

Circular to Councils

Subject/title	Consultation on reforms to council meeting practices
Circular Details	Circular No 24-23 / Date 17 December 2024 / A939075
Previous Circular	<i>Council Circular 24-17 Councillor conduct and meeting practices – a discussion paper</i>
Who should read this	Councillors / General Managers / Council Governance staff
Contact	Council Governance / 02 4428 4100 / olg@olg.gov.nsw.au
Action required	Response to OLG

What's new or changing?

- The Office of Local Government (OLG) is inviting feedback from the local government sector and others on proposed amendments to the Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (Model Meeting Code).
- A discussion paper on the proposed amendments and a consultation draft of the new Model Meeting Code and accompanying paper has been published on OLG's website at www.olg.nsw.gov.au. The proposed amendments to the Model Meeting Code are indicated in track changes.

What will this mean for council?

- Submissions may be made in writing by email at olg@olg.nsw.gov.au or by completing the online submission form. Submissions may also be made by post addressed to: Locked Bag 3015, NOWRA NSW 2541
- Submissions should be labelled "Model Meeting Code amendments" and marked to the attention of OLG's Council Governance Team.
- The closing date for submissions is COB Friday, 28 February 2025.

Key points

- The amendments are part of the NSW Government’s agenda to ensure that councillors are visibly in control of their councils, demonstrating to the community that decision making is genuinely local.
- The reform of the code and procedures governing how councillors gather, debate and make decisions, was flagged by the Minister for Local Government as part of the discussion paper issued in September 2024, “Councillor conduct and meeting practice: a new framework”.
- The proposed amendments to the Model Meeting Code are the first tranche of reforms to the regulation of meetings. The second tranche will be legislated in 2025 as part of the measures implemented to reform the regulation of councillor conduct and will have a particular focus on behaviour at meetings.
- The feedback OLG receives will be used to inform the amendments that are ultimately made to the Model Meeting Code.
- It is anticipated that the new Model Meeting Code will be prescribed in early 2025.

Where to go for further information

- The discussion paper and consultation draft of the Model Meeting Code and accompanying paper have been published on OLG’s website at www.olg.nsw.gov.au.
- For more information, contact OLG’s Council Governance Team by email at olg@olg.nsw.gov.au or by telephone at 02 4428 4100.

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