

Model Meeting Code Amendments - Online Submission Form : Entry # 12362

1. Your Details

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

I consent to my details being shared

Name:

Danielle Mulholland

Name of Organisation (If applicable):

Kyogle Council

Role/Position:

Mayor

Postal Address:

[REDACTED]

Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Email:

[REDACTED]

Which of the following best describes you?

Council Rural

2. Targeted Questions

2.1. Will the proposed amendments made in the consultation draft of the Model Meeting Code achieve the policy outcomes identified in the paper?

The de-politicisation of GM's is a step in the right direction. Some of the proposed reforms, are not conducive to good leadership and team building.

Preventing councils from holding private councillor briefing sessions is counterintuitive to informed decision making. Such sessions are not to hide issues from the public but to ensure that Councillors can openly and as often as they please, ask questions about current and emerging issues. These issues come to Council anyway so any inference that these workshops are being used to hide information from the general public is insulting.

Requiring information considered at closed meetings to be made public after it ceases to be confidential – the announcement of the decision is announced once Council comes out of confidential and this is covered by the code of meeting practice already. But disclosing all information considered in confidential defeats the purpose of going into confidential – which is primarily to protect the identities of individuals or commercial operations. Implementing this amendment removes that provision and can be open to abuse.

Requiring councils to give reasons when making decisions on planning matters that depart from staff recommendations – this is not why we are elected. Under s232 of the LG Act, Councillors are elected by their ratepayers to represent them. We are not there to represent special interests, party politics or any other influencers. Our reasons are disclosed during the debate. You are effectively removing the autonomy of Councils and becoming more prescriptive in how they should operate. If you want to pull the "local government is just an arm of the state government" card, you can pay us according to state government

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employee remuneration standards. If you want us to undertake a role which is essentially community service, we must have the autonomy to make our own decisions unless those decisions are based on any premise other than the best outcomes possible for our communities – the ones we serve.

Expanding the powers of the mayor to expel councillors from meetings for acts of disorder – we already have that power under the Code of meeting practice.

Requiring councillors to stand when the mayor enters and when addressing the meeting – breeds resentment and is not conducive to developing a collaborative, cooperative Council that is working in the best interests of its communities.

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

Absolutely. Please feel free to contact me for my suggestions.

2.3. Will the proposed amendments have any unintended consequences?

Please see above.

2.4. Are there any other amendments the Government should consider?

Remuneration of Councillors

Strengthening the Code of Conduct so that it actually has teeth. Councillors sometimes do the wrong thing. A Code of Conduct complaint has become a badge of honour for some. Be sensible. Sometimes the paddle is needed.

Notes



Admin Notification (ID: 66d4f054bfdd8)

added January 1, 2025 at 10:19 pm

WordPress successfully passed the notification email to the sending server.