



## Council Meeting - Public Question Time

The Council of the Shire of Buloke has introduced a Public Question Time segment to each Ordinary Council Meeting. The segment is designed to provide an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions on municipal issues and receive responses from Councillors and Officers.

The aim of Public Question Time is to provide an improved opportunity for the public to:

- (a) Ask questions about Council actions and decisions;
- (b) Enquire about the attitude of Council, or a particular Councillor, on specific municipal matters; and
- (c) Efficiently obtain timely information and answers to simple questions without the need for reports and correspondence.

The operation of Public Question Time is set out in Council's Meeting Local Law and is summarized on the back of this form.

Date:	
Name:	
Address:	Street:
	Town: <span style="float: right;">Post Code:</span>
Telephone:	Home: <span style="float: right;">Mobile:</span>
Email:	
Question:	

**Please word your question carefully as it will be included in the minutes of the meeting exactly as it is written.**

**Please note that Public Question Time does not substitute for appeal and review systems, formal business procedures, formal Council decisions and other legal processes required for the proper transaction of business with the Buloke Shire Council.**

**Privacy Statement:** The information requested on this form is for the primary purpose of collection, use and storage by Council for accurate capture of your question, ensuring appropriate action is taken and to provide feedback and answers to questions. Council will only use this information for the primary purpose specified on this form. The resident understands that if you choose to ask a question your name and address will be read to the meeting. Details such as your telephone number and email address will not be disclosed without your prior consent.

## Operation of Public Question Time

1. All questions to be asked must be submitted in writing through completion of this form.
2. Completed forms must be submitted prior to the commencement time of the monthly Ordinary Council Meeting. Ordinary Meetings of Council commence at 7:30pm. Completed forms submitted by mail will not be accepted unless received at least 1 working day before the day of the meeting. Forms may be submitted by fax on 03 5493 7786, or by email at [ea@buloke.vic.gov.au](mailto:ea@buloke.vic.gov.au), up to 4:00pm on the day of the meeting.  
  
Forms lodged at the meeting venue must be handed to the Chief Executive Officer or placed in the question box provided at the meeting venue.
3. The presentation and answering of questions will occur in accord with the printed agenda for the meeting unless a motion is passed to vary the order of items on the agenda.
4. Questions will be directed to the Chair of the Meeting, who will redirect the questions as required.
5. All questions submitted to the meeting are reviewed by the Chair of the Meeting. The Chair of the Meeting may determine not to allow a question to be admitted to the meeting if in his or her opinion the question:
  - (a) Is beyond Council's powers;
  - (b) Is defamatory, indecent, abusive, or objectionable in language or substance;
  - (c) Is repetitive of a question already answered (whether at the same meeting or an earlier meeting);
  - (d) Is asked to embarrass a Councillor or member of Council staff;
  - (e) Is about matter for which the meeting would normally be closed (Section 89(2) Local Government Act);
  - (f) Is prejudicial to the Council or any other person if answered;
  - (g) Is about the personal view or actions of an individual Councillor or Officer; and
  - (h) Is about a matter that is the subject of negotiation, litigation or commercial interest/advantage.
6. The Chair of the Meeting has the right to refuse to receive or answer any question, or to take the question on notice. Any questions taken on notice will be responded to in writing within five working days after the meeting.
7. If the Chair of the Meeting determines that a question is not to be admitted to the meeting he or she will advise the meeting accordingly.
8. When the Chair of the Meeting announces Public Question Time the Chief Executive Officer will read name of the questioner and the question to the meeting.
9. On reading the question the Chief executive Officer will ask if the questioner is present. If the questioner is not present the Chief Executive Officer will advise that a response will be supplied in writing.
10. If the questioner is present, the Chief Executive Officer will answer the question or refer it to a Councillor or Council Officer to answer. Responses are limited to a maximum of two minutes.
11. A Councillor, the Chief executive Officer, or member of staff answering a question may, through the Chair of the Meeting:
  - (a) Seek clarification of the question from the person who submitted it;
  - (b) Seek assistance of another person in answering the question; and
  - (c) Defer answering the question, so that the answer may be researched and a written response be provided within ten (10) working days following the meeting (the question thereby being taken on notice).
12. Following the response the Chair of the Meeting may ask the questioner if the answer provided responded to the question. The person asking the question will have the right to make a brief statement in response, keeping comments to a maximum of one minute.
13. Once this process has been completed there will be no further discussion.
14. The number of questions that any one person may ask shall be limited to two.
15. The number of questions that may be asked on any one issue shall be limited to two. Should a large number of persons be present in relation to one issue, it would be advantageous to appoint a spokesperson on behalf of the group to present the questions.
16. No debate on or discussion of a question or an answer by a member of the public will be permitted by the Chair of the Meeting other than for the purposes of clarification.
17. A Councillor may foreshadow a motion as part of their answer to a question.
18. It is essential that the session be conducted in an orderly manner, and participants are asked to keep this in mind when making statements and directing questions.

**Privacy Statement:** The information requested on this form is for the primary purpose of collection, use and storage by Council for accurate capture of your question, ensuring appropriate action is taken and to provide feedback and answers to questions. Council will only use this information for the primary purpose specified on this form. The resident understands that if you choose to ask a question your name and address will be read to the meeting. Details such as your telephone number and email address will not be disclosed without your prior consent.