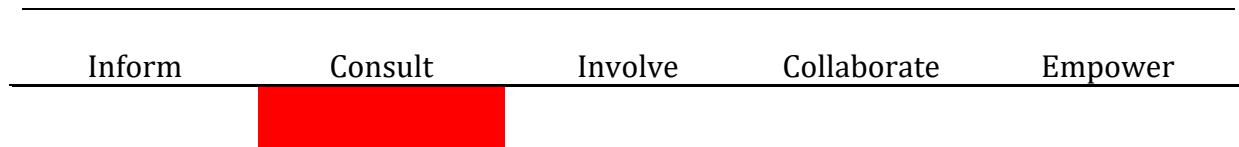


Guidelines - Ward Meetings



Level of participation adapted from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

Nature of the Meeting

Ward Meetings are essentially based around the opportunity for Councillors to meet in an informal sense with constituents over a range of issues which are generally not predetermined. Ward meetings will relate only to a single ward and may involve either all Ward Councillors or a single Ward Councillor.

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP²) Spectrum is designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any community engagement program. The five levels of participation are defined as Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower. In relation to the IAP² Spectrum, the level adapted to this style of meeting is CONSULT.

Administration

Ward Meetings will be organised at the request the ward councillor(s) of each ward who are acting on behalf of their constituents. Ward Meetings will principally be organised and administered by the Governance Unit in conjunction with the Ward Councillors.

Format and Content

- Ward Meetings will be held at a time specified by the Ward Councillors. Ideally they should start at a time that suits those who can only attend outside of business hours or on a weekend.
- Ward Meetings will not typically have a pre-set agenda prepared for the meetings
- Pre-prepared fact sheets can be prepared for Ward Councillors where it is deemed that there is a high likelihood of questions on a particular topic.
- All Ward Councillors should be invited to participate in a Ward Meeting.
- Ward Meetings will be chaired by a Ward Councillor – keeping in mind that the informal nature of these meetings will seldom require a chair role

Staff Attendance

Ward Meetings will typically not be attended by Council staff. At the request of the Ward Councillors/Councillor, a staff member can be provided to act as a note taker for the Ward Meeting.

Location of Ward Meeting

- The location of the Ward Meeting will be determined having regard for:
 - the number of community members expected to attend;
 - the relative room size and number of tables and chairs available at the facility;
 - the ideal need to meet with the community in the local area;
 - the likely weather conditions and the availability of heating/cooling in regard to this;
 - security/parking and the minimisation of any adverse impact on the immediate surrounding areas.

Advertising

Where possible, Ward Meetings will be advertised in “The City” edition the month it is scheduled to happen. *(NB: A minimum of six weeks lead time is required and frequently the community desire to seek a Community Forum may not allow for this to occur.)*

Ward Meetings will be advertised within the front six pages of local papers two weeks before they are scheduled to occur. A media release will also be sent to each local newspaper in the week prior to the event. .

A letter box invitation drop will be organised three weeks before the event. *(Where lead time permits.)* The extent of the letter box invitation will be determined in discussion with the Ward Councillors having regard to the issue/issues to be considered.

Signage will be placed in each Council Customer Service Centre and Library three weeks before each event. Signage will also be placed at the venue if permitted.

Advertisement of the Ward Meetings will also be placed on Council’s website.

Attendance

An Attendance Register will be provided at each Ward Meeting. Given the informal nature of Ward Meetings and the desire to encourage interaction it should not be compulsory for each resident to register attendance.

Where questions are raised that cannot be answered at the Ward Meeting these will be provided to the relevant officers after the meeting for action if required and will be noted in a register for follow up.

Minutes of Ward Meetings will not typically be made.

Catering

Where Ward Meetings occur within a Council facility, tea and coffee will be provided at the Ward meeting.

The nature of ward meetings may from time to time be based on a ‘sausage sizzle’ style concept in order to encourage information interaction.

Governance

A Ward Meeting may be subject to legislation under the *Local Government Act 1989* in relation to assemblies of council and conflicts of interest.

No Ward Meetings can be scheduled to take place during a three-month period prior to a Municipal Election. Ward Meetings should also not be held during the three month period prior to State and Federal elections if it is anticipated that issues of a State and Federal nature are likely to be raised.

Conduct

All Ward Meetings will be held in an environment where respect is shown to all participants. Poor conduct will not be condoned or tolerated from any participant. It is the responsibility of the "Chair" to call any poor or inappropriate conduct and take steps to remove the offending party from the meeting.