

From: [REDACTED]
To: [OLG BS Office of Local Government Mailbox](#)
Subject: Model Meeting Code Amendments
Date: Thursday, 27 February 2025 3:03:36 PM

ATTENTION: Council Governance Team

I refer to the consultation draft of the new Model Meeting Code as published on the OLG website.

As a member of the public and a ratepayer of Clarence Valley Council, I take an active interest in council matters and follow meetings closely.

My feedback on the proposed amendments is as follows:

7 MODES OF ADDRESS

7.1 Where they can, councillors and staff must stand when the mayor enters the chamber and when addressing the meeting.

I am opposed to this amendment as outdated and impractical.

While I understand the aim of this amendment is to "promote the dignity of the council chamber" and to ensure exchanges within the chamber are conducted in a more professional and respectful manner, this appears to be an excessively formal and old-fashioned approach.

From a practical point of view, our councillors currently use desk-mounted microphones for the livestreamed and recorded meetings. Standing to speak would, in my opinion, reduce sound quality and hamper the continuity and flow of the meeting.

There is also the consideration of preserving the dignity of any councillors or staff who may suffer physical injury or impairment. Requiring them to stand each time they address the meeting may present an unnecessary challenge or embarrassment.

This additional requirement is superfluous, given that it is the responsibility of the Chairperson to maintain a satisfactory standard of order and behaviour in the meeting at all times.

Otherwise, I am mostly pleased with the proposed changes, which I see as generally positive and, in some cases, necessary, to improve the standard of transparency and behaviour in council meetings. Particularly in our LGA, we have seen an unfortunate and regrettable deterioration in behavioural standards over recent council terms, especially from a minority of councillors.

There are several optional and discretionary items in the draft Model Meeting Code to be decided by individual councils. I will provide feedback on those items in due course when Clarence Valley Council's amended Code of Meeting Practice is exhibited locally for public consultation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my feedback.

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