



Code of Meeting Practice

Version 3 – 14 August 2025

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Definitions

Term / Abbreviation	Definition

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Background

Under the *Local Government Act*, joint organisations must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (Model Meeting Code) prescribed by the Regulation within 12 months of the elections.

The adopted code of meeting practice must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code. Joint organisations are not required to adopt the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code and can adapt them to meet their own needs.

Unlike Councils, there is no requirement for a joint organisation to publicly exhibit its Code of Meeting Practice, however the Regulation prescribes that a joint organisation must consult with its member councils about the content of its proposed Code of Meeting Practice before adopting it.

Contents

1	Introduction	5
2	Meeting Principles.....	5
3	Before the Meeting	5
4	Public Forums	9
5	Coming Together	9
6	The Chairperson	12
7	Modes of Address	13
8	Order of business for ordinary Joint Organisation meetings.....	13
9	Consideration of business at board meetings	13
10	Rules of debate	15
11	Voting	18
12	Committee of the whole	19
13	Dealing with Items by exception.....	19
14	Closure of meetings to the public	19
15	Keeping order at meetings.....	23
16	Conflicts of Interest	25
17	Decisions of the Joint Organisation	26
18	Time limits on Joint Organisation meetings	27
19	After the meeting.....	27
20	Joint Organisation Committees.....	28
21	Irregularities	31
22	Definitions	32

1 Introduction

This Code of Meeting Practice has been established by the Hunter Joint Organisation pursuant to Section 360(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (The Act). The Code is supplementary to the Act and Regulations, which cover most aspects of meeting procedure.

2 Meeting Principles

Board and committee meetings should be:

<i>Transparent:</i>	Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.
<i>Informed:</i>	Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information
<i>Inclusive:</i>	Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.
<i>Principled:</i>	Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.
<i>Trusted:</i>	The community has confidence that voting representatives and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.
<i>Respectful:</i>	Voting representatives, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.
<i>Effective:</i>	Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skillfully chaired.
<i>Orderly:</i>	Voting representatives, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

3 Before the Meeting

Timing of meetings

3.1 Omitted – Clause 3.2 applies

3.2 The Joint Organisation Board shall, by resolution, set the date and place of its ordinary meetings

Note: Under section 400T of the Act, boards of joint organisations are required to meet at least four (4) times each year, each in a different quarter of the year.

Extraordinary meetings

3.3 If the Chairperson receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) member voting representatives, the Chairperson must call an extraordinary meeting of the Joint Organisation to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The Chairperson can be one of the two voting representatives requesting the meeting.

Notice to the Public of Joint Organisation Meetings

3.4 The Joint Organisation must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of committees of the Joint Organisation.

3.5 For the purpose of clause 3.4, notice of a meeting of the Joint Organisation and of a committee of the Joint Organisation is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be

published on the Joint Organisation's website, and in such other manner that the Joint Organisation is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

- 3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to members of Joint Organisation meetings

- 3.7 The Executive Officer must send to each board member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the board, a notice specifying the time, date and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.
- 3.8 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to members in electronic form, but only if all voting representatives have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

Notice to members of extraordinary meetings

- 3.9 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to voting representatives of an extraordinary meeting of the board in cases of emergency.

Giving notice of business to be considered at board meetings

- 3.10 A voting representative may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the Joint Organisation at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted ten (10) business days before the meeting is to be held.
- 3.11 A voting representative may, in writing to the Executive Officer, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.
- 3.12 Omitted – not applicable to joint organisations
- 3.13 Omitted – not applicable to joint organisations

Questions with notice

- 3.14 A voting representative may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the Executive Officer about the performance or operations of the Joint Organisation.
- 3.15 A voting representative is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.14 that comprises a complaint against the Executive Officer or a member of staff of the Joint Organisation, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the Executive Officer or a member of staff of the Joint Organisation.
- 3.16 The Executive Officer or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.14 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the Joint Organisation or orally at the meeting.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

- 3.17 The Executive Officer must cause the agenda for a meeting of the Joint Organisation Board or a committee of the Joint Organisation to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.
- 3.18 The Executive Officer must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the board states:
- a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the Joint Organisation, and

- b) any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
 - c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and
 - d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.10.
- 3.19 Nothing in clause 3.18 limits the powers of the Chairperson to put a Chairperson's minute to a meeting under clause 9.6.
- 3.20 The Executive Officer must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the Joint Organisation any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the Executive Officer, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The Executive Officer must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the Joint Organisation.
- 3.21 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the Executive Officer, is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public, the Executive Officer must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:
 - a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and
 - b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.
- 3.22 The Executive Officer must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the Executive Officer, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to voting representatives for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public, and must not be disclosed by a voting representative or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Statement of ethical obligations

- 3.23 Business Papers for all ordinary and extraordinary committees of the Joint Organisation and Committees must contain a statement reminding voting representatives of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the Joint Organisation's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Availability of the Agenda and Business Papers to the Public

- 3.24 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the Joint Organisation and committees of the Joint Organisation, are to be published on the Joint Organisation's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the Joint Organisation, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the Joint Organisation.
- 3.25 Clause 3.24 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the Executive Officer has identified under clause 3.21 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.
- 3.26 For the purposes of clause 3.24, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the Joint Organisation's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to voting representatives.
- 3.27 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.24, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

- 3.28 The Executive Officer must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the Joint Organisation deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.
- 3.29 Despite clause 3.28, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the Joint Organisation, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:
 - a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
 - b) the business to be considered is ruled by the Chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Joint Organisation before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Joint Organisation.
- 3.30 A motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.
- 3.31 Despite clauses 10.20-10.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 3.32 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.29(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Pre-meeting briefing sessions

- 3.33 Prior to each ordinary meeting of the Joint Organisation, the Executive Officer may arrange a pre-meeting briefing session to brief voting representatives on business to be considered at the meeting. Pre-meeting briefing sessions may also be held for extraordinary meetings of the Joint Organisation and meetings of committees of the Joint Organisation.
- 3.34 Pre-meeting briefing sessions are to be held in the absence of the public.
- 3.35 Omitted - not applicable to joint organisations
- 3.36 The Executive Officer or a member of staff nominated by the Executive Officer is to preside at pre-meeting briefing sessions.
- 3.37 Voting representatives must not use pre-meeting briefing sessions to debate or make preliminary decisions on items of business they are being briefed on, and any debate and decision-making must be left to the formal Joint Organisation or committee meeting at which the item of business is to be considered.
- 3.38 Voting representatives must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of a briefing at a pre-meeting briefing session, in the same way that they are required to do so at a joint organisation or committee meeting. The Joint Organisation is to maintain a written record of all conflict-of-interest declarations made at pre-meeting briefing sessions and how the conflict of interest was managed by the voting representative who made the declaration.

4 Public Forums

Section 4 omitted (not applicable to joint organisations)

5 Coming Together

Attendance by voting representatives at meetings

- 5.1 All voting representatives must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the board and of committees of the board of which they are members.
- 5.2 Omitted – covered by clause 5.3
- 5.3 The board of the Joint Organisation may, if it thinks fit, transact any of its business at a meeting at which representatives (or some representatives) participate by telephone or other electronic means, but only if any representative who speaks on a matter before the meeting can be heard by the other representatives. For the purposes of a meeting held in accordance with this clause, the chairperson and each other voting representative on the board have the same voting rights as they have at an ordinary meeting of the board.
- 5.4 Where a voting representative is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the Joint Organisation, the voting representative should request that the board grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a voting representative from making an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.
- 5.5 A voting representative's request for leave of absence from Joint Organisation meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the voting representative intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.
- 5.6 The Joint Organisation must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a voting representative's request for a leave of absence.
- 5.7 A voting representative's civic office will become vacant if the voting representative is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the Joint Organisation without prior leave of the Joint Organisation, or leave granted by the Joint Organisation at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the board has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.
- 5.8 A voting representative who intends to attend a meeting of the Joint Organisation despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the Executive Officer at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

The quorum for a meeting

- 5.9 The quorum for a meeting of the Joint Organisation is a majority of the voting representatives (i.e. 50% plus one additional voting representative) of the Joint Organisation who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.
- 5.10 Clause 5.9 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the Joint Organisation.
- 5.11 A meeting of the Joint Organisation must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:
 - a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or
 - b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or

- c) at any time during the meeting.
- 5.12 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date and place fixed:
 - a) by the chairperson, or
 - b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the voting representatives present, or
 - c) failing that, by the Executive Officer.
- 5.13 The Executive Officer must record in the Joint Organisation's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the Joint Organisation, together with the names of the voting representatives present.
- 5.14 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety or welfare of voting members, joint organisation staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the Chairperson may, in consultation with the Executive Officer and, as far as is practicable, with each voting member, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the Joint Organisation's website and in such other manner that the Joint Organisation is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.
- 5.15 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.14, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the Joint Organisation or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.3.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

- 5.16 A meeting of the Joint Organisation or committee of the Joint Organisation may be held by audio-visual link where the Chairperson determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The Chairperson may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of Board members and staff at risk. The Chairperson must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the Executive Officer and, as far as is practicable, with each voting member.
- 5.17 Where the Chairperson determines under clause 5.16 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the Executive Officer must:
 - a) give written notice to all voting members that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and
 - b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all voting members can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and
 - c) cause a notice to be published on the Joint Organisation's website and in such other manner the Executive Officer is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.
- 5.18 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.16 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a Joint Organisation holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.16, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting

Attendance by voting-members at meetings by audio-visual link

- 5.19 Voting representatives may attend and participate in meetings of the Joint Organisation and committees by audio-visual link with the approval of the Joint Organisation.
- 5.20 A request by a voting representative for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the Executive Officer prior to the meeting in question.
- 5.21 Omitted – non-mandatory clause not applicable to joint organisations
- 5.22 Omitted – non-mandatory clause not applicable to joint organisations
- 5.23 Omitted – non-mandatory clause not applicable to joint organisations
- 5.24 Omitted – non-mandatory clause not applicable to joint organisations
- 5.25 Omitted – non-mandatory clause not applicable to joint organisations
- 5.26 Omitted – non-mandatory clause not applicable to joint organisations
- 5.27 Omitted – non-mandatory clause not applicable to joint organisations
- 5.28 This code applies to a voting representative attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the voting representative was attending the meeting in person. Where a voting representative is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.
- 5.29 A voting representative must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The voting representative's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.
- 5.30 A voting representative must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the Joint Organisation or Committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the public to attend board meetings

- 5.31 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the Joint Organisation and committees of the Joint Organisation. The Joint Organisation must ensure that all meetings of the board and committees of the Joint Organisation are open to the public.
- 5.32 Clause 5.31 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.
- 5.33 A person (whether a voting representative or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the Joint Organisation or a committee of the Joint Organisation if expelled from the meeting:
 - a) by a resolution of the meeting, or
 - b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the Joint Organisation has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

Webcasting of meetings

- 5.34 Omitted – joint organisations not required to webcast meetings
- 5.35 Omitted – joint organisations not required to webcast meetings
- 5.36 Omitted – joint organisations not required to webcast meetings
- 5.37 Omitted – joint organisations not required to webcast meetings
- 5.38 Omitted – joint organisations not required to webcast meetings

5.39 Omitted – joint organisations not required to webcast meeting

Attendance of the executive officer and other staff at meetings

- 5.40 The Executive Officer is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the Joint Organisation or a meeting or a committee of the Joint Organisation of which all of the members are voting representatives.
- 5.41 The Executive Officer is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the Joint Organisation and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.
- 5.42 The Executive Officer may be excluded from a meeting of the Joint Organisation or a committee while the Joint Organisation or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the Executive Officer or the terms of employment of the Executive Officer.
- 5.43 The attendance of other Joint Organisation staff at a meeting, (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the Executive Officer.
- 5.44 The Executive Officer and other Joint Organisation staff may attend meetings of the Joint Organisation and committees of the Joint Organisation by audio-visual link. Attendance by Joint Organisation staff at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the Executive Officer.

6 The Chairperson

The Chairperson at meetings

- 6.1 The Chairperson, or at the request of or in the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson (if any) presides at meetings of the Joint Organisation.
- 6.2 If the chairperson and the deputy chairperson (if any) are absent, a voting representative elected to chair the meeting by the voting representatives present presides at a meeting of the Joint Organisation.

Election of the chairperson in the absence of the chairperson and deputy chairperson

- 6.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the Joint Organisation at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a Chairperson to preside at the meeting.
- 6.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:
 - a) by the Executive Officer or, in their absence, an employee of the Joint Organisation designated by the Executive Officer to conduct the election, or
 - b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the Executive Officer nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no Executive Officer or designated employee.
- 6.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.
- 6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:
 - a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and
 - b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.
- 6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.

- 6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

- 6.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the Joint Organisation:
- a) any voting representative then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and
 - b) every voting representative present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7 Modes of Address

Section 7 omitted – non-mandatory clauses

8 Order of business for ordinary Joint Organisation meetings

- 8.10 At a meeting of the Joint Organisation, the general order of business is fixed by resolution of the Joint Organisation.
- 8.11 Omitted – non-mandatory clause
- 8.12 The order of business as fixed under clause 8.1 may be altered for a particular meeting of the Joint Organisation if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.
- 8.13 Despite clauses 10.20-10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.3 may speak to the motion before it is put.

9 Consideration of business at board meetings

Business that can be dealt with at a Joint Organisation meeting

- 9.1 The Board must not consider business at a meeting of the Joint Organisation:
- a) unless a voting representative has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.10, and
 - b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the voting representatives in accordance with clause 3.7 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.9 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.
- 9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:
- a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the Joint Organisation, or
 - b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or
 - c) subject to clause 9.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a chairperson's minute, or
 - d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to, a committee of the Joint Organisation.
- 9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the Joint Organisation even though due notice of the business has not been given to the voting representatives if:
- a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and

- b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Joint Organisation before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Joint Organisation.

9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3(a) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20 - 10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

9.5 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.3(b).

Chairperson's minutes

9.6 Subject to clause 9.9, if the Chairperson is chairing the meeting of the Joint Organisation, the Chairperson may, by minute signed by the chairperson, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the Joint Organisation, or of which the Joint Organisation has official knowledge.

9.7 A Chairperson's minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the Joint Organisation's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the person chairing the meeting) may move the adoption of a Chairperson's minute without the motion being seconded.

9.8 A recommendation made in a Chairperson's minute put by the Chairperson is, so far as it is adopted by the Board, a resolution of the Joint Organisation.

9.9 A Chairperson's minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent, or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the Board before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Joint Organisation.

9.10 Where a Chairperson's minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the Joint Organisation's Delivery Program and budget, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the Chairperson's minute does not identify a funding source, the Board must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the Executive Officer on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Staff reports

9.11 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the Board, a resolution of the Joint Organisation.

Reports of committees of the Joint Organisation

9.12 The recommendations of a committee of the Joint Organisation are, so far as they are adopted by the Board, resolutions of the Joint Organisation.

9.13 If in a report of a committee of the board distinct recommendations are made, the board may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

- 9.14 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the Joint Organisation unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.10 and 3.14.
- 9.15 A voting representative may, through the chairperson, put a question to another voting representative about a matter on the agenda.
- 9.16 A voting representative may, through the Executive Officer, put a question to a Joint Organisation employee about a matter on the agenda. Joint Organisation employees are only obliged to answer a question put to them through the Executive Officer at the direction of the Executive Officer.
- 9.17 A voting representative or Joint Organisation employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a voting representative or Joint Organisation employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the Joint Organisation.
- 9.18 Voting representatives must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.
- 9.19 The Chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a voting representative or board employee.

10 Rules of debate

Motions to be seconded

- 10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

- 10.2 A voting representative who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.
- 10.3 If a voting representative who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to voting representatives, the voting representative may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the Hunter Joint Organisation.
- 10.4 In the absence of a voting representative who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the Joint Organisation:
- a) any other voting representative may, with the leave of the Chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or
 - b) the Chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the Joint Organisation.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

- 10.5 It is the duty of the Chairperson at a meeting of the Joint Organisation to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.
- 10.6 The Chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.
- 10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the Chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.

- 10.8 Any motion, amendment or other matter that the Chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Motions requiring the expenditure of funds

- 10.9 A motion or amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the Joint Organisation's Delivery Program and budget, must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the Board must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the Executive Officer on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments to motions

- 10.10 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.
- 10.11 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the Board and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the Chairperson.
- 10.12 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.
- 10.13 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before the Board at any one time.
- 10.14 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.
- 10.15 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.
- 10.16 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the voting representative who moved the original motion.

Foreshadowed motions

- 10.17 A voting representative may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the Board, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.
- 10.18 Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a voting representative may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the Board at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.
- 10.19 Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

- 10.20 A voting representative who, during a debate at a meeting of the Board, moves an original

motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.

- 10.21 A voting representative, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.
- 10.22 A voting representative must not, without the consent of the Board, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.
- 10.23 Despite clause 10.22, the Chairperson may permit a voting representative who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the voting representative to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.
- 10.24 Despite clause 10.22, the Board may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.
- 10.25 Despite clauses 10.20 and 10.21, a voting representative may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:
- a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no voting representative expresses an intention to speak against it, or
 - b) if at least two (2) voting representatives have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) voting representatives have spoken against it.
- 10.26 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.
- 10.27 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the Chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.20.
- 10.28 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.
- 10.29 All voting representatives must be heard without interruption and all other voting representatives must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another voting representative is speaking.
- 10.30 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the Chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

Participation by non-voting representatives in joint organisation board meetings

- 10.31 Non-voting representatives of joint organisation boards may speak on but must not move, second or vote on any motion or an amendment to a motion.

Note: Under section 400T(1)(c) of the Act, non-voting representatives of joint organisation boards may attend but are not entitled to vote at a meeting of the board.

11 Voting

Voting entitlements of voting representatives

11.1 Each voting representative is entitled to one (1) vote.

Note: Under section 400T(1) of the Act, voting representatives of joint organisation boards are entitled to one (1) vote each at meetings of the board.

11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the Joint Organisation has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

11.3 Where the Chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

11.4 A motion at a meeting of the board of a joint organisation is taken to be lost in the event of an equality of votes.

Note: Under section 400U(4) of the Act, joint organisations may specify more stringent voting requirements for decisions by the board such as a 75% majority or consensus decision making. Where a joint organisation's charter specifies more stringent voting requirements, clause 11.4 must be adapted to reflect those requirements.

Voting at board meetings

11.5 A voting representative who is present at a meeting of the Joint Organisation but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion.

11.6 If a voting representative who has voted against a motion put at a Joint Organisation meeting so requests, the Executive Officer must ensure that the voting representative's dissenting vote is recorded in the board's minutes.

11.7 The decision of the Chairperson as to the result of a vote is final, unless the decision is immediately challenged and not fewer than two (2) voting representatives rise and call for a division.

11.8 When a division on a motion is called, the Chairperson must ensure that the division takes place immediately. The Executive Officer must ensure that the names of those who vote for the motion and those who vote against it are recorded in the board's minutes for the meeting.

11.9 When a division on a motion is called, any voting representative who fails to vote will be recorded as having voted against the motion in accordance with clause 11.5 of this code.

11.10 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the Board may resolve that the voting in any election by voting representatives for Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson is to be by secret ballot.

11.11 Omitted – non-mandatory clause

Voting on planning decisions

Section omitted – not applicable to joint organisations

12 Committee of the whole

- 12.1 The Board may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the Joint Organisation.
- 12.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the Joint Organisation, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the Joint Organisation when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.
- 12.3 The Executive Officer or, in the absence of the Executive Officer, an employee of the Joint Organisation designated by the Executive Officer, is responsible for reporting to the Board the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.
- 12.4 The Joint Organisation must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the Joint Organisation's minutes. However, the Joint Organisation is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

13 Dealing with Items by exception

- 13.1 The Joint Organisation or a committee of the Joint Organisation may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.
- 13.2 Before the Joint Organisation resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the Chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask voting representatives to identify any individual items of business listed by the Chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.
- 13.3 The Joint Organisation or a committee of the Joint Organisation must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a voting member has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.
- 13.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the Joint Organisation or committee of the Joint Organisation must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.3.
- 13.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.
- 13.6 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.
- 13.7 Voting members must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the Joint Organisation's code of conduct.

14 Closure of meetings to the public

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

- 14.1 The Joint Organisation or a committee of the Joint Organisation may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:
 - a) personnel matters concerning individuals (other than voting representatives),
 - b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
 - c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with

- whom the Joint Organisation is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
- d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the board, or
 - (iii) reveal a trade secret,
 - e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
 - f) matters affecting the security of the Joint Organisation, voting representatives, Joint Organisation staff or Joint Organisation property,
 - g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
 - h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,
 - i) alleged contraventions of the Joint Organisation's code of conduct.

14.2 The board or a committee of the board may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:

- a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security, and
- b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the Board or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

- a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the Joint Organisation or committee of the Joint Organisation is involved, and
- b) are clearly identified in the advice, and
- c) are fully discussed in that advice.

14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

- a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or
- b) the discussion of the matter may:
 - (i) cause embarrassment to the board or committee concerned, or to voting representatives or to employees of the board, or
 - (ii) cause a loss of confidence in the board or committee.

14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the Board or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Chief Executive of the Office of

Local Government.

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

- 14.8 Part of a meeting of the Joint Organisation, or of a committee of the Joint Organisation, may be closed to the public while the Board or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:
- a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and
 - b) the Board or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:
 - (i) should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and
 - (ii) should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Representations by members of the public

- 14.9 The Joint Organisation, or a committee of the Joint Organisation, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.
- 14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.
- 14.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the Joint Organisation in the approved form. Applications must be received by 10 business days before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.
- 14.12 The Executive Officer (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.11. The Executive Officer or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- 14.13 No more than two speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9.
- 14.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the Executive Officer or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the Board. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the Executive Officer or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the board.
- 14.15 The Executive Officer (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.
- 14.16 Where the Joint Organisation or a committee of the Joint Organisation proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than two (2) speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.
- 14.17 Each speaker will be allowed five minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the Chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the Chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the Chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of non-voting representatives from meetings closed to the public

- 14.18 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the board or a committee of the board is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a voting representative and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.
- 14.19 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the board or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Obligations of board members attending by audio-visual link

- 14.20 Joint Organisation Board Members attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

- 14.21 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:
- a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,
 - b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,
 - c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

- 14.22 If the Joint Organisation passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the Chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.
- 14.23 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the Chairperson under clause 14.21 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

15 Keeping order at meetings

Points of order

- 15.1 A voting representative may draw the attention of the Chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.
- 15.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.
- 15.3 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The Chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the voting representative raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The Chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

- 15.4 The Chairperson, without the intervention of any other voting representative, may call any voting representative to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.
- 15.5 A voting representative who claims that another voting representative has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the Chairperson to the matter.
- 15.6 The Chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the Board.
- 15.7 The Chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

- 15.8 A voting representative can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the Chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the Chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.
- 15.9 If a motion of dissent is passed, the Chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the Chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.
- 15.10 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the Chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

- 15.11 A voting representative commits an act of disorder if the voting representative, at a meeting of the Joint Organisation or a committee of the Joint Organisation:
 - a) contravenes the Act or any regulation in force under the Act or this code, or
 - b) assaults or threatens to assault another voting representative or person present at the meeting, or
 - c) moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the Joint Organisation or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the Board or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or
 - d) insults or makes personal reflections on or imputes improper motives to any other Joint Organisation official, or alleges a breach of the Joint Organisation's code of conduct, or

- e) says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the Joint Organisation or the committee into disrepute.

15.12 The chairperson may require a voting representative:

- a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(a) (b), or (e), or
- b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.11(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or
- c) to retract and apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(d) and (e).

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

15.13 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the board, the Chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The Joint Organisation Board, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the Chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of voting representatives.

Expulsion from meetings

15.14 All Chairpersons of meetings of the Joint Organisation and committees of the Joint Organisation are authorised under this code to expel any person, including any voting representative, from a Joint Organisation Board or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act.

15.15 Omitted – covered by Clause 15.14

15.16 Clause 15.14 does not limit the ability of the Joint Organisation and committees of the Joint Organisation to resolve to expel a person, including a voting representative, from a Joint Organisation Board or committee meeting, under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.

15.17 A voting representative may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the board for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.12. The expulsion of a voting representative from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the voting representative for the act of disorder concerned.

15.18 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the Joint Organisation for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.

15.19 Where a voting representative or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

15.20 If a voting representative or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the board is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the board or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the voting representative or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the voting representative or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

How disorder by Board members attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

- 15.21 Where a Joint Organisation Board member is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the Chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the Board members audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this code.
- 15.22 If a Joint Organisation Board member attending a meeting by by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the Chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the Chairperson, may terminate the Board members audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

- 15.23 Voting representatives, Joint Organisation staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the Joint Organisation and committees of the Joint Organisation.
- 15.24 A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the Joint Organisation or a committee of the Joint Organisation without the prior authorisation of the Joint Organisation Board or the committee.
- 15.25 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.24 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.18. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 12.19, may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.
- 15.26 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the board or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

16 Conflicts of Interest

- 16.1 All voting representatives and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the Joint Organisation and committees of the Joint Organisation in accordance with the Joint Organisation's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.
- 16.2 Voting representatives attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the Joint Organisation's code of conduct. Where a voting representative has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the voting members audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the voting representative must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Joint Organisation Board or committee, or at any time during which the Joint Organisation Board or committee is voting on the matter.

17 Decisions of the Joint Organisation

Board decisions

- 17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the Joint Organisation Board at which a quorum is present is a decision of the Joint Organisation.

Note: Clause 14.1 reflects section 400T(8) of the Act in the case of joint organisations.

Note: Under section 400U(4) of the Act, joint organisations may specify more stringent voting requirements for decisions by the board such as a 75% majority or consensus decision making. Where a joint organisation's charter specifies more stringent voting requirements, clause 14.1 must be adapted to reflect those requirements.

- 17.2 Decisions made by the Joint Organisation Board must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering Board decisions

- 17.3 A resolution passed by the Joint Organisation Board may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.10.
- 17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.
- 17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.10.
- 17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) voting representatives if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.
- 17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.
- 17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.
- 17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.11 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.
- 17.10 Omitted – optional clause not applicable to joint organisations
- 17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Joint Organisation may be moved on the report of a committee of the Joint Organisation and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Organisation.
- 17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Joint Organisation may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:
- a) a notice of motion signed by three voting representatives is submitted to the Chairperson, and
 - b) a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and
 - c) the Chairperson rules the business that is the subject of the motion is of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Joint Organisation before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Joint Organisation.
- 17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–

10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.14 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the Chairperson under clause 17.12(c).

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

17.15 Despite the provisions of this Part, voting representatives may, with the leave of the Chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

- a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the Joint Organisation's resolution, or
- b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.

17.16 In seeking the leave of the Chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), the voting representative is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.

17.17 The Chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.

17.18 A motion moved under clause 17.15 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.15 can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.19 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the Chairperson under clause 17.15.

17.20 A motion moved under clause 17.15 with the leave of the Chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

18 Time limits on Joint Organisation meetings

Omitted - Optional clauses not applicable to Joint Organisation meetings

19 After the meeting

Minutes of meetings

19.1 The Joint Organisation is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the Joint Organisation.

19.2 At a minimum, the Executive Officer must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the Joint Organisation minutes:

- a) The names of Board members attending a Joint Organisation meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link
- b) details of each motion moved at a Joint Organisation meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
- c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
- d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
- e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

19.3 The minutes of a Joint Organisation meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the Joint Organisation.

19.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

19.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the

subsequent meeting.

- 19.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.
- 19.7 The confirmed minutes of a Joint Organisation meeting must be published on the Joint Organisation's website. This clause does not prevent the Joint Organisation from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

- 19.8 The Joint Organisation and committees of the Joint Organisation must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.
- 19.9 Clause 15.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.
- 19.10 Clause 15.8 does not apply if the Joint Organisation or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.
- 19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 15.9 and 15.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

Implementation of decisions of the board

- 19.12 The Executive Officer is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the board.

20 Joint Organisation Committees

Application of this Part

- 20.1 This Part only applies to committees of the Joint Organisation whose members are all voting representatives.

Joint Organisation committees whose members are all voting representatives

- 20.2 The Joint Organisation may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.
- 20.3 A committee of the Joint Organisation is to consist of the Chairperson and such other voting representatives as are elected by the voting representatives or appointed by the Joint Organisation Board.
- 20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the Joint Organisation is to be:
- a) such number of members as the Joint Organisation Board decides, or
 - b) if the Joint Organisation Board has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

- 20.5 The Joint Organisation must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established, but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

- 20.6 The Executive Officer must send to each voting representative, regardless of whether they are a

committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:

- a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and
- b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

20.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

Attendance at committee meetings

20.8 A committee member (other than the Chairperson) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:

- a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences, or
- b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

20.9 Clause 20.8 does not apply if all of the members of the Joint Organisation are members of the committee.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

20.10 A voting representative who is not a member of a committee of the Joint Organisation is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the voting representative is not entitled:

- a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or
- b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
- c) to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and deputy chairperson of board committees

20.11 The Chairperson of each committee of the Joint Organisation must be:

- a) the Chairperson, or
- b) if the Chairperson does not wish to be the Chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the Joint Organisation Board, or
- c) if the Joint Organisation Board does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.

20.12 The Joint Organisation Board may elect a member of a committee of the Joint Organisation as Deputy Chairperson of the committee. If the Board does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a Deputy Chairperson.

20.13 If neither the Chairperson nor the Deputy Chairperson of a committee of the Joint Organisation is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be Acting Chairperson of the committee.

20.14 The Chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the Joint Organisation. If the Chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the Deputy Chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the Chairperson nor the Deputy Chairperson is able or willing to preside, the Acting Chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in committee meetings

20.15 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the Joint Organisation may

regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the Joint Organisation unless the Joint Organisation Board or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.

20.16 Omitted – not applicable to joint organisations

20.17 A motion at a committee of a joint organisation is taken to be lost in the event of an equality of votes.

20.18 Voting at a Joint Organisation committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Closure of committee meetings to the public

20.19 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the Joint Organisation to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the Joint Organisation to the public.

20.20 If a committee of the Joint Organisation passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the Chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended, and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the board. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

20.21 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the Chairperson under clause 20.20 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in committee meetings

20.22 The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in Joint Organisation meetings apply to meetings of committees of the Joint Organisation in the same way as they apply to meetings of the Joint Organisation.

Minutes of Joint Organisation committee meetings

20.23 Each committee of the board is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:

- a) the names of voting members attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
- b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
- c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
- d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
- e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

20.24 All voting at meetings of committees of the Joint Organisation (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of voting representatives who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

20.25 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the Joint Organisation must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

20.26 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

20.27 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that

subsequent meeting.

20.28 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

20.29 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the Joint Organisation must be published on the Joint Organisation's website. This clause does not prevent the Joint Organisation from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the board on its website prior to their confirmation.

21 Irregularities

21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a Joint Organisation or a Joint Organisation committee are not invalidated because of:

- a) a vacancy in a civic office, or
- b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any voting representative or committee member, or
- c) any defect in the election or appointment of a voting representative or committee member, or
- d) a failure of a voting representative or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a Joint Organisation or committee meeting in accordance with the Joint Organisation's code of conduct, or
- e) a failure to comply with this code.

22 Definitions

the Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
act of disorder	means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.11 of this code
amendment	in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion
audio recorder	any device capable of recording speech
Audio-visual link	means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places
business day	means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales
chairperson	in relation to a meeting of the Joint Organisation – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this code, and in relation to a meeting of a committee – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.11 of this code
this code	means the board's adopted code of meeting practice
committee of the board	means a committee established by the Joint Organisation in accordance with clause 20.2 of this code (being a committee consisting only of voting representatives) or the board when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1
joint organisation official	Has the same meaning it has in the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW
day	means calendar day
division	means a request by two voting representatives under clause 11.7 of this code requiring the recording of the names of the voting representatives who voted both for and against a motion
foreshadowed amendment	means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a voting representative under clause 10.18 of this code during debate on the first amendment
foreshadowed motion	means a motion foreshadowed by a voting representative under clause 10.17 of this code during debate on an original motion

open voting	means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means
planning decision	means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a board under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act
performance improvement order	means an order issued under section 438A of the Act
quorum	means the minimum number of voting representatives or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting
the Regulation	means the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>
webcast	a video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time
year	means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June