
MEDIA RELEASE

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HAVE YOUR SAY ON COUNCIL MEETING CODE AND COUNCILLOR TRAINING

The Office of Local Government is reminding council staff and councillors as well as members of the community to have their say on key documents guiding standards for council meetings and councillor training and development in NSW.

The draft *Model Code of Meeting Practice* and *Councillor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines* were released for public comment in December as part of the NSW Government's commitment to strengthening council integrity and performance.

The *Model Code of Meeting Practice* sets out for the first time a uniform set of meeting rules for councils across the State to help ensure more accessible, orderly, effective and efficient meetings.

It adopts principles to ensure meetings are transparent, informed, inclusive, respectful and effective.

The draft code is focused on improving transparency and public involvement in council meetings and the decision making process. Proposed measures include public forums before ordinary council meetings where local residents can address councillors and the mandatory webcasting of council meetings.

Once finalised and implemented, councils will have six months to adopt a code of meeting practice based on the new requirements.

Draft *Councillor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines*, also on exhibition, have been designed to ensure mayors and councillors are able to perform their roles effectively.

Councils will be required to deliver induction training within six months of an election and an ongoing professional development program over the term to help councillors acquire and maintain the necessary knowledge and skills.

The guidelines ensure that all mayors and councillors across the State have access to induction and professional development training and that programs meet a consistent benchmark.

Councils would be required to publish reports on their websites of councillor attendance and participation in the training.

The consultation drafts of the *Model Code of Meeting Practice* and *Councillor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines* are available at www.olg.nsw.gov.au.

Submissions should be emailed to olg@olg.nsw.gov.au by COB Friday 16 March 2018.

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