

## Model Meeting Code Amendments - Online Submission Form : Entry # 12602

### 1. Your Details

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

I consent to my details being shared

Name:

Kylie Smith

Name of Organisation (If applicable):

Cobar Shire Council

Role/Position:

Director Coporate and Community Services

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?**

We do not believe that they will achieve the outcomes and believe that that the current code has been reviewed many times with the current version working well.

Council considered the changes and consequences at its February meeting with the feed back adopted contained in item 2.3.

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

Nil

**2.3. Will the proposed amendments have any unintended consequences?**

Councillor Misbehaviour in Public Office and Privileges Committee

In the spirit of minimising complaints needing further action by the Office of Local Government or a Privileges Committee and increasing public transparency, that the Council (whoever has the accused Councillor) vote on any conduct allegation submitted to Council and whether it be referred on to a Privileges Committee or investigation by the Office of Local Government.

Council does not support the suggestion that the Privileges Committee process would be paid for by either individual councillors or their councils. If a councillor is found to breach the code they should pay for the process. Rural councils shouldn't have to have another cost put on them when budgets are so tight.

## Model Meeting Code Amendments - Online Submission Form : Entry # 12602

Standing when Mayor enters and addressing the meeting

Council is not supportive of the concept of standing on ceremony and formality at meetings limiting participation by Councillors and elevating the Mayor above the current accepted, first among equals position. Council meetings should have order and process ensuing that the position of Mayor is treated with the respect it deserves without unrequired excessive formality. Council meetings need to find a balance to remain current and encourage the next generations to participate and take an interest. Meeting practice shouldn't be burdensome and have unnecessary pomp that detracts from the real reason we are there, to help our communities.

Banning Briefing Sessions

Retain and support the practice of workshops and briefing sessions under the current practices as an opportunity to enhance understanding not decision making as is currently the case. As meeting procedure is very formal, councillors have limited opportunity to understand the issues under consideration.

Adding more work for councillors in rural and remote communities by increasing the time a council meeting will take, or juggling onerous committee meetings to have the background they need to make an informed decision on matters is another step backward in encouraging more participation in the future.

It shouldn't be forgotten that councillors are elected, and as such, the community has provided a mandate to make decisions on the behalf of Council.

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

The current code is working well and we propose no changes.

## 3. General feedback

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

Following feedback resolved on 27 Feb 2025 by Cobar Shire Council.

Councillor Misbehaviour in Public Office and Privileges Committee

In the spirit of minimising complaints needing further action by the Office of Local Government or a Privileges Committee and increasing public transparency, that the Council (whoever has the accused Councillor) vote on any conduct allegation submitted to Council and whether it be referred on to a Privileges Committee or investigation by the Office of Local Government.

Council does not support the suggestion that the Privileges Committee process would be paid for by either individual councillors or their councils. If a councillor is found to breach the code they should pay for the process. Rural councils shouldn't have to have another cost put on them when budgets are so tight.

Standing when Mayor enters and addressing the meeting

Council is not supportive of the concept of standing on ceremony and formality at meetings limiting participation by Councillors and elevating the Mayor above the current accepted, first among equals position. Council meetings should have order and process ensuing that the position of Mayor is treated with the respect it deserves without unrequired excessive formality. Council meetings need to find a balance to remain current and encourage the next generations to participate and take an interest. Meeting practice shouldn't be burdensome and have unnecessary pomp that detracts from the real reason we are there, to help our communities.

Banning Briefing Sessions

Retain and support the practice of workshops and briefing sessions under the current practices as an opportunity to enhance understanding not decision making as is currently the case. As meeting procedure is very formal, councillors have limited opportunity to understand the issues under consideration.

Adding more work for councillors in rural and remote communities by increasing the time a council meeting will take, or juggling onerous committee meetings to have the background they need to make an informed decision on matters is another step backward in encouraging more participation in the future.

It shouldn't be forgotten that councillors are elected, and as such, the community has provided a mandate to make decisions on the behalf of Council.

**Notes****Admin Notification (ID: 66d4f054bfdd8)**

added February 28, 2025 at 8:22 am

WordPress successfully passed the notification email to the sending server.