

# INFORMAL COUNCIL MEETINGS POLICY

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## Policy Statement

The Town's informal (non-statutory) Council meeting structure is supported by detailed procedures to ensure the meetings run efficiently and effectively. Providing this clarity enables elected members to:

- (a) Stay focussed on strategic matters that are aligned to achieving community aspirations;
- (b) Clarify areas of uncertainty and ask questions; and
- (c) Request further information that assists them to become fully informed before making formal decisions.

The policy has been developed in line with the principles of good governance and guidance detailed in the [Department of Local Government Sport and Cultural Industries Operational Guideline 05 – Council Forums](#)

## Policy Details

Informal Council meetings include:

1. Strategic Workshops (Confidential)
2. Workshops
3. Agenda Forums

### **1.1 Strategic Workshops (Confidential)**

These workshops provide the opportunity for elected members to discuss ideas and explore concepts relevant to achieving the community's strategic objectives. The CEO and staff attend. They ascertain what further research or information may be needed to determine if the matter will proceed to Council for a formal decision.

These workshops are not open to the public. This enables the opportunity for creativity to flow and ideas to be explored. Some things discussed at these workshops may eventuate in a Council report and formal decision; others may not.

Strategic Workshops generally involve projects or matters that are in the early planning stages. There is further work needed to get them to a point where it can be decided whether or not they will proceed to Council for a formal decision.

### 1.1.1 Roles and responsibilities

Elected Members	CEO
Disclose any conflicts of interest	Disclose any conflicts of interest
Remain focussed on strategic matters	Seek input from Elected Members as to the research and further information required that may culminate in a Council report
Explore ideas and concepts or opportunities for advocacy that relate to strategic objectives	Provide Council with correct/adequate information to enable ideas/concepts to be fully explored
Observe appropriate behaviours and follow the guidance provided in the General Procedures for Strategic Workshops	Ensure the scope is made clear of what is required for Council to determine if the matter will progress
Maintain confidentiality about matters discussed	Provide presentations to assist Council

## 1.2 Workshops

From time to time an informal workshop may be convened to discuss specific issues. The purpose of workshops is to enable Council to gain a better understanding of these issues.

No formal decisions are made at workshops.

Depending on the subject matter, these workshops may, or may not, be open to the public.

### 1.2.1 Roles and responsibilities

Elected Members	CEO
Disclose any conflicts of interest	Disclose any conflicts of interest
Observe appropriate behaviours and follow the guidance provided in the General Procedures for Workshops	Provide Elected Members with correct/adequate information, including presentations, to assist them to gain an understanding of specific issues

### 1.3 Agenda Forums

These meetings present the draft OCM agenda to elected members. They give an opportunity for elected members to gain maximum knowledge by asking questions about officer's reports; receiving further information or presentations; or requesting specific information. In this way, elected members can be fully informed before the OCM where formal decisions are made.

No formal decisions are made at these forums.

The report content as listed on a draft OCM agenda presented to an Agenda Forum may change after the forum. Additionally, some items may be included on a final OCM agenda that are not considered at an Agenda Forum and go straight to Council for a decision.

Agenda forums are open to the public.

#### 1.3.1 Roles and responsibilities

Elected Members	CEO
Disclose any conflicts of interest	Disclose any conflicts of interest
Ask questions, request further information about draft OCM agenda items	Provide a draft OCM agenda for Council to consider prior to Agenda Forums
Observe appropriate behaviours and follow the guidance provided in the General Procedures for Agenda Forums	Provide Elected Members with correct/adequate information, including presentations, to assist them to become fully informed
Maintain confidentiality about matters where it is intended that the OCM will be closed to the public (pursuant to s.5.23 LGA) when the matter is considered by Council at a formal meeting	Gather details of any further information Elected Members require and provide either directly to the particular Elected Member requesting information (cc'ing all others), or included in the final OCM report

#### Definitions

**CEO** means Chief Executive Officer of the Town of Mosman Park

**LGA** means *Local Government Act 1995*

**Agenda Forum** means a non-statutory meeting held by Council to ask questions, receive presentations and seek clarity on officer reports presented in a draft OCM agenda.

**OCM** means an Ordinary Council Meeting pursuant to s.5.3 of the *Local Government Act 1995*

**Strategic Workshop** means a non-statutory meeting held by Council to provide input and guidance on the development of matters that have a strategic impact and/or relate to the delivery of the Town’s Strategic Community Plan.

**Town** means the Town of Mosman Park

**Workshop** means any other non-statutory meeting of Council, which may be called from time to time, for the purpose of raising and discussing matters that are issue-specific with strategic and/or community significance.

### Governance References

Statutory Compliance	Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021 Town of Mosman Park Code of Conduct (Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates) 2021 (under development)
Council/Organisational Compliance	Department of Local Government Sport and Cultural Industries Operational Guideline 05 – Council Forums – January 2004 General Procedures for Strategic Workshops General Procedures for Workshops General Procedures for Agenda Forums

### Policy Administration

Directorate:		Officer title:
Executive Services		Chief Executive Chief
Next Review		Review Cycle
2021		Bi-ennial
Version	Date	Ref
1	22 August 2017	OCM-137-2017
2	23 February 2021	OCM-025-2021
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