

Model Meeting Code Amendments - Online Submission Form : Entry # 12617

1. Your Details

I would like my name and personal details to be treated as confidential:

I consent to my details being shared

Name:

Clr Dr Mila Kasby

Name of Organisation (If applicable):

The Hills Shire Council

Role/Position:

Councillor

Postal Address:

[REDACTED]

Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Email:

[REDACTED]

Which of the following best describes you?

Council Metro

2. Targeted Questions

2.2. Are there any other amendments you would suggest that will achieve these policy outcomes?

The OLG Model Meeting Code in section 5.35 should make it mandatory for Councils who already have the capacity to webcast meetings (the audio visual equipment is installed and in working order) to do so. The Hills Shire Council has consistently decided (via council resolution of the majority party) to provide residents with only the audio recording of each meeting, which is available on the website 3 days after the event.

Improved transparency and accessibility for residents would be achieved by standardising this procedure and making audiovisual webcasting of meetings mandatory across the board (as 9 out of 10 councils already do), especially those who already have the capability.

In addition, some councils make reforms to their Code of Meeting Practice that severely restrict community participation. As of midway through last term, The Hills Shire Council's Code of Meeting Conduct does not permit residents to speak at meetings on Notice of Motions (which are usually brought to council by a councillor on behalf of the community).

The Hills Shire Council Code states:

(Section 4.1: The Council will permit speakers for an agenda item (excluding Notices of Motion and Questions with Notice) listed on the business paper in accordance with this Code. Approved speakers will allow Councillors to hear oral submissions from members of the public on items of business being considered at the meeting Public Speakers may also be approved prior to extraordinary Council meetings and meetings of committees of the Council.)

The OLG code should mandate that residents have the right to participate/ speak on any item in the business paper including councillor Notice of Motions. This will remove the unjust attempt to silence residents who may hold view that differ from the

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majority of councillors.

In addition, the number of resident speakers permitted to speak on all council initiated items on the Agenda was reduced to 1 speaker for and 1 speaker against.

I would suggest better outcomes would be achieved if the OLG were to mandate a minimum number of speakers (>1) for and against to allow the public to make reasonable representations at Council meetings where the opportunity for residents to directly address the meeting has been reduced to an absolute minimum.

(Section 4.8 of The Hills Shire Council states: No more than one (1) speaker is to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the Council Meeting unless approved by the Mayor.)

3. General feedback

3.1. Please provide any other feedback on the proposed amendments.

Electronic petitions should be accepted by councils if they contain name, email and postcode. Stipulating that all petitions should have full name, address and be hand signed severely restricts the community to voice their collective concerns.

As of 2023 The Hills Shire Council decided not to accept electronic petitions from residents.

The OLG should carefully consider adding to the mandatory components of the Code of Meeting Practice to ensure all sections of the community can be fairly heard.

Thank you for the chance to comment.

Notes



Admin Notification (ID: 66d4f054bfdd8)

added February 28, 2025 at 3:56 pm

WordPress successfully passed the notification email to the sending server.