

Thank you for coming to our Committee/Council meeting and being part of the democratic process for Otago Regional Council. This handout gives you helpful information about our meetings, including where you'll present from, meeting rules and speaking guidelines.

Please note that our meetings are audio recorded, and media is also present.

What is a public forum?

Public forums are where members of the public can present their thoughts and ideas to ORC councillors. Forums are usually at the start of the council meeting. In the case of a committee meeting, anything raised must also fall within the terms of reference of that committee.

Public forums can be up to 30 minutes. Requests to speak must be made to the meeting secretary on 0800 474 082 at least 24 hours before the meeting; however, this requirement may be waived by the Chairperson.

Where do I sit?

You're welcome to come into the Council Chamber during any public meeting. As you enter the room there are three rows of seating to the left and right, this is the public gallery. Please come in quietly and take a seat.

Where will I present from?

People presenting to our councillors sit at the end of the table near the windows. We will let you know when it's your turn and will invite you to come up.

Are there meeting rules?

Our committee and council meetings follow Standing Orders, which are meeting rules that ensure ORC councillors make decisions in a transparent, inclusive and lawful way.

How long can I speak for?

You may speak for up to five minutes. No more than two speakers can speak on behalf of an

organisation and if there are more than six people who want to speak during a public forum, the Chairperson has discretion to restrict how long each person can present for.

Are there speaking guidelines?

The Chairperson can decline to hear a speaker or to stop a presentation at any time where:

- A speaker is repeating views presented by an earlier speaker at the same public forum
- The speaker is criticising elected members and/or staff
- The speaker is being repetitious, offensive or disrespectful
- The speaker has previously spoken on the same issue
- The matter is subject to legal proceedings
- The matter is subject to a hearing, including the hearing of submissions where the local authority or committee sits in a quasi-judicial capacity

Will the councillors ask me questions?

When you have finished speaking, the Chairperson can allow councillors to ask you questions if they want to clarify anything you talked about or find out more.

Will the councillors make a decision based on what I say?

No debate or decisions will be made at the meeting on issues raised during the forum, unless related to items already on the agenda.