

Public inquiry procedures

Purpose of inquiry

- The public inquiry is part of the examination and reporting process conducted by the Delegate. It provides an opportunity for members of the public to express their views on the proposal to the Delegate.
- The public inquiry is being held in accordance with section 263 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Length of inquiry

- This session of the inquiry must be concluded at the advertised time.

Sign in and registration

- All attendees must sign in on arrival.
- Registered speakers must also sign in and will be given a speaker number.
- A representative of each council which is subject to the merger proposal is invited to speak first. Remaining registered speakers will be invited to speak in order of registration.
- In order to enable as many people as possible an opportunity to present their views, speakers may only speak once during each inquiry, irrespective of the number of sessions. Only one member of an organisation may speak on behalf of that organisation.
- Unregistered attendees who wish to speak will, to the greatest extent possible, be provided the opportunity to speak once all registered speakers have spoken, as time permits.
- Under section 264 of the Local Government Act, a person is not entitled to be represented at the inquiry by an Australian lawyer or any person acting for a fee or reward.

Direction for speakers

- A representative of each council subject to the merger proposal will be given a time to verbally present their views about the proposal. They may only speak once, irrespective of the number of sessions.
- All other registered speakers will be given a time to verbally present their views about the proposal.
- Speakers will be given a time limit and must keep to this limit. A time warning will be given by the facilitator one minute prior to the end of the time limit.
- Speakers are encouraged to speak directly into the microphone and provide their name, the local government area they are from and, if relevant, the organisation they represent.
- Comments should be addressed to the Delegate and must be relevant to the proposal under examination.
- Speakers are encouraged to avoid repetition and if there is repetition they may be asked if they have any new information to add. Comments can be expressed forthrightly but respectfully and should not be of a personal or insulting nature.
- With the exception of the person speaking on behalf of a council, speakers may not use power point, audio visual or other presentations. If speakers wish to provide further information about their view of the proposal, they may provide a written submission.
- Speakers are reminded that all submissions will be thoroughly considered regardless of whether they are made verbally or in writing or both.

Direction for attendees

- Please ensure all mobile telephones are switched off or turned to silent.
- Unruly behaviour from any attendee – such as calling out or making disparaging remarks – is inappropriate.
- Attendees may provide written submissions. To enable the Delegate and other attendees to focus on the presentations made by the speakers, attendees may not display or distribute flyers or other material inside the public inquiry.
- Attendees may not hand out material within the venue.

Direction to speakers on audio recording of the public inquiry

- Please note this inquiry will be sound recorded. This means that anyone who makes a submission to this inquiry will have their voice recorded. The purposes for which the information is being collected in this inquiry are the purposes for which the information will be used, including subsequent review by the Delegate, transcription and publication on the Council Boundary Review website (either in audio form or as a transcript).
- The intended recipients of the information are any members of the public who wish to access the website. The provision of information by way of submissions to the inquiry is voluntary. Any person who does not wish to be sound recorded is invited to make a written submission. Individuals have the right of access to and correction of the information. The information will be held by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, 52 Martin Place, Sydney NSW 2001.

Recordings and photographs

- Verbal presentations made by speakers are being audio recorded by inquiry staff to ensure the Delegate has a full and accurate record of speaker views about the merger proposal.
- To respect the privacy of attendees, audio, video or photographic recordings of the public inquiry cannot be made without the prior approval of the Delegate.
- Media representatives may only take audio and video recordings of proceedings in accordance with the media protocol or as approved by the Delegate. Members of the media may only take photographs inside the public inquiry venue in line with the media protocol or as approved by the Delegate.