

## Application to Speak in the Public Forum

**Note:** Council conducts a Public Forum at each Council Meeting. Members of the public may make application to Council to speak in the public forum session. Public Forums are conducted in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice. Persons wanting to register should read and become familiar with 4. Public Forum section of the code. For convenience, an extract of the code is reproduced within this form.

**Each speaker will be allowed five minutes to address the Council.**

**The Public Forum commences prior to the commencement time of the Council Meeting, at 6pm.**

**All applications to speak in the Public Forum must be made by 5pm on the Monday immediately before the Council Meeting.**

Persons wishing to address Council in the forum must register by submitting a written application. The conduct of the forum is governed by the Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

**Please note new rules outlined below.**

**persons participating in the Public Forum  
persons attending Council meetings  
new rules apply**

Due to COVID-19 restrictions regarding gatherings and the need to comply with social distancing measures and until further notice, all Council meetings are being held at Holbrook Library Complex.

**Council has resolved to permit members of the public to now participate in Public Forums or attend the meetings in person subject to strict conditions to comply with COVID-19 restrictions.**

The public gallery will be limited to 10 people.

### Public Forum

Residents wanting to participate in the Public Forum – please note conditions below:

1. Preference will be given to residents that wish to address Council in the Public Forum
2. In the Public Forum - residents will only be able to address Council on matters that are included in the Agenda papers for the particular meeting. The timeframe for registration will still be in accordance with the current Code of Meeting Practice (written application to speak must be received by 5pm Monday of the meeting week).
3. Initially Council will take registrations from 1 person for and 1 person against an item in the Agenda papers based on a first in, first served basis. Additional people may be able to address Council in the Public Forum provided the number does not exceed 10.

### Persons attending meetings

People who wish to attend the meeting in person please note:

1. People may register to attend the Council meeting in the public gallery and should any additional spaces be available residents will be accepted in order of registration. **Registrations to attend the meeting in the public gallery must be provided to Council by 5pm on the Tuesday prior to the meeting.**
2. Residents will be advised by 10am on the morning of the meeting as to whether they have the capacity to attend the meeting in the public gallery.

This form is available on Council's website, or at any Council Office.

## Applicant – To attend the meeting

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business** *If applicable* \_\_\_\_\_

## Applicant – To Speak in Public Forum

Name	_____
Business <i>If applicable</i>	_____
Council Meeting Agenda Item	<b>Yes</b>
Topic	_____
Reason for speaking	<i>Must be completed</i>

## Applicant – Contact Details

Telephone	_____	Mobile	_____
Email	_____		
Speaker is 18 Years Old or Over	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
Person with a Disability (PwD)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
Describe	_____		

## Date of Council Meeting

Date	_____ <i>Insert date of meeting</i>
Location	_____ <i>Insert location of meeting</i>

## Public Forums Extract from Greater Hume Council Code of Meeting Practice

### Public Forums

- 4.1 The Council may hold a Public Forum prior to each Ordinary Meeting of the Council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public Forums may also be held prior to Extraordinary Council Meetings and meetings of Committees of the Council.
- 4.2 Public Forums are to be chaired by the Mayor or their nominee.
- 4.3 To speak at a Public Forum, a person must first make an application to the Council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the Public Forum must be received by 5pm on the Monday immediately preceding the date on which the Public Forum is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the Council Meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.
- 4.4 A person may make application to speak to Council on a matter that is not on the Agenda for that meeting.
- 4.5 A person may apply to speak on no more than two items of business on the agenda of the Council Meeting or two issues if not included on the Agenda.
- 4.6 Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak at a Public Forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the Public Forum.
- 4.7 The General Manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. The General Manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- 4.8 No more than six speakers are to be permitted to speak at each Public Forum, and no more than two 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the Council Meeting.

- 4.9 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the General Manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the council, the General Manager or their delegate is to determine who will address the Council at the Public Forum.
- 4.10 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the General Manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the Council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.
- 4.11 Approved speakers at the Public Forum are to register with the Council any written, visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the Council at the Public Forum, and to identify any equipment needs no more than two days before the Public Forum. The General Manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.
- 4.12 The General Manager or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers at the Public Forum.
- 4.13 Each speaker will be allowed five minutes to address the council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.
- 4.14 Speakers at Public Forums must not digress from the item they have applied to address the council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.
- 4.15 A Councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.
- 4.16 Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.14. Answers by the speaker, to each question are to be limited to one minute.
- 4.17 Speakers at Public Forums cannot ask questions of the Council, Councillors or Council staff.
- 4.18 The General Manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the council for up to five minutes in response to an address to the council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.
- 4.19 Where an address made at a Public Forum raises matters that require further consideration by Council staff, the General Manager may recommend that the Council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matters.

- 4.20 When addressing the council, speakers at public forums must comply with this code and all other relevant Council codes, policies and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the council's code of conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.
- 4.21 If the Chairperson considers that a speaker at a public forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.19, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.
- 4.22 Clause 4.20 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.
- 4.23 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.19, the General Manager or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at Public Forums for such a period as the General Manager or their delegate considers appropriate.
- 4.24 Councillors (including the Mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address at a Public Forum, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at Public Forums and how the conflict of interest was managed by the Councillor who made the declaration.

**Note: Public Forums should not be held as part of a Council or Committee Meeting. Council or committee meetings should be reserved for decision-making by the Council or Committee of Council. Where a Public Forum is held as part of a Council or Committee Meeting, it must be conducted in accordance with the other requirements of this code relating to the conduct of Council and Committee Meetings.**

***Please Tick***

I agree to comply with provision of the Code of Meeting Practice 4. Public Forums.

**Signature/s** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**General  
Manager's  
Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return to  
Greater Hume Council, PO Box 99, Holbrook NSW 2644  
Email: [mail@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au)