

Public participation at Ordinary Council Meetings is subject to the discretion of the Chairperson, available if you wish to ask a question or make a statement relating to Council's role, functions or business.

As a result of the impact of COVID-19, public participation may not be available at all Council meetings. Council will be guided by the Department of Health and Human Services restrictions and in accordance with the temporary measures in place under the *Local Government Act 2020*. Information will be placed on each agenda page of Council's website at the following link <https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/about-council/meetings-and-agendas/council-agendas-and-minutes>

These guidelines for Public Participation at Ordinary Council Meetings (**the Guidelines**) inform and are to be read in conjunction with the Governance Rules and provide the public with a means of participating in Ordinary Council Meetings in addition to the submission of written public questions to Council under the Governance Rules.

The process in these Guidelines provides the local community with an informal forum to ask questions or make statements relating to Council's role, functions or business.

If the question or statement you are asking is not suitable for this format, you are invited to submit a written public question under the Governance Rules or contact Council's Customer Service Centre on mail@gleneira.vic.gov.au or by telephone 9524 3333.

Process to participate in an ordinary council meeting

A. Registration

1. Participants should register by completing the form provided in the Council Chamber and submitting the form prior to commencement of the Ordinary Council Meeting or as soon as possible thereafter. Forms will be available from 7 p.m. on the day of the Ordinary Council Meeting.
2. The forms will be numbered, and speakers will normally be taken in order of registration (first come, first served), subject to the Chairperson's discretion to alter the order in which speakers will be taken.
3. There will be a limit of one speaker per registration.
4. The Chairperson or Chief Executive Officer shall read all proposed questions/statements in advance to ensure they are not inappropriate. A proposed question/statement is deemed inappropriate if it falls within any of the criteria set out under paragraph 10 (a) to (e) below.
5. Where a proposed question or statement is deemed inappropriate by the Chairperson or Chief Executive Officer under paragraph 4, then the Chairperson or Chief Executive Officer may read to the Ordinary Council Meeting only the name and suburb of the person asking the proposed question or making the proposed statement and the ground under paragraph 10 upon which the question or statement was deemed inappropriate.

B. Public Participation Process

6. The Chairperson will manage the public participation process at his or her discretion and in accordance with these Guidelines.
7. At a convenient point in the Ordinary Council Meeting, the Chairperson may announce the commencement of public participation under the Governance Rules.

8. Following the commencement of public participation under paragraph 7 above, the Chairperson may invite participants to speak in the order detailed in paragraph 2.
9. Conduct at an Ordinary Council Meeting must be professional and courteous at all times. Relevant provisions of the Governance Rules and Council Meeting Procedure Local Law 2019 continue to apply to improper or disorderly conduct during an Ordinary Council Meeting.
10. A question may be deemed inappropriate on the ground or grounds that it:-
 - (a) relates to matters that are outside the role, functions or business of Council; 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 considered to be defamatory, indecent, inappropriate or may constitute discrimination, vilification, harassment, or may place Council or the participant at risk of legal action; or
 - (d) if answered could constitute a breach of:
 - i. the **Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)**; or
 - ii. the confidentiality provisions or any other provision of the **Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)**; or
 - iii. any other relevant legislation.
 - (e) relates to an electoral matter during an election period.
11. The Chairperson may direct a participant not to speak on nor continue to speak on any topic which the Chairperson considers is set out in paragraph 10(a) to (e) above.
12. Participants must comply with a direction of the Chairperson.
13. The Chairperson may request participants to ask one (1) question or make one (1) statement. If time permits, and at the discretion of the Chairperson, further questions may be asked or statements made. If there are any questions or statements that remain outstanding at the conclusion of the allotted time for public participation, the Coordinator Councillor Business will respond on behalf of Council at a later date by telephone or email.
14. The Chairperson may:
 - (a) refer each question to the most appropriate person to respond. Responses may be provided by the Mayor, a Councillor, the Chief Executive Officer or a member of Council staff; or
 - (b) advise that a response to a question may be provided at a later time.
15. Members of the public addressing the Ordinary Council Meeting are permitted to speak for a maximum of five (5) minutes (unless granted an extension of time by the Chairperson).

C. Minutes of the Council meetings

16. Council meetings may be recorded (audio and/or visual recording) and the recording made available publicly and otherwise managed in accordance with Council policies. Participants in Ordinary Council Meetings under these Guidelines will be included in such recordings.
17. A record of the public participation under these Guidelines will not be included in the Minutes of the Council Meeting.