

## **Greater Shepparton City Council Public Question Time**

Greater Shepparton City Council conducts a public question time of up to 30 minutes duration in conjunction with each ordinary Council meeting.

### **How can I submit a question?**

Questions may be delivered in person at the Council office, 90 Welsford Street Shepparton, submitted by email to [questiontime@shepparton.vic.gov.au](mailto:questiontime@shepparton.vic.gov.au), or posted to:

Question Time  
Greater Shepparton City Council  
Locked Bag 1000  
Shepparton Vic 3632

### **When does my question have to be received by the Council?**

Your question must be received by the Council at least five clear business days prior to the ordinary meeting at which you would like it to be answered. Ordinary Council meetings are currently held on the third Tuesday of each month, so this means questions must be received by the Monday of the week prior to the meeting if they are to be answered at the next available meeting. The closing time for receiving questions is 4.00pm. Questions which are hand delivered to the Council office or sent by post must be clearly marked "Question Time" or they will be answered in writing, rather than at an ordinary Council meeting.

### **Is there anything I can't ask a question about?**

The *Local Government Act 1989* lists a number of matters for which a Council may close a meeting to the public and questions on these matters will not be accepted by the Council. These matters relate to:

- personnel matters
- the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer
- industrial matters
- contractual matters
- commercially sensitive matters associated with proposed developments;
- legal advice
- matters affecting the security of Council property
- any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person.

In addition, the Council has determined that it will not accept questions which are considered to be malicious, defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial, or objectionable in language or substance, or questions relating to matters which are:

- declared to be confidential under section 77 of the Act
- outside the duties, functions and powers of the Council
- have previously been addressed by the Council.

Please note that questions must be brief and concise. Council reserves the right to edit questions that are not brief and concise, and in doing so, will make every endeavour to ensure that the essence of the question is preserved.

If a question is not accepted, you will be informed of the reason why.

**What personal information do I have to provide and why?**

You must include your name, address and a contact telephone number or email address when you submit a question. This allows us to contact you if we need to and to confirm that you are present in the gallery at the Council meeting when your question is answered. The Council takes your privacy seriously and will only use your personal information for the purpose of answering your question. You can find out more about the Council's commitment to your privacy on the Council's website:

[www.greatershepparton.com.au](http://www.greatershepparton.com.au)

Please be aware that questions and answers, including the name of the person who submitted the question, will be included in the Council Meeting minutes. These minutes will be available to the public.

**How will my question be answered?**

Questions submitted for public question time will be treated in the same manner as questions asked in person or on the telephone; they will be answered verbally. Your answer will be provided by the Chief Executive Officer at the next ordinary Council meeting. If you are not in the gallery to hear the answer to your question, it will be held over to the next ordinary Council meeting. If you are not present at the second meeting, the question will not be considered further and if you still wish it to be answered at a Council meeting, you will need to resubmit it. You will not receive a written response to any question you submit for public question time unless you specifically request it.

**How many questions can I submit?**

You may submit two questions for consideration at any ordinary Council meeting. This limit has been set to ensure that as many individuals as possible can have their questions answered within the 30 minutes allowed. If you submit more than two questions, the first two questions received will be answered, unless you tell us otherwise. Additional questions beyond the two approved for the next ordinary Council meeting will not be further considered. You will need to resubmit them if you wish them to be answered at a Council meeting. Again, you will not receive a written response to these questions unless you specifically request it.

**What happens if the 30 minutes is up before my question is answered?**

Questions will be answered in the order they were received and approved, for a maximum of 30 minutes. If there are only one or two questions to go at the end of the 30 minutes, a Councillor may move for an extension of time to allow all questions to be answered. If there are too many questions or a motion for an extension of time is unsuccessful, unanswered questions will be held over to the next ordinary Council meeting. If you require an answer to your question before the next meeting, you may contact the Council's Chief Executive Officer and request either a verbal or written response.