

1.26 BRIEFING SESSION PROTOCOLS

OBJECTIVE

Briefing Sessions are intended to provide Councillors and staff with the opportunity to raise ideas and concepts relating to the betterment of the Shire of Gingin that may be presented to Council for consideration in the future.

Briefing Sessions also provide staff with an opportunity to seek guidance and input from Councillors when researching and formulating proposals for possible future Council consideration.

Council Briefing Sessions are not recognised in the *Local Government Act 1995*, and therefore the Act and its supporting regulations do not provide any guidance with respect to how such forums will be conducted. Neither are Briefing Sessions recognised by the Shire of Gingin Meeting Procedures Local Law 2014.

The objective of this Policy is to provide guidance with respect to the manner in which Briefing Sessions will be conducted.

POLICY

1. The Shire President shall preside at all Briefing Sessions.
2. In the Shire President's absence, the Deputy Shire President shall preside.
3. In the absence of both the Shire President and Deputy Shire President, Councillors shall appoint a Councillor to preside.
4. Discussion papers may be prepared by staff as necessary in order to assist Briefing Session discussions, however issues can be presented verbally if deemed appropriate.
5. Briefing Sessions may be open to the public when an issue is being discussed that Council believes would benefit from public awareness and debate.
6. Briefing Sessions provide an opportunity for informal discussions by Councillors and staff. Sessions have no decision-making function other than in the sense of general consensus as to whether an idea or project is worthy of further development for consideration by Council, or feedback to staff to assist in progressing a specific matter.
7. No discussion will be permitted at a Briefing Session with respect to any matter listed on the Agenda for consideration at a Council meeting immediately following the Session.
8. Briefing Sessions will be subject to the disclosure rules applying to Council meetings constituted under the *Local Government Act 1995*. Councillors, staff, consultants and other participants must disclose any financial or other prescribed interests that relate to a matter to be discussed at a Briefing Session. Any party who has disclosed a financial or proximity interest will leave the Session for the duration of discussions in relation to that matter.

9. Given the sometimes unpredictable nature of Briefing Session discussions, it is possible that discussions may occur with respect to an issue or issues not specifically included on the agenda. This means that participants may not necessarily be aware prior to the discussion taking place that they will need to disclose an interest on that particular matter. Under these circumstances, a person with an interest in a matter raised “ad hoc” during a Briefing Session must disclose that interest at the time discussion commences on that issue.
10. A general record will be kept of items covered at a Briefing Session, including any disclosures of interest with appropriate departures/returns.
11. In the interests of supporting open and frank discussion, all information presented to a Briefing Session and the discussions relating to that information are considered to be confidential in nature, unless advised otherwise.
12. Briefing Sessions will be held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month unless otherwise advised by the CEO. The usual venue will be Council Chambers, however Briefing Sessions may be held in other locations as required.
13. Any Discussion Papers will be issued by the Friday prior to the Briefing Session unless prevented by unforeseen circumstances.

GOVERNANCE REFERENCES

Statutory Compliance	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996</i>
Industry Compliance	Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries Operational Guideline No. 5.
Organisational Compliance	Shire of Gingin Meeting Procedures Local Law 2014

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Review Cycle	2 years	Next Review	2021
Department	Office of the CEO		

Version	Decision Reference	Synopsis
1.	Unknown – pre-2005	Policy adopted
2.	19/04/2011 – Item 11.2.2	Policy reviewed
3.	21/01/2020 – Item 11.1.2	Policy amended
4.	12/03/2020	Administration amendment to reflect name change from Concept Forum to Briefing Session.