
Governance and Administration Matters - 15 September 2026

ITEM 8.1 Draft Code of Meeting Practice 2026

AUTHOR **Corporate**

SUMMARY

- The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the public exhibition process and to seek Council's endorsement for the draft Code of Meeting Practice (CoMP).
- Councillors would be aware of requirements and actions arising from the May 2026 disallowance of the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Model Code of Meeting Practice) Regulation 2025* and the subsequent enactment of the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Meetings) Regulation 2026* (2026 Amendment Regulation) in June 2026. These matters were reported to Council at the June and July 2026 Ordinary meetings, respectively.

At its meeting on 28 July 2026, Council endorsed proposed amendments to the draft CoMP to allow Councillors to attend Council meetings and public forums by audio-visual link, in accordance with the relevant non-mandatory provisions in the Office of Local Government's (OLG) 2021 Model Code.

- At its July meeting, Council also resolved to place the proposed amendments to the draft CoMP on public exhibition, as required under Sections 361-363 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).
- Public exhibition of the draft CoMP took place from 29 July 2026 to 26 August 2026 and two submissions were received.
- In considering the submissions, it is recommended that Council adopt the draft CoMP without amendment as outlined in the report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the draft Code of Meeting Practice.

ATTACHMENTS [Click here for attachment](#)

1. Draft Code of Meeting Practice 2026

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING ALIGNMENT

- Section 360 of the Act requires Council to have in place a CoMP that provides a set of meeting rules to ensure accessible, orderly, effective and efficient meetings of Council and Committees of which all the members are Councillors.
- This requirement aligns with the *Leading and Engaged* destination of the CBCity 2036 Community Strategic Plan.

STRATEGIC IMPACT

- Adoption of the Draft CoMP ensures Council abides by good governance practices and meets its legislative obligations.
- The adoption of this policy ensures that decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable, meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.

DETAILED INFORMATION

Purpose

- To seek Council's adoption of the CoMP.

Background

- Section 360 of the Act requires councils in NSW to adopt a CoMP that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Code prescribed by *the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*. Section 360 provides that councils may also resolve to adopt non-mandatory provisions of the Model Code and other supplementary provisions so long as they are not inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of the Model Code.
- At its June 2026 Ordinary Meeting and following the May 2026 disallowance of the OLG's 2025 Model Code of Meeting Practice (Model Code) and reinstatement of the 2021 Model Code, Council was required to rescind the CoMP adopted in December 2025 and reinstate its previous CoMP as adopted in October 2024.
- At the July 2026 Ordinary Meeting, Council was advised of mandatory amendments to the CoMP, required under the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Meetings) Regulation 2026* (2026 Amendment Regulation) which commenced on 26 June 2026.
- Council's reinstated CoMP reflects all relevant non-mandatory provisions of the reinstated 2021 Model Code with the exception of the provisions governing councillor attendance and conduct at Council meetings and public forums by audio-visual link.
- At the July 2026 Ordinary Meeting, Council endorsed proposed amendments to the draft CoMP that would allow Councillors to attend Council meetings and public forums by audio-visual link and resolved to place the amended draft CoMP on public exhibition.
- The proposed amendments are consistent with the non-mandatory provisions of the 2021 Model Code.
- Under Section 361 of the Act, before adopting the proposed amendments, Council was required to publicly exhibit the draft CoMP for 28 days and provide members of the community 42 days in which to comment on the draft CoMP.

Discussion

Public Exhibition

- The draft CoMP was placed on public exhibition on Council's Have Your Say (HYS) website for a period of 28 days from 29 July 2026 to 26 August 2026 with the deadline for comments closing on 9 September 2026.
- The draft CoMP was viewed by 148 unique visitors to the HYS page, one email campaign was sent through the HYS platform to 2,035 recipients and two submissions were received.

Summary of Submissions

- While the two submissions received were silent on the proposed amendments allowing Councillors to attend Council meetings and public forums by audio-visual link, both respondents supported the mandatory amendments resulting from the 2026 Amendment Regulation in relation to the reintroduction of livestreamed recordings of Council meetings.
- Both respondents also called for the reintroduction of livestreamed recordings of public forums with both submissions providing that:
 - a. A public forum is not a separate or ceremonial event and forms part of the broader decision-making process, allowing residents to address Councillors immediately before agenda items are debated and determined.*
 - b. It is difficult to justify why the public can livestream Council's deliberations, but not the community representations that may inform those deliberations.*
 - c. Transparency is only meaningful if residents who cannot attend a public forum are able to watch it live.*
 - d. Livestreaming public forums would further strengthen the principles of openness, accountability and public confidence that underpin both the Act and the recent CoMP reforms.*

Live Webcasting of Public Forums

- As noted in the Council Report for the July 2026 Ordinary Meeting, neither the 2026 Amendment Regulation nor the 2021 Model Code prescribe the live webcasting of public forums. It was therefore proposed that the matter of livestreaming public forums be considered when the OLG prescribes a new Model Code through amending legislation.

Recommended Approach

- It is recommended that Council adopts the draft Code of Meeting Practice with the proposed amendments, as publicly exhibited.