

Model Meeting Code Amendments - Online Submission Form : Entry # 12611

1. Your Details

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

I consent to my details being shared

Name:

Stephen Lesslie

Role/Position:

former Mayor and Councillor Drummoyne Municipal Council; former Mayor and Councillor Lithgow city Council

Postal Address:

[REDACTED]

Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Email:

[REDACTED]

Which of the following best describes you?

Member of the public

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?

Abolition of briefing session is essential.

Used extensively to gain prior agreement and to avoid making decisions, in public, on difficult or unpopular matters.

3.3 Calling Extraordinary Council meetings. Agree it should be assumed the Mayor would be able to find a second Councillor.

3.23 Agree with the deletion of this Statement of Ethical Considerations. Councillors have made this oath and it is insulting to keep including this on the business paper.

7.1 Standing when speaking in debate or moving points of order is essential.

With ipads and computers now on desks some councillors simply read speeches which may have been written by others.

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

10.17 Give the Mayor the authority to allow both foreshadowed motions and motions on "Matters arising" – see below

2.3. Will the proposed amendments have any unintended consequences?

4.1 Disagree, Public forums should only be held prior to Council meetings and Extraordinary Council meetings.

Committee meeting decisions are public documents and these decisions need to be ratified at the council meeting. Members of the public can address their concerns before the decision is ratified by the full council.

7.1 Disagree with the requirement to stand when the Mayor enters the room.

Confusing. The Mayor may stop to talk with fellow Councillors or chat with members of the public. Would be in breach too

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often and becomes embarrassing if enforced.

10.13 Disagree. An amendment may be trivial or substantive.

Better to give the Mayor the ability to allow debate on both the amendment and the motion simultaneously. A Councillor could say "I wish to speak against the amendment and in favour of the motion" or any other combination. If the amendment is trivial the Mayor can put it quickly and allow debate to continue smoothly.

10.17 Disagree. a foreshadowed motion is sometimes essential.

For example: A motion is being debated to appoint two councillors as representatives to an external committee. It would not be possible to include the names of the Councillors as an amendment because (a) the motion might be lost (b) more than two Councillors might want to be on the committee. (c) a councillor might want to vote against the motion but still want to be on the committee if carried. The only appropriate way to deal with this is to give the Mayor the power to allow a foreshadowed motion or "a matter arising" to select the two councillors should the motion be carried.

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

10.18 Include a statement that the "right of reply" does not allow the mover to introduce new matter into the debate. Clearly this is undemocratic as it prevents all other councillors from responding to this new material.

3. General feedback

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

Between 1977 and 2024 I have served as a Councillor (and for two separate terms Mayor) for 24 years in both metropolitan and regional councils. Should you believe my background would be helpful I would be happy to give the OLG my thoughts on this subject.

Stephen Lesslie

Notes



Admin Notification (ID: 66d4f054bfdd8)

added February 28, 2025 at 11:54 am

WordPress successfully passed the notification email to the sending server.