



INVERELL SHIRE COUNCIL

PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM

CONDITIONS OF ACCESS

Council and Committee Meetings are public events and participants are reminded that remarks made during the Public Access Forum will become a matter of public record.

In addition, participants in the Forum conducted at the Ordinary Meetings of Council need to be aware that proceedings of the Meeting are tape recorded for minute purposes.

1. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Public Access Forums conducted by Council shall be held in accordance with the following principles:

1.1 Qualified Privilege – Defamation

Presentations made in the Forum should be truthful and factual. Council and Committee meetings do not enjoy the protection from defamation commonly referred to a 'Parliamentary Privilege'. Therefore, any unfounded allegations made against the reputation or character of an individual or organisation may result in legal liability.

1.2 Appropriate Language/Behaviour

Participants must use appropriate language and behaviour when making their presentations by:

- Refraining from the use of racist, sexist or unnecessary critical remarks. Comments should be fair and based on facts.
- Avoid conduct or behaviour that may cause embarrassment or offence to others.

2. PROCEDURES

The following procedures shall apply to the conduct of the Public Address Forum:

- (i) The public forum shall be limited to a period of 30 minutes, unless extended by Council (or a Committee of Council);
- (ii) Each address shall be limited to five (5) minutes. The Mayor or (Committee Chairperson) will notify speakers when there is 30 seconds remaining;
- (iii) Speakers must only speak in relation to the subject stated in their application (depending on Council's decision in respect of a) Notification of Address to Council);
- (iv) Councillors shall not debate the issue with the speaker;
- (v) The Mayor (or Committee Chairperson) may ask questions of the speaker on a point of clarification;
- (vi) The Mayor (or Committee Chairperson) can order a person to cease speaking if he/she considers that the speaker is making inappropriate or offensive comments, is abusive, not in the public interest or comply with the protocols of the public forum session.