

Policy number	Policy 051
Policy title	Agenda Briefing Forum, Concept Forum, Policy Forum and Workshops
Strategic outcomes supported	S2 – An informed and knowledgeable community CL8 – Visionary civic leadership with sound and accountable governance that reflects objective decision making.

POLICY OBJECTIVE:

To set out the purpose, structure and relevant proceedings of the Town’s informal (nonstatutory) meetings that fall under Part 17 ‘Briefings and Other Informal Forums’ of its *Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*, which include the Agenda Briefing Forum, Concept Forum, [Policy Forum](#) and Council workshops.

POLICY SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Elected Members, officers of the Town and any member of the public involved in an Agenda Briefing Forum, Concept Forum, [Policy Forum](#) or a Council workshop.

DEFINITIONS:

Agenda Briefing Forum refers to the non-statutory meeting held by Council to ask questions, receive presentations and seek clarity, on officer reports presented within the draft Ordinary Council Meeting agenda.

Concept Forum refers to the non-statutory meeting held by Council to provide input and guidance on the development of matters that have a strategic impact and/or relate to the delivery of the Strategic Community Plan.

officer report refers to a report presented to Council by an officer of the Town, which includes professional advice and a recommendation, from which a Council decision is sought at the Ordinary Council Meeting.

[Policy Forum](#) refers to the non-statutory meeting held by Council to provide input and guidance into the policy development, review and [evaluation](#).

workshop refers to any other non-statutory meeting of Council, which may be called upon from time to time, for the purpose of raising and discussing matters that are issue specific with a strategic and/or community-wide significance.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. Understanding that Council needs to meet and discuss matters relating to the good governance of the Town outside of its formal (statutory) meeting structure, this policy seeks to ensure that such informal (non-statutory) meetings are responsibly managed, transparent and are in line with principles of good governance.

Agenda Briefing Forum

2. The purpose of the Agenda Briefing Forum is to maximise the opportunity for elected members to be informed, and seek additional information, on an officer report contained in the draft Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda, before it is presented for a decision at the Ordinary Council Meeting. While every endeavour is made to ensure that all items to be presented at the Ordinary Council Meeting are included in the Agenda Briefing Forum, there may be instances where items will not be ready in time for the forum and will have to be presented straight to Council for a decision. No decisions or debate are to be made at the forum. While the formal meeting structure of Council and Committee meetings do not apply to this forum, the general conduct of the meeting must be in line the Town of Victoria Park Standing Orders Local Law 2011 for the purpose of preserving order.
3. This forum is held on the first Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise determined by Council. This forum is open to members of the public, except in matters to be deemed confidential in nature, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*.
4. Where applicable, elected members are to disclose any conflicts of interest to the Chief Executive Officer. Participation on an agenda item will not be allowed where the interest declared is of a financial, indirect financial or proximity nature.

Officer Presentation

5. Elected Members may request that an 'Officer Presentation' be provided on any report item, upon approval of the Chief Executive Officer. The time allotted for such presentations is no longer than 10 minutes, unless otherwise approved by the Presiding Member.

Public Participation

6. Members of the public have two opportunities to participate at the meeting:

'Deputation/ Presentation' on a report item

7. A request to make a deputation or presentation at the forum must be submitted in writing and approved by the Chief Executive Officer. All requests must be sent no later than 12pm on the Monday preceding the forum. Any documents that will be presented at the forum must be provided at the time of making the request. The Town is to ensure that any member/s of the public that are directly impacted by an agenda item are advised of their ability to make a presentation or deputation at this forum. The time allotted for public deputations and presentations is not to exceed 10 minutes on any agenda item, unless otherwise approved by the Presiding Member.

General public participation through questions and statements

8. Similar to the Ordinary Council Meeting, members of the public will have an opportunity to address the

meeting at the beginning and at the end of the forum during 'Public Participation Time'. The time allotted for each Public Participation Time will be set at 30 minutes. Any extension of time will be in 5 minute increments, and must be approved by agreement at the meeting. All public questions must be asked through the Presiding Member. The Presiding Member may choose to call upon an officer of the Town, or another elected member, to assist with responses.

Record of Briefing

9. While formal minutes of the meeting will not be kept, notes regarding any action to be undertaken, discussion held and any public participation, will be recorded and be made available on the Town's website within five working days after the meeting has been held.
10. Audio recordings of the meeting are to be kept and made available on the Town's website at the same time as the meeting notes. Notes and audio recordings for matters which are deemed confidential in nature, in line with the *Local Government Act 1995* and any other relevant legislation, will not be made publically available.
11. To promote transparency and ensure that any additional information regarding a report item is appropriately included into the decision-making process, the Agenda Briefing Forum Notes are to be received by Council at the relevant Ordinary Council Meeting.

Concept Forum

12. The purpose of the Concept Forum is to provide elected members and officers with an opportunity to discuss ideas, strategies and concepts for, or currently in, development. Topics to be discussed at the Concept Forum must be aligned to the Town's Strategic Community Plan. This forum is strictly for the purpose of ensuring that officers have a clear understanding of Council's directive, and for discussion of any options, opportunities and risks related to an issue of strategic significance. Topics to be considered are typically those that will require an eventual Council decision, and/or are matters 'for information' that are deemed contentious, high risk or have significant community impact. No decisions are made at this forum.
13. Both elected members and officers may add an item to the forum agenda by making a submission in writing using the approved form. This forum is not open to the public, unless upon invitation by either the Presiding Member or the Chief Executive Officer.

Officer Presentation

14. Elected Members may request that an 'Officer Presentation' be made on a topic, upon approval of the Chief Executive Officer. Such requests must be made at least five working days before the distribution of the forum agenda.

Public Participation

15. Members of the public, including relevant community, advisory, project and reference groups of the Town, and other such stakeholders, may, from time to time, be invited to attend the Concept Forum by either the Presiding Member or the Chief Executive Officer. Any such engagement must be in line with the Town's Public Participation Policy.

Record of Briefing

16. While formal minutes of the forum will not be kept, notes regarding any outcomes will be recorded and distributed to all elected members, regardless of their attendance.

Policy Forum

17. The purpose of the Policy Forum is to provide elected members and officers with an opportunity to discuss policies in development, review or evaluation. Policies to be discussed at the Policy Forum will be in line with Council's endorsed annual policy review work plan, or emerging policies in line with Policy 001 Policy Management and Development.

18. This forum is not open to the public, unless upon invitation by either the Presiding Member or the Chief Executive Officer.

Public Participation

19. Members of the public, including relevant community, advisory, project and reference groups of the Town, and other such stakeholders, may, from time to time, be invited to attend the Policy Forum by either the invitation of the Presiding Member or the Chief Executive Officer. Any such engagement must be in line with the Town's Public Participation Policy.

Record of Briefing

16.20. While formal minutes of the forum will not be kept, notes regarding any outcomes will be recorded and distributed to all elected members, regardless of their attendance.

Workshop

17.21. It is recognised that the Council may need, from time to time, to convene an informal meeting other than the Agenda Briefing and Concept Forum; this may be conducted in the form of a Council workshop. The purpose of a workshop is to gain a better understanding on an issue-specific topic, or as a form of community engagement, in line with Public Participation Policy.

18.22. Attendance at the workshop is to be determined on a case-by-case basis, and may be open to the public. Both the Presiding Member and the Chief Executive Officer may convene a workshop by providing at least five working days' notice to all elected members, and all anticipated attendees. No decisions are

to be made a workshop.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

[Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019](#)

Policy 103 Public Participation Policy

Policy 021 Elected Members – Information and Service Provision Policy

Policy manager	Manager – Governance and Strategy
Responsible officers	Governance Officer – Council Support
Approval authority	Council
Next Evaluation Date	

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved, Amended, Rescinded or Reviewed	Date	Authority	Resolution Number	Key Changes/Notes
1	Approved	19/03/2019	Council	40/2019	Item 10.1
<u>2</u>	<u>Amended</u>	<u>29/10/2019</u>	<u>Council</u>		

