

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME PROTOCOL

Whyalla City Council is committed to providing an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions at Ordinary Meetings. Members of the public are requested to read and comply with the protocol below.

1. During each Ordinary Meeting evening the Council will allocate a time, as listed in Council agenda, for Public Question Time. The length of time allocated to Public Question Time is at the discretion of the Chair and will be no longer than ten minutes. At the conclusion of Public Question Time the Ordinary Meeting will resume.
2. Persons submitting questions must be present in the public gallery and must stand when the Mayor reads their name and question.
3. In signing the Question Time Application Form, a person agrees to recognise the Mayor has discretion to terminate both question and response at any time, and acknowledges Council's right to enforce Section 30 Local Government (Procedure at Meetings) Regulations 2000.
4. The Mayor will have discretion to not accept a particular question. Questions are restricted to matters relating to Council reports, policy or operations, and those of a political or personal nature will not be accepted.
5. Only questions submitted on the Question Time Application Form (refer over) will be accepted. Such questions will be accepted up to 9.30 am on the day of the Ordinary Meeting. Questions submitted after that time will be submitted to the following Ordinary meeting, or alternatively may be responded to in writing.
6. Questions relating to the same issue will be grouped together and one response provided to that group of questions. Council will then proceed to the next subject.
7. The Mayor will take advice from the Chief Executive Officer on any matter deemed confidential under the Local Government Act Section 90 and under these circumstances, no response to the question will be provided.
8. The Mayor will chair and determine who shall answer each question.
9. All questions and answers must be as brief as possible and the Mayor or Chair will determine when sufficient response to a question has been provided. The Mayor or Chair may indicate a maximum time for each question, having regard to the number of questions to be answered during the allotted time and complexity of the issue.
10. No discussion on the questions and answers will be permitted.
11. A list of questions and responses will be recorded in Council's Minutes and be available from the Customer Services Centre within one week of the Ordinary Meeting at which the questions were heard.

12. If there is sufficient time to verbally respond to a question, or if a more detailed response is required than time allows, a written response will be provided within five working days.
13. **Limited Privilege:** Questions and Councillors should be aware that the protection of parliamentary privilege does not apply to local government, and any statements or discussion in the Council Chamber or any documents produced are subject to the laws of defamation.
14. Council has discretion, taking into account the volume of requests, to assist customers, particularly those with disabilities or from a non-English speaking culture, by typing questions, that may then be read either by the questioner or the Mayor/Chair.

Please return form (either by mail or in person) to:

Executive Officer
Whyalla City Council
PO Box 126
WHYALLA SA 5600

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Whyalla City Council is committed to providing an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions at Ordinary Meetings. Members of the public are requested to read and comply with the protocol below.

1. The Mayor or Chair determines the appropriate Councillor or Officer to respond to each question.
2. The Mayor or Chair will take advice from the Chief Executive Officer on any matter deemed **confidential** under the Local Government Act Section 90 and under these circumstances, no response to the question will be provided.
3. All question and answers must **be as brief as possible**, and no longer than ten minutes and the Mayor or Chair will determine when sufficient response to a question has been provided. The Mayor or Chair may indicate a maximum time for each question, having regard to the number of questions to be answered during the allotted time and the complexity of the issue.

NOTES:

1. Members of the community should be aware that the Mayor or Chair, Councillors and Council Officers will not always have sufficient knowledge on specific or individual issues to provide a detailed response to a question. The Mayor or Chair may indicate that the question would be better answered if submitted as an Action Request. Assistance to log such an Action Request can be provided by the Council Officers immediately following the Council meeting, or by contacting the Customer Service on 0886 40 3444 or in person at the Customer Service area located at Council Office, Darling Terrace, Whyalla.
2. Responses to questions are verbal only, no written response will be provided unless a subsequent Action Request is raised and a written reply deemed appropriate.
3. **Limited Privilege:** Questioners and Councillors should be aware that the protection of parliamentary privilege does not apply to local government, and any statements or discussion in the Council Chamber or any documents produced are subject to the laws of defamation.
4. Council has discretion, taking into account the volume of requests, to assist customers, particularly those with disabilities or from a non-English speaking culture, by typing questions, that may then be read either by the questioner or the Mayor/Chair.

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WHYALLA CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC QUESTION TIME
APPLICATION FORM

NAME:
(Please Print)

ADDRESS:
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QUESTION:
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I hereby agree to abide by the Question Time Protocol (as detailed over page). I understand that the Mayor has discretion to terminate both question and response at any time, and to refer a question for submission as an Action Request, if necessary.

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Signature

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Date

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