

Council Information Sessions with External Parties that are Facilitated by Council

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Contact Officer:	Manager Administrative Services
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1. Objective

To ensure openness and transparency by establishing a formal process for holding Councillor information sessions, attended and presented by external parties, on proposed major developments and complex issues of significance to the City.

Notes:

- This policy does not apply to Councillor Briefing Sessions with Councillors by Council officers.
- This policy does not allow for Councillor Information Sessions for small scale developments.
- Councillor Information Sessions will only be convened for matters other than those related to major developments or a major infrastructure project, if a request is made, in writing, to the General Manager by a community group or organisation recognised by Randwick City Council, or upon the direction of the General Manager.

2. Policy Statement

1. Councillor information sessions are set up to provide in-depth information to Councillors on major developments, significant proposals and complex social issues of City wide significance.
2. Councillors or external parties may request an information session. Requests are to be in writing to the General Manager and should outline the nature of the issue and the reasons for requesting an information session.
3. The General Manager, or delegated Council Officer, will determine if the issue or proposal is of City wide significance and whether an information session is necessary to assist Councillors to understand and clarify the issue or proposal.
4. The purpose of the information session is for the exchange of information only; decision making and seeking consensus will not be part of briefing sessions.
5. Participants may ask questions for the purpose of seeking information or clarification. Discussion of the merits or otherwise of a proposal or issue will not be part of information sessions.
6. All information sessions are to be held on Council property, preferably in the Council's Administration Building or in the Randwick Town Hall. However, the information session may include a site visit, if the General Manager deems it appropriate for the purposes of the information session.
7. All Councillors will be invited in writing or by email and through the Councillors' Bulletin to attend information sessions. All Councillors are encouraged, but not compelled, to attend.

8. Where two or more issues are dealt with in a single information session external representatives will only attend that part of the information session relevant to their issue or proposal.
9. Minutes and recordings of the information sessions will not be taken, but a written record will be kept and filed in the Council's records. The written record will consist of:
 - time, date, location and duration of the information session
 - the names of all present
 - a copy of all presentations
 - all information tabled by any party at the information session.
10. Public access to these written records will be in accordance with the Council's Access to Information Policy and Guidelines.
11. Council officers' development application reports to the Council will record that a Councillor information session on the proposal was held.
12. An information session in no way prevents proponents of major developments from attending community information sessions with precincts or other interested community groups.
13. The General Manager or delegated officer publish notice on the Council website and in the Southern Courier newspaper, notification of any request by an external party under point 2 that is to be granted.
14. The General Manager or delegated officer will read out aloud points 4 and 5 of this policy at the commencement of each information session.
15. Interested observers will be invited to attend upon registering with the General Manager.

Related Policies:

- Randwick City Council Code of Conduct
- Community Consultation Principles and Consultation Planning Guide
- Public Notification of Development Proposals and Council Plans DCP
- Access to Information Policy and Guidelines

Minute No: 114/2009

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Next Review: August 2015