



DISTRICT FORUMS: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Adopted: 1 February 2017

TRIM: 347777.2016



1. NAME

1.1 District Forums Terms of Reference

2. INTERPRETATION

2.1 For the purpose of these terms of Reference:

“**CEO**” means the Chief Executive Officer of Council.

“**Council**” means the Liverpool City Council.

“**Forum**” means a meeting that is supported by Council where information, ideas, and views are encouraged and exchanged with the community.

“**Community**” means a group of people living, working and/or studying in Liverpool, including those who may share a common characteristic or interest.

“**Customer Request**” means when a participant requests that Council take some specific action, including completing a task or delivering a service.

“**District**” refers to any of the six District areas of the Liverpool Local Government Area. Council will determine the boundaries of each District.

“**Information request**” means when a participant asks for general information on a Council matter that does not come under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*

3. PURPOSE/ OBJECTIVES

3.1 Council has a key role in creating socially just, inclusive and sustainable communities.

3.2 Council has established Forums as a means to develop and strengthen strong community bonds by ensuring ongoing dialogue between Council and the community about important matters affecting local communities, including those matters that affect the broader Liverpool Local Government Area.

3.3 Forums are based on the principle that Council and the community work best in partnership. Views expressed by participants at Forums may help shape and inform Council in its decision making.

4. FUNCTIONS

4.1 Forums provide opportunities for Council to:

a) Engage with and consult with the community about local matters, including those affecting the broader Liverpool Local Government Area;

- b) Convey information about Council services and operations;
- c) Encourage active and meaningful community participation in Council matters;
- d) Provide the community with the means to identify and help to solve local issues and to take appropriate action, where possible; and
- e) Respond appropriately to the community on matters raised.

4.2 The following are examples of matters which may be referred at appropriate times by Council to Forums to obtain feedback:

- a) Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan and Budget;
- b) Capital works affecting specific districts, such as proposals for maintenance or upgrading of parks, roads and footpaths and community facilities;
- c) Proposed Master Plans;
- d) Significant policy reviews such as Local Environment Plans;
- e) Traffic management and transport issues;
- f) Plans of Management;
- g) Local operational issues relating to levels or standards of service; and
- h) Review of Liverpool Listens consultations.

4.3 At each Forum, participants will have the opportunity to propose agenda items for future Forums. The Chairperson has the following options for dealing with agenda items raised by participants:

- a) Arrange topical presentations;
- b) Organise workshops to build community capacity;
- c) Refer the issue to an appropriate Council manager or director to provide a direct written and timely response to a future Forum;
- d) Initiate a telephone call or a separate meeting with relevant members of Council staff; or
- e) Refer the issue to Council's Customer Request System for action.

4.4 A Forum should not be a platform to raise and discuss individual maintenance matters or complaints. While customer request forms may be submitted at a Forum, it is the responsibility of the person lodging the request to follow up the matter with Council outside the Forum.

4.5 Forum participants are encouraged to lodge requests to Council through any of the following means:

- a) Phone the Customer Service Centre on 1300 36 2170;
- b) Email lcc@liverpool.nsw.gov.au;
- c) Visit the Customer Service Centre, Ground floor, 33 Moore Street, Liverpool;
- d) Submit a customer request online on the Council website www.liverpool.nsw.gov.au.

5. OUTCOMES

5.1 Forums should assist Council to:

- a) Foster informed and engaged local communities;

- b) Value and encourage local community input in decision making;
- c) Encourage greater levels of local community support, participation and collaboration in relation to Council activities and projects;
- d) Achieve greater participation in community-led projects;
- e) Improve the process of community consultation;
- f) Create greater transparency in terms of Council decision-making processes;
- g) Deepen the level of trust between Council and the community it serves.

6. PARTICIPATION

6.1 Community participation

Any person who lives, works or studies, studies in, or owns a property within their local District, may attend their particular Forum. If Forum participants are members of an organisation such as a political party, government, or community group, they may only attend the Forum as a community member, not as a representative or lobbyist for their particular group or organisation.

6.2 Councillor participation

Any Councillor may attend any Forum. However, the nominated Councillor(s) for the particular Forum is authorised to chair that Forum.

6.3 Chairperson

The Councillor nominated by Council resolution will be the chairperson of the particular Forum. The Chairperson is authorised and responsible for opening and closing the meeting, facilitating discussion, recognising speakers and maintaining order. In the absence of the Chairperson, other Councillors present at the Forum shall consult with each other and agree upon a temporary Chairperson for the Forum.

6.4 Support staff

Nominated Council staff will provide administrative support for the organisation of meetings and venues, including preparation of the agenda and taking notes.

6.5 Presenters

Representatives of organisations in the general community and Council directors and managers (with the permission of the director or the CEO) may be invited by the Chairperson to address the Forum on matters on the agenda, or they may seek such an invitation from the Chairperson. All presentations must fall within the functions of a Forum. Each presentation, including question time, will be restricted to one hour, unless leave is granted to exceed this time by the majority of participants.

7. QUORUM

- 7.1 The quorum for a Forum will be one Councillor and five other participants, excluding members of Council staff.

8. TIMETABLE FOR MEETINGS

- 8.1 Forums will be held on a quarterly basis, or as the need arises. Meetings will be limited to a maximum duration of two hours.
- 8.2 Forums will be based on the following six district boundaries:
- a) **Rural District** comprises Badgerys Creek, Bringelly, Greendale, Kemps Creek, Luddenham, Rossmore, Silverdale and Wallacia.
 - b) **New Release District** comprises Cecil Park, Austral, Middleton Grange, West Hoxton, Cecil Hills, Elizabeth Hills, Len Waters Estate, Hoxton Park, Carnes Hill, Horningsea Park, Leppington, Denham Court and Edmondson Park.
 - c) **2168 District** comprises Ashcroft, Busby, Cartwright, Green Valley, Heckenberg, Hinchinbrook, Miller and Sadleir.
 - d) **Established District** comprises Casula, Liverpool (excluding City Centre), Lurnea, Prestons and Warwick Farm.
 - e) **City Centre** (in accordance with the Liverpool Development Control Plan 2008)
 - f) **Eastern District** comprises Chipping Norton, Hammondville, Holsworthy, Moorebank, Voyager Point, Pleasure Point and Wattle Grove.
- 8.3 The location, date and starting time for each Forum will be made available to the public via the Liverpool City Council What's On, the Council website, Liverpool Listens and other relevant social media.

9. MEETING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

- 9.1 A Forum may be cancelled by the Chairperson if there are less than five community attendees within 15 minutes of the notified start time.
- 9.2 A participant may ask a question through the Chairperson who may disallow the question if, in the opinion of the Chairperson, the question:
- a) Is outside the scope of the Forum;
 - b) Is defamatory; or
 - c) Might constitute a breach of Council's Code of Conduct.
- 9.3 Wherever possible, any decisions that need to be made at a Forum will be made on the basis of consensus, that is, where all participants agree through an informal process. At the discretion of the Chairperson, a vote may be taken to decide a matter. This may occur when consensus cannot be reached, or in relation to a matter that is considered significant in nature. In each case, the Chairperson will provide reasons to the Forum for their decision to put a matter to a vote.
- 9.4 Notes regarding the significant points covered at each Forum will be taken and placed by Council support staff on the Council website as a record of the meeting. Matters raised that fall outside the scope of the Forum will not be noted. Each Forum will cover topics notified in the agenda for that quarter.
- 9.5 Forum participants must fill in their contact details on an attendance sheet. Participants may volunteer to have their details included on a Council database (for

contact by Council only). Council will endeavour to forward copies of the agenda and draft minutes of the previous Forum to participants on the list.

- 9.6 Audio and visual recording of a Forum by a participant will not be allowed unless authorised by the CEO.

10. INFORMATION REQUESTS

- 10.1 Information requests will be referred by Council support staff to the relevant manager by email. Managers should give attention to formulating complete answers to questions raised, including answering potential follow up questions. Where necessary, the relevant manager who receives the request should collaborate with other managers, as necessary, to provide a complete response. Where a response may require a decision or input by a director or the CEO, an acknowledgement should be provided to the Chairperson of the Forum, indicating the timing for a full response to be provided, and then a response provided as soon as practicable. Where possible, a response to a Forum should be provided to the Chairperson prior to the next Forum meeting.
- 10.2 After consulting with their particular director or the CEO, a manager may attend a Forum to explain a particular response to the Forum, especially if the nature of a particular response is complex or is likely to lead to further questions from Forum participants. Attendance should be organised with the Forum Chairperson.

11. INSURANCE COVER

- 11.1 Participants will be covered by Council's public liability insurance cover while attending the Forum.

12. APPROPRIATE CONDUCT AT FORUMS

- 12.1 During Forums, participants must act respectfully, and strive to adopt a fair and reasonable approach to communicating with each other. Repetitive issues raised that are not conducive to a productive meeting, including grandstanding, abusive language or threatening behaviour by anyone will not be tolerated and may result in the person behaving in this way being asked to leave or excluded from the Forum until further notice.
- 12.2 Any individuals or group responsible for any disorderly conduct at a Forum may be asked to leave by the Chairperson. If the individuals or group do not leave, security staff may be called in or the Forum may be closed.
- 12.3 Members of Council staff and Councillors are required to observe the provisions of Council's Code of Conduct and Service and Communication Policy at all times during Forums.

13. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

- 13.3 Participants, through their involvement in a Forum may come in contact with confidential or personal information retained by Council. An example is the information contained on a Forum attendance sheet. Participants are required to maintain the security and confidentiality of any such information and not access, use or remove that information.

14. MEDIA PROTOCOL

- 14.1 No Forum participant is authorised to speak to the media on behalf of a Forum. Members of Council staff must comply with Council's media procedure.

15. CIRCULATION

- 15.1 A copy of the District Forum Terms of Reference will be available on Council's website. Copies will also be made available at each Forum.

16. REVIEW

- 16.1 The operation of each Forum and these Terms of Reference should be reviewed every two years.

AUTHORISED BY

Council Resolution

EFFECTIVE FROM

1 February 2017

DIRECTORATE RESPONSIBLE

Community and Culture (Community Development and Planning)

REVIEW DATE

Two years after the date of adoption of these Terms of Reference

VERSIONS

Version	Amended by	Date	TRIM Number
1	Adopted by Council	1 February 2017	347777.2016

REFERENCES

Liverpool City Council: Code of Conduct

Liverpool City Council: Code of Conduct Procedures

Liverpool City Council: Councillor Access to Information and Interaction with Staff Policy

Liverpool City Council: Privacy Policy