

# Public Question Time



Community members wishing to ask a question at a Council meeting must complete this form by providing details of their full name, address, contact details and the question they wish to ask.

The completed form must be received at Council's Corporate Centre via hand delivery, postal delivery, or email by no less than four hours before the meeting's published commencement time on the day of the Council meeting or handed to the Council officer on duty fifteen minutes before the meeting's published commencement time on the day of the Council meeting.

East Gippsland Shire Council live streams, records and publishes its meetings via webcasting to enhance the accessibility of its meetings to the broader East Gippsland community. These recordings are also archived and available for viewing by the public or used for publicity or information purposes. At the appropriate times during the meeting, any members of the gallery who are addressing the council will have their image, comments or submissions recorded.

If you have any questions about this form, please contact Governance Officer on 5153 9500.

Full Name:
Postal address:
Email address:
Contact number:
<i>Please note your full name will be included in the formal Council Meeting minutes</i>
Question (Max 2):
Attendance: <i>(Please select one option only)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>I will be attending in person</b> (Doors open at 5.45pm)
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>I will attend electronically</b> – I will dial in and ask my question (A meeting link will be sent to the email address provided above)
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>I am unable to attend</b> – I give permission for the Chief Executive Officer to read my question on my behalf
Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

## Privacy Statement

East Gippsland Shire Council asks for details about you to collect rates, approve permits and licences, and run a range of community services. The information you give to us on this form is used only for the reasons set out in the form and is not given to anybody else. Sometimes we may supply details about you to someone else, but only if we are allowed by law, or to protect someone or property.

When information is given out, Council will always try to make sure your privacy is protected in line with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*. You may ask for more information about Council's Information Privacy Policy by contacting our Information Privacy Officer on 03 5153 9500 or [e-mail feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au](mailto:feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au)

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## Rules for Community Questions and Submissions

1. Council will hold open forum and questions of Council time for up to 30 minutes to allow public submissions and questions of Council.
2. When addressing Council, speakers:
  - a) must confine their address to the 5-minute allocation of time;
  - b) shall extend due courtesy and respect to the Council and the processes under which it operates; and
  - c) shall take direction from the Chair whenever called upon to do so.
3. Prior notice of questions or submissions must be received by no less than four hours before the meeting's published commencement time on the day of the Council meeting.
4. No more than two questions will be accepted from any person at any one meeting.
5. The person wishing to address Council must indicate whether they are attending in person, online or otherwise provide approval to have their question or submission read out by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on their behalf.
6. The Mayor will invite speakers at the relevant point in proceedings to read out their question or submission. The speaker must read their question as submitted or in respect to submissions, the speaker must focus on the topic.
7. There will be no discussion or debate with the attendees to Questions and Submissions, however Councillors may ask questions of clarification of the attendee.
8. If a question cannot be answered by the CEO or another senior Officer present at the meeting, a written response will be prepared in accordance with the service standard for written correspondence set out in Council's Customer Response Policy (within 10 business days of the Council meeting).
9. Questions or submissions may be on any matter except if it:
  - a) is considered malicious, defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial, or objectionable in language or substance;
  - b) relates to confidential information as defined in section 3(1) of the Act;
  - c) relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
  - d) relates to any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person. 1
10. The Mayor reserves the right to cease a question or submission at any point if it is deemed inappropriate or inconsistent with Council's Mutual Respect Charter.

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## Mutual Respect Charter

Our Mutual Respect Charter is based on the principle of mutual respect and cooperation and supports our values of providing a safe and respectful workplace. It outlines the rights and responsibilities of the community, Councillors and staff in all Council-related interactions.

The Charter sets out a shared responsibility for:

1. Safe workplace expectations for our staff in dealing with the community and our customers.
2. Our commitment to serving the community and what people can expect when interacting with Council and its staff.

The Charter reads:

### The community has the right and responsibility to:

- Be treated with courtesy and respect
- Be given reasons that explain decisions affecting them
- A fair and impartial assessment based on the facts and merits of the matter
- A timely response
- Express their opinions in ways that are respectful and lawful
- A fair hearing
- Communicate valid concerns and views without fear of reprisal
- Access Council's complaints management policy
- Be informed about the actions taken and outcome of their complaint

### Councillors and staff have the right and responsibility to:

- Be treated with courtesy and respect
- A safe and healthy working environment
- Expect honesty, cooperation and reasonable assistance from the community
- Zero tolerance on verbal abuse, offensive behaviour, threats and violence
- Provide reasons for decisions, and ensure that decisions are subject to appropriate review processes
- Be clear on how the matter will be handled, including compliance to statutory and/or legislative processes
- Modify, curtail or decline service in response to unacceptable behaviour which because of its nature or frequency raises health, safety, resource or equity issues

With permission from City of Stonnington, the Mutual Respect Charter has been reproduced for use by East Gippsland Shire Council.

Adopted by Council 5 October 2021

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