

Shire of Victoria Plains – Public question time submission



Questions should be addressed to the Presiding Member, and submitted to the Chief Executive Officer.

Questions can be submitted by –

- e-mailing this form or a Word document to reception@victoriaplains.wa.gov.au, or
- hand delivering this form to the Shire's administration office at 28 Cavell Street, Calingiri, by midday the day prior to the relevant council or committee meeting.

Questions handed in after that time may be taken as being without notice, and answered in writing after the meeting.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Contact No. _____

Are you an elector or resident of the Shire? Yes _____ No _____

Question 1 – Agenda Item No. that the question relates to – _____

Question 2 – Agenda Item No. that the question relates to – _____

Author's signature _____

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|---|--|----------|--|-----|
| OFFICE USE – after meeting to Records Officer for registration and response | | | | |
| Noted in Meeting minutes of | | File No. | | ICR |

PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The *Local Government Act 1995* requires that a minimum of 15 minutes be provided at council meetings for public question time.

Public question time is early in the meeting as required by the Act. This allows questions to be asked before business is dealt with and also smooth running of the business part of the meeting. The procedure for asking a question is outlined below.

Presenting a question

1. Questions should be addressed to the Presiding Member, and submitted in writing to the Chief Executive Officer by midday the business day prior to the meeting.
2. Priority will be given to those questions relating to a matter on the Agenda before the meeting. General questions will only be addressed if time permits.
3. The length of question, including any background information, should not exceed 150 words.
4. Questions are limited to 2 per person, and with a total time limit of 2 minutes per speaker. Multiple parts to a question are considered separate questions.
5. Questions are to be directed to the Presiding Member, not to any other person.
6. Questions must be related to issues pertaining to the Shire.
7. Questions regarding personal affairs or opinions, or to information or perceptions not relating directly to Shire business will be refused.
8. Retain your own copy of the question/s to be read aloud at the meeting.
9. No late documentation or item is to be brought into the meeting for distribution without prior arrangement with the CEO.

Managing the questions

10. The CEO is to compile the same or similar questions submitted with notice, and provide a single response.
11. A question without notice at the meeting is to be written on the form available at the meeting so that the exact wording of the question is recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Staff will be made available to assist in wording the question if desired.
12. A timer may be activated at the beginning of each person's time period and the Presiding Member will require questioners to conclude after 2 minutes.
13. Those asking questions are to state their name, address and the item number to which they are referring, and then read the question. Staff will have prepared brief notes for written questions to enable an informed response to be given at the meeting.
14. When specifically requested, questioner's details may be kept private.
15. Questions without notice or multiple parts to a question will be answered in the order they are asked to a maximum of 2.
16. Should time permit, after all present have had an opportunity to ask a question, additional questions may be considered.
17. Where a question raises a significant issue not addressed in the staff report, and which cannot be adequately responded to, the meeting will need to consider whether the item should be held over or referred back for further consideration. In making this decision, the meeting will take account of statutory deadlines and other implications if appropriate.

Responding to the questions

18. The order in which questions are to be addressed is –
 - a) questions with notice relating to matters within that meeting's agenda;
 - b) questions with notice relating to other matters;
 - c) questions without notice relating to matters within that meeting's agenda; then
 - d) questions without notice relating to other matters.
19. Matters considered confidential under section 5.23 of the Act will not be addressed other than to advise of such.
20. Written questions submitted by a person not present at the meeting may be declined, and dealt with as correspondence.
21. Responses will be provided in reasonable detail, but in order to permit as many questions as possible, will be concise and to the point. Should greater detail be required, this should be notified to the Shire after the meeting.
22. Questions without notice will only be responded to at the meeting if they are simple. Otherwise they will be taken on notice and will be answered in writing after the meeting and the response included in the agenda of the next council meeting.
23. The meeting will not debate nor discuss the question raised with the questioner. Discussion or debate directly with an elected member or employee, or within the gallery is not permitted.

PLEASE NOTE Members of the public should note that no action should be taken on any item discussed at a council meeting prior to written advice on the resolution of council being received.