

# Public Access

## Information Booklet and Application Form

116 Adelaide Street, Raymond Terrace  
 NSW 2324  
 PO Box 42, Raymond Terrace NSW 2324  
 p 02 4988 0245  
 e [councillor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au](mailto:councillor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au)  
 ABN 16 744 377 876

Please email completed form to [councillor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au](mailto:councillor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au) prior to 12 noon Monday prior to the public access request date.

Name

Address

Suburb

State

Postcode

Email

Phone

Mobile

Speaking? For  Against  You consent to be recorded and broadcast live on the internet? Yes  No

Agenda item no. (if applicable)

Subject *Please provide details of the matter to be discussed and your interest in the matter.*

Date of proposed public access

Will you be speaking to a power point presentation? Yes  No  (per item 6 below)

**DECLARATION:** By signing this application, I agree that I have read and understood the terms and conditions. I will conduct myself with respect towards the Council and observe Council's Code of Meeting Practice and at the direction of the Chairperson. I will not disrupt the Council Meeting and will treat all people with respect courtesy, compassion and sensitivity. I understand that should I say or present any material that is inappropriate, I may be subject to legal action.

Applicant's signature

**Applications must be submitted to the Senior Executive Assistant by 12 NOON MONDAY prior to the meeting at which public access is proposed. All applications will be considered by the Mayor, in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice, and approval or refusal will be forwarded by email.**

**Should you have any enquiries regarding the status of your application, please phone 4988 0245.**

OFFICE USE ONLY	Approved	Refused	Date
	Mayor		

## 1. When does Public Access occur?

Public Access is held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at **5.30pm** in the Council Chambers, prior to the Council meeting.

## 2. Who can request Public Access?

Any person may request public access. Please be aware that your details may be considered public information and you consent to the use of your personal information for the purpose of Public Access. Should you have concerns with regards to this please consult staff.

Any legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not permitted to speak unless they have identified their status as a legal representative when applying to speak.

## 3. How do I request Public Access?

1. Complete the attached Application Form outlining details on the agenda items you wish to speak on, if applicable. Please indicate your interest in the subject and the date of the meeting you wish to have public access.
2. You may request to speak on no more than 2 agenda items.
3. Return your application to the Mayor's Office by 12 noon on the Monday prior to the date access is requested.

Remember to submit your application form early as the number of speakers permitted for public access is limited. The number of speakers permitted on any one subject is restricted to 2 speakers FOR and 2 speakers AGAINST any item, with a maximum of 12 speakers in total on any given night.

## 4. Who approves my application?

The Mayor will consider your application and send you an approval or refusal notice by close of business on Monday prior to the date of access being requested. If you have provided an email address you will receive your confirmation by email. If you do not have an email address you will receive notification by telephone with written confirmation in the mail.

## 5. Defamatory comments

All persons are reminded that any form of legal privilege does **NOT** apply to Public Access. **Defamatory comments and/or allegations against Councillors, staff or other community members** may lead to suspension of Public Access and/or legal action.

Applicants should seek independent legal advice if they still intend making such comments.

## 6. What if my application is approved?

If public access is granted please note the following procedure:

- Public Access commences at 5:30pm.
- You should arrive at least 5 minutes prior to Public Access commencing.
- If you are speaking to a power point presentation this document must be cleared by Council's IT department prior to Public Access. Please email your presentation to [councillor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au](mailto:councillor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au) by 2pm on the day of the meeting. If the presentation is not received and cleared prior to commencement of public access, you may be refused use of the presentation. You must also ensure that you have the consent to use any images of other people – especially children. Council may restrict the use of any inappropriate images.
- Take a seat in the Council Chambers gallery.
- The Mayor will introduce you and ask you to proceed to the microphone and podium situated at the right hand side of the Chambers.
- You must adhere to the Mayor's direction whilst addressing Council. Failure to do so may result in your Public Access address being cancelled and/or any future application being refused.
- You have 5 minutes **ONLY** in which to speak – this must be strictly adhered to. You will be advised at the 4 minute mark that you have 1 minute to finish your address.
- You are not permitted to ask questions of the Councillors or staff.
- Councillors may ask you questions once you have finished speaking.
- Speaking at Public Access does not guarantee that Council will take action on the matters raised.

## 7. What if my application is refused?

You may re-apply or make an appointment with the Mayor to discuss the matter further.

## 8. Webcasting

Council meetings are recorded and broadcast on the internet via webcast. This means that your image and any comments made are available to the public via Council's website.

If you do not consent to being recorded and broadcast on the internet you will be heard prior to those that do consent.

Council accepts no responsibility or liability for any defamatory or offensive statements made by speakers during the course of Public Access.

## 9. What if I have further questions?

The Senior Executive Assistant will be able to assist you with any further questions you may have. Phone: 4988 0245 or email: [councillor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au](mailto:councillor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au)

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## Your privacy

Port Stephens Council is committed to protecting your privacy. We take reasonable steps to comply with relevant legislation and Council policy.

**Purpose:** Council collects this information for the purpose of identifying persons addressing Council via Public Access.

**Intended recipients:** Council Officers will contact you regarding your address to Council if required.

**Supply:** Voluntary.

**Consequence of Non Provision:** The application will not be considered.

**Storage and security:** This document will be placed on the relevant file and/or saved in Council's records management system in accordance with Council Policy and relevant legislation.

**Access:** Please contact Council on 02 4988 0255 to enquire how you can access information.