be accepted.</p> <p>The Community Forum Question/Statement Form is available online at Councils website for electronic submission or download. Hard copies are also available from Councils Customer Service Department.</p> <p>All requests received will be evaluated prior to acceptance. At a minimum the information provided must include the following:</p> <p>Name Address Contact Number Subject Matter:-</p> <p>A complete copy of the statements to be made and/or questions to be asked.</p> <p>Where an incomplete form is lodged Council will endeavour to assist submitters to make a valid request up until the cut-off time for submissions closes.</p> <p>Acceptance of all Questions/Statements lodged is in accordance with clause 12 of the attached Community Forum Rules of Conduct (Appendix A). Every request will be considered on its own merits using the Checklist for approval/rejection of a Question/Statement (Appendix B). A decision on an individual request will not be seen as setting a precedent for</p>	<p>Deadline for submission of Forms amended.</p> <p>Detail added to inform of the requirement for submission to be evaluated and accepted.</p> <p>Detail added as to minimum information required in a submission for acceptance.</p> <p>Information added as to how we deal with duplicated questions.</p> <p>Reference to the Rules of Conduct added for further detail on the limits of acceptance.</p>
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		<p>the consideration of any other request received by Council.</p> <p>A decision to reject a question/statement is final. Individuals will receive notification of such decisions by close of business on the Friday prior to the Forum via the contact number provided on the form.</p> <p>Discretion to deter from these guidelines lies with the General Manager and the Mayor and/or Chairperson.</p> <p>The person requesting to speak or their representative must be in attendance at the Community Forum for the matter to be addressed and recorded in the Record of Proceedings. A copy of all requests accepted will be provided to all Councillors for their information regardless of attendance.</p>	
<p>Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – Community Access to Agendas and Associated Agenda – was on Page 11</p>	<p>3. Community Access to Agendas and Associated Agenda</p> <p>3.1 Copies of the Community Forum and Ordinary Meeting of Council agenda shall be available at Council libraries and at the customer service centre by 8.00am on the Friday 10 days prior to the Community Forum. These copies are available for viewing at no charge. Copies to be taken away will be available, at no charge, from the customer service centre in reasonable numbers.</p> <p>3.2 Copies of the Community Forum and Ordinary Meeting of Council agenda are also available on Council's website – www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au.</p>		<p>Heading Deleted and information reworded and inserted under the Access to Records heading on Page 10.</p> <p>Therefore clauses renumbered that follow.</p>

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	<p>3.3 The press and the community shall, during or at the close of a Community Forum, be allowed reasonable access to the correspondence and reports tabled at or submitted to the Forum.</p> <p>3.4 The General Manager may withhold access to the correspondence and reports referred to in subclause 3.3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In any case where the General Manager, upon advice from the Council's Officers, so decide on the ground that the matter may not be in accordance with clause 5.3 of this Guideline. <p>3.5 The use of various mediums for the distribution of agenda is available upon request and nothing in this code shall be construed as limiting the means of distributing information to any one medium.</p>		
<p>Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – Notice of Community Forum – Page 10</p>	<p>4. Notice of Community Forum</p> <p>...</p>	<p>3. Notice of Community Forum</p> <p>...</p>	<p>Wording unchanged renumbered due to re-organisation of information within the document to improve flow.</p>
<p>Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – Agenda for the Community</p>	<p>6. Agenda for the Community Forum</p> <p>6.1 The General Manager will ensure that an agenda is prepared for the Community Forum.</p>	<p>4. Agenda for the Community Forum</p> <p>4.1 The General Manager will ensure that an agenda is prepared for the Community Forum.</p>	<p>Renumbered as the information was relocated within the</p>

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<p>Forum Page 10 –</p>	<p>6.2 The General Manager must not include in the agenda for a Community Forum 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.</p> <p>6.3 The General Manager must cause an agenda to be delivered to Councillors and be available for the community not later than three days prior to the Community Forum.</p>	<p>4.2 The General Manager must not include in the agenda for a Community Forum 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.</p> <p>4.3 The General Manager must cause an agenda to be delivered to Councillors and be available for the community not later than three days prior to the Community Forum.</p> <p>4.4 Copies of the Community Forum and Ordinary Meeting of Council agenda will be made available to the public no less than three days prior to the Community Forum on Council's website – www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au. A reasonable number of hard copies will be made available for collection from Council's Customer Service department free of charge. Copies are also available for viewing at Council's Library.</p> <p>4.5 The use of various mediums for the distribution of the agenda is available upon request and nothing in this code shall be construed as limiting the means of distributing information to any one medium.</p>	<p>document to improve flow.</p> <p>Minor rewording and amendment to availability at the Library to reflect current procedures.</p>
<p>Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – Access to Records – Page 10</p>	<p>13. Access to Records</p> <p>Council's <i>Access to Information Policy</i> applies.</p>	<p>5. Access to Records</p> <p>5.1 The press and the community shall, during or at the close of a Community Forum, be allowed reasonable access to the correspondence and reports tabled at or submitted to the Forum.</p> <p>5.2 The General Manager may withhold access to the correspondence and reports referred to in subclause 5.1 if it is not in the public interest to provide access.</p>	<p>Relocated within the document to improve flow.</p> <p>Heading renumbered accordingly.</p> <p>Information inserted that was previously under the Heading Community</p>

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		5.3 Council's Access to Information Protocol and Guidelines apply.	Access to Agendas and Associated Agenda. Reference updated as the Access to Information Policy is now a Protocol and Guidelines.
Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – Presence at the Community Forum – Page 11	5. Presence at the Community Forum A Councillor cannot participate in a Community Forum unless personally present at the Forum and within the physical confines of the room, in which the Forum is being held.	6. Presence at the Community Forum A Councillor cannot participate in a Community Forum unless personally present at the Forum and within the physical confines of the room, in which the Forum is being held.	Wording unchanged information relocated due to re-organisation of the document to improve flow. Section renumbered accordingly.
Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – Community and Informal Question/Statement Time – Page 11	7. Community Question/Statement Time Community Question/Statement Time will be for those matters that relate directly to the upcoming Ordinary Meeting of Council agenda. Informal Questions/Statements will be allowed at the discretion of the General Manager and the Mayor. If the Chairperson or General Manager receives a Community Question/Statement Time form that contains substantial inappropriate content, such as abusive or threatening language (or adverse personal reflections on individuals)	7. Community and Informal Question/Statement Time Community Question/Statement Time is for those matters that relate directly to the upcoming Ordinary Meeting of Council agenda. Informal Question/Statement Time is for general matters of interest. The limits upon acceptance of Questions/Statements is detailed below at clause 12.	Minor correction to the heading. Updated to refer to the limits upon acceptance clause which provides more detail.

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	the Chairperson or General Manager will advise the sender that the matter will not be received nor dealt with.		
Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – 8 Matters May be Put to Councillors and Council Employees – Page 11	<p>8. Matters May be Put to Councillors and Council Employees</p> <p>8.1 A person present:</p> <p>(a) May through the Chairperson put a matter to a Councillor</p>	<p>8. Matters May be Put to Councillors and Council Employees</p> <p>8.1 A person presenting:</p> <p>(a) May through the Chairperson put a matter to a Councillor</p>	Amendment to make it clear that questions from the floor are not permitted.
Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – Expectations on how we interact with each other – Page 11		<p>9. Expectations on how we interact with each other</p> <p>9.1 In line Council’s Statement of Business Ethic’s Council expects that all submitters have a mutual obligation in observing the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide accurate and reliable information ▪ To declare actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as you become aware of the conflict ▪ To act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with Council ▪ To act with moral conscious ▪ To at all times be respectful and courteous. 	New Section – to detail the mutual obligations of Council and Submitters.
Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – Acts of Disorder – Page 12		<p>10. Acts of Disorder</p> <p>10.1 Community members who are deemed as having no regard for the principles outlined in clause 9 above or who insult, make personal reflections or impute improper motives to Council or Councillors, or do or say anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order, or exhibit any other behaviour deemed disorderly by the Council will be deemed to have committed an act of disorder.</p> <p>10.2 Council reports are written by council officers and state the</p>	<p>New heading added to separate the explanation of what is deemed an Act of Disorder from how we deal with such Acts.</p> <p>No new information other than a reference to</p>

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		<p>views of the applicants' proposal, community views and legal aspects and where appropriate, comments. Inflammatory, derogatory or derisive comments against a report writer or council officer will not be tolerated and will be deemed acts of disorder.</p> <p>10.3 Failure to take direction from the Chairperson when a participant's time limit is reached or other forms of disruptive or disrespectful behaviour will be deemed an act of disorder.</p> <p>10.3 Councillors and Council employees must, at all times, observe the provision of Council's Code of Conduct, as adopted.</p>	the new section 9 on expectations
Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – How Disorder at a Community Forum May be Dealt With	<p>9. How Disorder at a Community Forum May be Dealt With</p> <p>9.1 If disorder occurs at a Community Forum, the Chairperson may adjourn the Forum for a period of not more than 15 minutes and leave the Chair. The Chairperson, on reassembling the Forum, must decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This subclause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the community as well as disorder arising from the conduct of Councillors.</p>	<p>11. How Disorder at a Community Forum May be Dealt With</p> <p>11.1 If disorder occurs at a Community Forum, the Chairperson may adjourn the Forum for a period of not more than 15 minutes and leave the Chair. The Chairperson, on reassembling the Forum, must decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This subclause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the community as well as disorder arising from the conduct of Councillors.</p> <p>11.2 A member of the community may be expelled from a Community Forum for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the Forum.</p> <p>11.3 A Community member who fails to follow a direction from the Chairperson after</p>	Numbering update only.

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	<p>9.2 A member of the community may be expelled from a Community Forum for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the Forum.</p> <p>9.3 Community members who insult or make personal reflections or impute improper motives to Council or Councillors, or does or says anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order will be deemed acts of disorder, or any other behaviour deemed disorderly by the Council.</p> <p>9.4 Council reports are written by council officers and state the views of the applicants' proposal, community views and legal aspects and where appropriate, comments. Inflammatory, derogatory or derisive comments against a report writer or council officer will not be tolerated and will be deemed acts of disorder.</p> <p>9.5 Councillors and Council employees must, at all times, observe the provision of Council's Code of Conduct, as adopted.</p>	<p>successive requests at a Community Forum or over several Community Forums may be issued a formal warning. No more than two warnings will be issued following which subsequent requests to speak at Community Forums will be denied and Community Question/Statement Forms will not be accepted.</p>	
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	<p>9.6 A Community member who fails to follow a direction from the Chairperson after successive requests at a Community Forum or over several Community Forums may be issued a formal warning. No more than two warnings will be issued following which subsequent requests to speak at Community Forums will be denied and Community Question/Statement Forms will not be accepted.</p>		
<p>Appendix A – Rules of Conduct – Limits upon Acceptance of Community or Informal Question/Statement Time Forms.</p>	<p>10. Limits upon Acceptance of a Community or Informal Question/Statement Time Forms</p> <p>Informal Questions/Statements will be allowed at the discretion of the General Manager and the Mayor. If the Chairperson or General Manager receives a Community or Informal Question/Statement Time form that contains substantial inappropriate content, such as abusive or threatening language (or adverse personal reflections on individuals) the Chairperson or General Manager will advise the sender that the matter will not be received nor dealt with.</p>	<p>12. Limits upon Acceptance of Community or Informal Question/Statement Forms</p> <p>12.1 All contributions must be relevant to the business of the Council and/or the Shire. Acceptance of Question/Statement forms lies with the General Manager and the Mayor/Chairperson.</p> <p>12.2 Information supplied on forms must not endorse commercial products or activities; solicit business or invade anyone's privacy.</p> <p>12.3 Where a Form contains a substantial amount of inappropriate content, such as defamatory, abusive, offensive or</p>	<p>Reworded pulling in information previously noted throughout the document and introducing matters such as duplication and relevance and providing further clarity on other matters.</p>

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		<p>threatening language (or casts adverse personal reflections on individuals) it will not be received nor dealt with. The sender will be notified of such decisions.</p> <p>12.4 Matters which are subject to a Tender process, Expression of Interest, reports in a closed meeting in accordance with Section 10A (1)(2) of the Local Government Act or considered contrary to the public interest will not be accepted.</p> <p>12.5 All topics for discussion must be submitted in advance detailing the statement/s to be made or question/s to be asked. Comments and questions will be limited to those notified and approved by Council by the submission deadline.</p> <p>12.6 Questions/statements received that duplicate or are substantial the same as those submitted to a previous Community Forum will not be accepted.</p>	
Appendix A Sections 13 to 17			No change to information – sections renumbered
Appendix B		Checklist for the approval/rejection of a Question/Statement	New Checklist prepared to enhance and document

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Report of Governance to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 20 June 2016

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			the decision-making process.
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Wollondilly
Shire Council

**COMMUNITY FORUM
GUIDELINES**

WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL

P O Box 21 PICTON NSW 2571
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Rural Living

Governance

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WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY FORUM GUIDELINES

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Date Amended: 2/02/2016
Date Last Adopted: 17/02/2014 Resolution: 9/2014



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1. Introduction

The Community Forum is an opportunity for members of the public to present their views to Councillors on any topic relevant to Council or Wollondilly Shire. They are open to all members of the public and are held in the evenings the week before each Ordinary Meeting of Council.

The matters raised help inform Council's decision-making process and may include items:

- for information
- for consideration
- to gain support
- to search for a solution/s to a problem
- to highlight a concern
- to provide positive or negative feedback.

2. Objectives

The Aim of the Community Forum is to:

- Inform through formal presentations and responses to questions/statements raised
- Be informed by providing the platform for people who live, work, own property or have an interest in the area to regularly communicate face to face with Council
- Enhance Council's decision-making process and promote the objectives of open transparent governance.

3. Schedule of Community Forums

Day held: Second Monday* of the month
Doors Open 6.15pm
Commencement time: 6.30pm
Conclusion time: 8.30pm

Opening & Welcome to Country

Formal Community Forum Matters - set agenda.

Community Question/Statement Time - matters relating to the Ordinary Meeting agenda.

Informal Question/Statement Time - general issues.

Conclusion

Informal discussions

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The schedule of meetings will be advertised in various formats. Notice will be provided of any amendments to the advertised schedule.

*Note: In the event that a Community Forum falls on a Monday which has been designated as a public holiday, the Forum will be held the next day, being on the Tuesday.

4. Meeting Rules

The Community Forum Guidelines (this document) and associated Rules of Conduct (Appendix A) detail how Community Forums will be run. These meeting rules have been established to ensure forums are effective and efficient and held in an organised and controlled manner. Copies of these documents are available at every Forum and on Councils website – www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au.

5. Style of Meeting

A chairperson will guide each forum in order to maintain order and direction however they are not run according to formal meeting procedures therefore no resolutions, recommendations or motions will be passed.

Community Forums seek to be welcoming occasions where people can come together and explore matters and question activities or policies that affect them and their community. However, they are not a debate night.

5.1 Chairperson

Community Forums are chaired by the Mayor or another Councillor as appointed by the Mayor. The Chairperson is selected according to Councillors surname in alphabetical order and any Councillor that declines his/her opportunity will have to wait until their name is called again alphabetically.

The Chairperson's role is to maintain control and guide the Forum. The Chairperson will adopt a balanced approach that will:

- Allow opportunity for discussion
- Ensure that the Forum is not dominated by particular persons to the detriment of others present
- Be consistent in the application of Forum rules and procedures
- Maintain decorum and order
- Generate confidence in the Chair.

In the event the Forum loses its focus or moves away from the aims or purpose of the Forum, the Chairperson has the discretion to apply the *Community Forum Rules of Conduct (Appendix A)*.

The Chairperson is responsible for clearly communicating any discretionary changes to the Community Forum Agenda or procedure to the Minute Taker and Community Forum Participants.

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Where a question/statement is retracted or amended the Chairperson will advise the participant to provide an alternative question/statement form to Council within 24 hours to be placed into Councils Electronic Document and Record Management System (TRIM).

5.2 Formal Community Forum Matters

Formal Community Forum matters will be as per a set Agenda pre-determined by Council and typically supported by a presentation. During this time input from our community is welcomed in an endeavour to maximise community feedback to the Council.

An Example of a Formal Community Forum Matter could be:

- Public exhibition items
- Strategic matters
- Community safety.

Council's Executive and the Forum Chairperson will determine the Formal Community Forum matters to be placed on the Agenda.

The time limit for Presentations is ten (10) minutes which may be extended by a maximum of ten (10) minutes, at the discretion of the Chairperson. The length of time for questions on each presentation is five (5) minutes.

5.3 Community Question/Statement Time

Community Question/Statement Time will be for those matters that relate to the Ordinary Meeting of Council Agenda.

The General Manager will read the Executive Summary for each Item from Council's current Agenda where a question/statement has been submitted.

Questions/Statements not supporting a matter will be dealt with in the first instance and the proponent or person speaking in support of a matter will be dealt with in the second instance.

The Chairperson will invite each person in turn to present their question/statement, or where requested, the question/statement may be read out on their behalf.

Two (2) questions/statements will be accepted for and against each issue, with each speaker allowed a maximum of 5 minutes.

In order to address Council at the Forum you must submit a Community Forum Question/Statement Form prior to 12pm on the Friday before to the Community Forum. Further information on how to lodge a Question/Statement Form is detailed at point 9 of these guidelines.

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5.4 Informal Question/Statement Time

Informal Question/Statement Time will be for any general issues as well as those matters that were not raised during the Formal Community Forum section.

The Chairperson will invite each person in turn to present their question/statement, or where requested, the question/statement may be read out on their behalf.

Two (2) questions/statements will be accepted for and against each issue, with each speaker allowed a maximum of 5 minutes.

In order to address Council at the Forum you must submit a Community Forum Question/Statement Form prior to 12pm on the Friday before to the Community Forum. Further information on how to lodge a Question/Statement Form is detailed at point 9 of these guidelines.

5.5 The Answering of Questions

Every attempt will be made to provide an appropriate response on the night. If not possible, the question will be taken on notice. The level of detail warranted for each response varies and is largely dependent upon the complexity of the matter. The type of response provided is at the discretion of the General Manager and the Chairperson. On occasion correspondence will be sent to the individual or party concerned. Statements are generally accepted as advice only. Councillors are provided with copies of all questions/statements submitted for their consideration.

5.6 Conclusion

This section of the Forum will allow the Chairperson to bring the Forum to a close.

A firm conclusion to the Forum is necessary with emphasis being placed on thanking those who attended for their feedback and their interest in contributing to the future of the Shire.

5.7 Break and Discussions with Councillors

This section of the Forum will allow time for our community to have a cup of tea or coffee and speak openly with Councillors and Council Officers about any matter they wish to raise.

This section of the Forum will not be recorded.

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6. Agendas and Record of Proceedings

A Notice of Community Forum (Agenda) will be prepared for each Community Forum. The agenda will set out the order of business, which the Chairperson should follow.

The Record of Proceedings will document the business that has been conducted at the Forum. The information recorded for each section is as follows:

Presentations - The outcome, for example:

- A presentation was conducted by (Council Officer) - slides from PowerPoint presentations or a brief overview may be included
- Discussions were held on the matter of (Item discussed)
- Members of our community raised questions and these were addressed by Council Officers and/or answered on the night

Community and Informal Question/Statement Times:

- The name of the person raising the Question/Statement
- Whom the person raising the Question/Statement is representing
- The matter/item discussed
- Note any additional documentation handed in on the night

No verbal comments will be recorded from the floor.

Where a participant is granted the right to speak on the night at the discretion of the Chairperson the Record of Proceedings will only note the participants name and the subject matter.

Copies of these documents are available on Councils website or from the Customer Service department.

7. Promotion

Community Forums may be promoted through the Bush Telegraph, the local media, Council's library, the mobile library and information service, on Council's website, www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au and on social media.

Council's website has a page entitled *Community Forums made available on this page* will be the schedule of Community Forum dates, related forms and documents.

8. Councillor Contacts

A list of Councillor Contact details will be available for participants at every Community Forum.

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9. How to lodge a request for a Presentation Topic and/or Question/Statement Form

All requests to speak at Community Forums are required to be made in writing in advance.

Questions/Statements must be submitted on Councils prescribed question/statement form by 12 noon on the Friday prior to the Forum. Late forms will not be accepted.

The Community Forum Question/Statement Form is available online at Councils website for electronic submission or download. Hard copies are also available from Councils Customer Service Department.

All requests received will be evaluated prior to acceptance. At a minimum the information provided must include the following:

- Name
- Address
- Contact Number
- Subject Matter
- A complete copy of the statements to be made and/or questions to be asked.

Where an incomplete form is lodged Council will endeavour to assist submitters to make a valid request up until the cut-off time for submissions closes.

Acceptance of all Questions/Statements lodged is in accordance with clause 12 of the attached Community Forum Rules of Conduct (Appendix A). Every request will be considered on its own merits using the Checklist for approval/rejection of a Question/Statement (Appendix B). A decision on an individual request will not be seen as setting a precedent for the consideration of any other request received by Council.

A decision to reject a question/statement is final. Individuals will receive notification of such decisions by close of business on the Friday prior to the Forum via the contact number provided on the form.

Discretion to deter from these guidelines lies with the General Manager and the Mayor and/or Chairperson.

The person requesting to speak or their representative must be in attendance at the Community Forum for the matter to be addressed and recorded in the Record of Proceedings. A copy of all requests accepted will be provided to all Councillors for their information regardless of attendance.

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WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY FORUM GUIDELINES

Appendix A

Community Forum Rules of Conduct

1. Definitions

In these rules:

Chairperson

In relation to the Community Forum, means the person presiding at the Community Forum.

Councillor

Is an elected member of the Council.

Tabled (Tabling of Documents)

The Tabling of Documents is usually done when the document is long or if it is relatively unimportant, if its nature prevents it from being read, for example, graphs, tables of statistics, photographs or is a document relating to a Development Application in the Business Paper. Persons tabling documents merely state as they do so that they are tabling the document. The tabled documents will not become part of the official Record of Proceedings, but will be given to Councillors for their information.

The Act

Means the Local Government Act 1993 (as amended from time to time).

The *Community Forum Rules of Conduct* incorporates relevant provisions of the Regulations and Act. In the event of any inconsistency between the Rules and the Act or Regulations, the Act or Regulations (as the case may be) prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

2. Who is Entitled to Attend

2.1 Every person is entitled to attend a Community Forum.

2.2 A person (whether a Councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a Community Forum if expelled from the Forum in accordance with clause 11 of these Rules.

- By the Chairperson presiding at the Community Forum exercising the power of expulsion in accordance with these rules.

Date Amended: 2/02/2016
Date Adopted: 17/02/2014 Resolution: 9/2014



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WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY FORUM GUIDELINES

3. Notice of Community Forum

- 3.1 The General Manager will send to each Councillor, at least three days before each Community Forum, a notice specifying the time and place at which and the date on which the Community Forum is to be held and the business proposed to be transacted at the Community Forum.
- 3.2 Proceedings at a Community Forum are not invalidated because of a failure to give notice of the Community Forum to any Councillor.
- 3.3 Council will give public notice of the times and places of its Community Forums.

4. Agenda for the Community Forum

- 4.1 The General Manager will ensure that an agenda is prepared for the Community Forum.
- 4.2 The General Manager must not include in the agenda for a Community Forum 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.
- 4.3 The General Manager must cause an agenda to be delivered to Councillors and be available for the community not later than three days prior to the Community Forum.
- 4.4 Copies of the Community Forum and Ordinary Meeting of Council agenda will be made available to the public no less than three days prior to the Community Forum on Council's website – www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au. A reasonable number of hard copies will be made available for collection from Council's Customer Service department free of charge. Copies are also available for viewing at Council's Library.
- 4.5 The use of various mediums for the distribution of the agenda is available upon request and nothing in this code shall be construed as limiting the means of distributing information to any one medium.

5. Access to Records

- 5.1 The press and the community shall, during or at the close of a Community Forum, be allowed reasonable access to the correspondence and reports tabled at or submitted to the Forum.
- 5.2 The General Manager may withhold access to the correspondence and reports referred to in subclause 5.1 if it is not in the public interest to provide access.
- 5.3 Council's Access to Information Protocol and Guidelines apply.

Date Amended: 2/02/2016
Date Adopted: 17/02/2014 Resolution: 9/2014



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WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY FORUM GUIDELINES

6. Presence at the Community Forum

A Councillor cannot participate in a Community Forum unless personally present at the Forum and within the physical confines of the room, in which the Forum is being held.

7. Community and Informal Question/Statement Time

Community Question/Statement Time ~~is will be~~ for those matters that relate directly to the upcoming Ordinary Meeting of Council agenda.

Informal Question/Statement Time ~~is for general matters of interest.~~

~~The limits upon acceptance of Questions/Statements is detailed below at clause 12.~~

8. Matters May be Put to Councillors and Council Employees

8.1 A person presenting:

- (a) May through the Chairperson put a matter to a Councillor
- (b) May through the General Manager put a matter to a Council employee

8.2 However, a Councillor or Council employee to whom a matter is put is entitled to be given reasonable time, if required, to enable reference to be made to other persons or to documents. In this event, the matter may be answered directly to the person enquiring at a later time after such information has been researched and gained by a Councillor or Council employee.

8.3 The person must put every such matter directly, succinctly and without argument.

8.4 The Chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply or advice of a need to research information (in accordance with subclause 8.2) in response to a matter put to a Councillor or Council employee.

9. Expectations on how we interact with each other

9.1 In line Council's Statement of Business Ethic's Council expects that all submitters have a mutual obligation in observing the following principles:

- To provide accurate and reliable information
- To declare actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as you become aware of the conflict
- To act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with Council
- To act with moral conscious
- To at all times be respectful and courteous.

Date Amended: 2/02/2016
Date Adopted: 17/02/2014 Resolution: 9/2014



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10. Acts of Disorder

- 10.1** Community members who are deemed as having no regard for the principles outlined in clause 9 above or who insult, make personal reflections or impute improper motives to Council or Councillors, or do or say anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order, or exhibit any other behaviour deemed disorderly by the Council will be deemed to have committed an act of disorder.
- 10.2 Council reports are written by council officers and state the views of the applicants' proposal, community views and legal aspects and where appropriate, comments. Inflammatory, derogatory or derisive comments against a report writer or council officer will not be tolerated and will be deemed acts of disorder.
- 10.3** Failure to take direction from the Chairperson when a participant's time limit is reached or other forms of disruptive or disrespectful behaviour will be deemed an act of disorder.
- 10.3 Councillors and Council employees must, at all times, observe the provision of Council's *Code of Conduct*, as adopted.

11. How Disorder at a Community Forum May be Dealt With

- 11.1** If disorder occurs at a Community Forum, the Chairperson may adjourn the Forum for a period of not more than 15 minutes and leave the Chair. The Chairperson, on reassembling the Forum, must decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This subclause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the community as well as disorder arising from the conduct of Councillors.
- 11.2** A member of the community may be expelled from a Community Forum for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the Forum.
- 11.3 A Community member who fails to follow a direction from the Chairperson after successive requests at a Community Forum or over several Community Forums may be issued a formal warning. No more than two warnings will be issued following which subsequent requests to speak at Community Forums will be denied and Community Question/Statement Forms will not be accepted.

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12. Limits upon Acceptance of Community or Informal Question/Statement Forms

- 12.1 All contributions must be relevant to the business of the Council and/or the Shire. Acceptance of Question/Statement forms lies with the General Manager and the Mayor/Chairperson.
- 12.2 Information supplied on forms must not endorse commercial products or activities; solicit business or invade anyone's privacy.
- 12.3 Where a Form contains a substantial amount of inappropriate content, such as defamatory, abusive, offensive or threatening language (or casts adverse personal reflections on individuals) it will not be received nor dealt with. The sender will be notified of such decisions.
- 12.4 Matters which are subject to a Tender process, Expression of Interest, reports in a closed meeting in accordance with Section 10A (1)(2) of the Local Government Act or considered contrary to the public interest will not be accepted.
- 12.5 All topics for discussion must be submitted in advance detailing the statement/s to be made or question/s to be asked. Comments and questions will be limited to those notified and approved by Council by the submission deadline.
- 12.6 Questions/statements received that duplicate or are substantial the same as those submitted to a previous Community Forum will not be accepted.

13. Power to Remove Persons from a Community Forum

If a Councillor or a member of the community fails to leave the place where a Community Forum is being held:

- (a) Where the Council has authorised, through the adoption of these *Rules*, the person presiding at the Community Forum to exercise the power of expulsion, immediately after being directed by the person presiding to leave the Forum.
- (b) In the case of a neutral/independent Chairperson, the power of expulsion is to be exercised by the General Manager.

The Police will be notified to attend in order to Keep the Peace.

14. Inspection of the Record of Proceedings of the Community Forum

14.1 Everyone is entitled to inspect the current version of the following documents free of charge:

- (a) agendas of Community Forums; and
- (b) record of proceedings of Community Forums.

14.2 The documents may be inspected at the office of the Council during ordinary office hours or on Council's website.

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14.3 The Council must have copies of the documents available for taking away by anyone who asks for a copy.

15. Recording of Meetings of the Community Forum Prohibited

15.1 No component of the Community Forum will be electronically recorded. This includes but is not limited to the use of:

- Tape recording devices
- Video recording devices
- Computer Laptop/Notebook devices
- Mobile Telephone devices

15.2 A person who is found to be electronically recording any part of a Community Forum will be requested to cease the activity. In the event the person refuses to comply with a request to stop recording, the Forum will be adjourned by the Chairperson. At the end of the adjournment the Forum will resume, however if the person still refuses to comply the Forum will be declared closed.

16. Code of Conduct

Councillors and staff shall at all times comply with Council's adopted *Code of Conduct*.

17. Petition

A person may present a petition to the Community Forum. The Chairperson may, at their discretion, permit a spokesperson to detail the nature of the petition.

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Appendix B

Checklist for approval/rejection of a Question/Statement

**CHECKLIST FOR APPROVAL/REJECTION OF A
COMMUNITY FORUM QUESTION/STATEMENT**



Yes	No	A Community Forum Question/Statement Form is received
		<input type="radio"/> Was it received prior to 12noon on the Friday prior to the Community Forum? <i>If no - request is not accepted (unless discretion is granted due to exceptional circumstances eg: Technical issues)</i>
		<input type="radio"/> Was it made in writing on the prescribed Form? <i>Discretion permitted if not received on the prescribed form but contains the required information If not in writing - request is not accepted</i>
		<input type="radio"/> Has all the basic mandatory information been provided? Compulsory fields are: NAME ADDRESS PHONE TOPIC/SUBJECT MATTER
		<input type="radio"/> Has a substantial description of what's being spoken to been provided? <i>NO - reject - notification to be sent</i>
		<input type="radio"/> Is it a duplication or substantially the same as questions/statements previously submitted in the recent past? <i>NO - Proceed to Evaluation of the contents YES - reject - notification to be sent</i>

Date Amended: 2/02/2016
 Date Adopted: 17/02/2014 Resolution: 9/2014



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COMMUNITY FORUM GUIDELINES

**CHECKLIST FOR APPROVAL/REJECTION OF A
COMMUNITY FORUM QUESTION/STATEMENT**



Evaluation of Questions/Statements – Accept or Reject	
No	<p>Are the Statements made and/or Questions asked acceptable?</p> <p>Consider the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ relevant to the business of the Council and/or the Shire ▪ free of endorsements / doesn't solicit business ▪ not subject to confidentiality/privacy concerns – subject of a closed report ▪ is the information substantially true ▪ doesn't contain offensive, threatening or abusive language ▪ not canvassing for a tender or EOI ▪ not defamatory or containing adverse personal reflections. <p>If YES to all of the above accept If NO to any of the above reject – Notification to be sent</p>
Yes	

Date Amended: 2/02/2016
Date Adopted: 17/02/2014 Resolution: 9/2014



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