

## Public Question Time – Buloke Shire Council Meetings

The Buloke Shire Council offers the public an opportunity to be involved in Council meetings through Public Question Time.

This agenda item enables the public to address questions to Councillors regarding municipal issues.

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

- As questions about Council actions and decisions;
- Enquire about the attitude of Council, or a particular Councillors, on a specific municipal matter/s; and
- Efficiently obtain timely information and answers to simple questions without the need for reports and correspondence.

Any question must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive Officer (or other person authorized for this purpose by the Chief Executive Officer) by no later than 1:00pm on the day of the Council Meeting using only the appropriate form.

Questions and answers must be as brief as possible, and must not exceed 2 minutes in duration. No debate or discussion of a question or an answer is permitted other than for the purposes of clarification.

The provision of Public Question Time is set out in full, within the Buloke Shire Council's Governance Rules and is attached to the bottom of this form, including the criteria for which the Chairperson (Mayor) will determine the question appropriate (or not) for inclusion within the meeting.

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.

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### **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.*

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## Form: Public Question Time – Council Meeting

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|-------------------------|----------------|--|------------------------|--|
| <b>Date:</b>            |                |  |                        |  |
| <b>Name:</b>            |                |  |                        |  |
| <b>Council Meeting:</b> |                |  |                        |  |
| <b>Address</b>          | <b>Street:</b> |  |                        |  |
|                         | <b>Town:</b>   |  | <b>Postcode:</b>       |  |
| <b>Telephone:</b>       | <b>Mobile:</b> |  | <b>Business Hours:</b> |  |
| <b>Email Address:</b>   |                |  |                        |  |
| <b>Question:</b>        |                |  |                        |  |



## **THE OPERATION OF PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

### **BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL GOVERNANCE RULES 2022**

#### **102. Public question time**

- 1) There must be a question time at every meeting to enable members of the public present in the gallery to address questions to Councillors.
- 2) Question time may be limited in duration and answers to individual questions may be limited at the discretion of the Chairperson.
- 3) No motions can be moved during question time.
- 4) A Councillor may foreshadow a motion as part of their response to a question during question time but cannot move the motion.
- 5) Any question must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive Officer (or other person authorised for this purpose by the Chief Executive Officer) by 1.00pm on the day of the meeting using the appropriate form.
- 6) The question should only be read to the meeting if the Chairperson has determined that the question:
  - a) does not relate to a matter of the type described in section 66 of the Act;
  - b) does not relate to a matter in respect of which the Council has no power;
  - c) is not defamatory, indecent, abusive, or objectionable in language or substance;
  - d) is not repetitive of a question already answered (whether at the same meeting or an earlier meeting); and
  - e) is not asked to embarrass a Councillor or member of Council staff.
- 7) If the Chairperson has determined that the question shall not be read to the meeting:
  - f) the meeting must be advised accordingly; and
  - g) the question shall be available to Councillors upon request.
- 8) The Chief Executive Officer must read to the meeting the name of the person who has submitted a question.



- 9) The Chief Executive Officer must read the text of the question and the Chairperson may then direct that the question be answered by a nominated Councillor or member of Council staff.
- 10) Questions and answers must be as brief as possible, and must not exceed 2 minutes in duration.
- 11) No debate or discussion of a question or an answer is permitted other than for the purposes of clarification.
- 12) A Councillor or member of staff nominated to answer a question may:
  - 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 provided within 10 working days following the meeting (the question thereby being taken on notice).

## **SCHEDULE 2 – QUESTIONS FROM THE GALLERY**

### **Council meeting question time**

- 1) Council sets aside times at its Council meetings to consider written questions submitted by the public. Members of the public who are present at the meeting are permitted to prepare in writing up to 2 questions on any Council matter.
- 2) Members of the public may submit questions by 1.00pm on the day of the meeting on the form provided. In most cases, an answer will be given at the meeting.
- 3) Sometimes it may be indicated that further time is required to research an answer. In such cases, the relevant officer will advise the person when an answer will be provided.
- 4) Questions will not be read out and answered if the Chairperson has determined that the relevant question relates to:
  - a) personnel matters
  - b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer
  - c) industrial matters



- d) contractual matters
  - e) proposed developments
  - f) legal advice
  - g) matters affecting the security of Council property
  - h) any other matter which Council considers would prejudice it or any person
  - i) matters which may disadvantage Council or any person Or is:
  - j) defamatory, indecent, abusive or objectionable in language or substance
  - k) repetitive of a question already answered (whether at the same or an earlier meeting)
  - l) asked to embarrass an Officer or Councillor.
- 5) No debate or discussion of questions or answers shall be permitted and all questions and answers shall be as brief as possible.