

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC QUESTION TIME



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

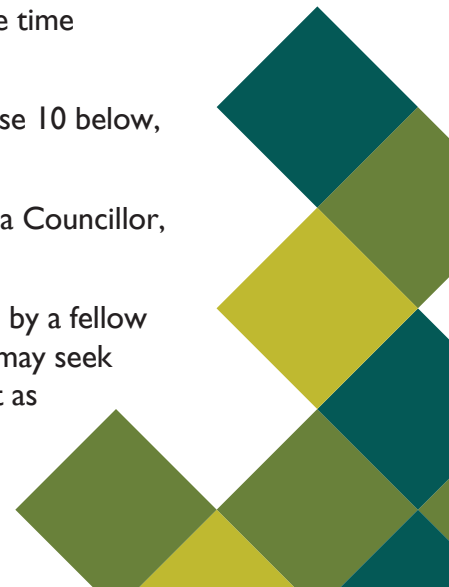
BENTLEIGH
BENTLEIGH EAST
BRIGHTON EAST
CARNEGIE
CAULFIELD
ELSTERNWICK
GARDENVALE
GLEN HUNTLY
MCKINNON
MURRUMBEENA
ORMOND
ST KILDA EAST

SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONS

1. Questions should be submitted not later than 12 noon on the business day preceding the day of the Ordinary Council Meeting. Questions should be clearly headed "Public Question" and may be submitted to the Council by email (publicquestions@gleneira.vic.gov.au), fax (9524 3358), mail, or personal delivery or Internet (website).
2. Questions must bear the questioner's printed name and address, the date, and a landline phone number at which the questioner may be contacted for verification. Questions exceeding 150 words will not be accepted.
3. Each person may submit up to a maximum of two questions to any one Ordinary Council Meeting. If more than two questions are received from any one person, only the first two will be processed in accordance with the Local Law.

RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS

4. If the person asking the question is present, the Chief Executive Officer or nominee will read the question to the meeting. If the person submitting the question is not present, the question will not be read to the Meeting but will be answered in the mode that it was received (eg. mail or email).
5. The Chief Executive Officer or another officer designated by him/her will:
 - a) examine the questions;
 - b) recommend to the Chairperson for the Chairperson's decision any questions deemed to be inappropriate having regard to clause 12 below; and
 - c) read the questions to the Meeting.
6. The Chairperson may decide to either:
 - a) personally answer the question or
 - b) refer the question to the appropriate Councillor or
 - c) refer the question to the appropriate officer or
 - d) advise that the question is taken on notice and that a written response will be sent
7. Responses provided under clause 6(d) above will be given within a reasonable time (usually in less than ten working days).
8. All questions and answers shall be as brief as possible and, subject to clause 10 below, no discussion on the questions and answers will be allowed.
9. Where a question is asked about an individual Councillor in their capacity as a Councillor, the question may be redirected to the Councillor concerned.
10. Where a Councillor disagrees with, or is aggrieved by the response provided by a fellow Councillor appointed by the Chairperson to answer the question, he or she may seek leave of the Chairperson to make an appropriate brief explanatory statement as provided for under the Right to make a statement provisions of clause 238 of the Local Law.



11. The time for Public Question time shall be no longer than fifteen minutes unless determined otherwise by the Chairperson having regard to the other business on the agenda. In the event of questions not being dealt with during the time allowed, all such questions shall be taken on notice as per clause 6(d) for separate reply.
12. The Minutes will record questions (unless ruled inappropriate under clause 14). They will also record any answers which are given at the Meeting.
13. A report will be submitted to a public Council Meeting quarterly showing the numbers of questions asked, number ruled inadmissible, number answered at the Meeting and time taken to reply to questions taken on notice.

RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS

14. A question may be deemed inappropriate upon the grounds that it:
 - a) relates to a matter ultra vires; or
 - b) does not relate to the business of Council or otherwise relates to a Councillor or staff member other than in their Council capacity; or
 - c) is defamatory, indecent, may constitute discrimination, vilification, harassment or may place the Council at risk of legal action;
 - d) refers to a matter which would, if answered, breach any provision of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* or the Confidentiality provisions of the *Local Government Act*; or
 - e) exceeds 150 words.
15. The Chairperson will make the final decision as to those questions deemed inappropriate under clause 14.
16. Where a question is deemed inappropriate by the Chairperson, the Chief Executive Officer or designated officer shall read to the meeting only the name and suburb of the person and the ground under clause 14 on which the question was ruled inappropriate.

