

# Guidance on Writing Motions to Electors' Meetings

## Objective: Guidance on how to draft an effective motion

### 1 Purpose:

Electors wanting Council to consider making a decision on a matter can draft a motion to be presented at an Annual General Meeting of Electors (where electors may raise any motion that is related to the responsibilities and functions of the local government) or Special Meetings of Electors (where electors may raise motions that are related to the purpose for which the meeting was called for) and if endorsed by electors present will proceed to be considered by Elected Members at an Ordinary Meeting of Council.

Legislation does not set out how electors are to word motions therefore the City of Joondalup has provided this guide to assist electors in drafting motions.

### 2 Who can Submit a Motion:

All City of Joondalup electors are eligible to submit motions for consideration at formal electors' meetings. Further information on electors' meetings can be found in Part 5, Division 2, Subdivision 4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (S5.26 to S5.33) and the *City of Joondalup's Procedures for Electors' Meetings* which is accessible on the City's website [www.joondalup.wa.gov.au](http://www.joondalup.wa.gov.au).

### 3 Elected Members' Role:

Effective contribution to and representation at meetings by elected members increases the quality of council decisions. Elected members use the following legislation and guidelines to assist them at meetings when making decisions on motions:

- *Local Government Act 1995.*
- *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996.*
- *City of Joondalup Meeting Procedures Local Law 2013.*
- *City of Joondalup Procedures for Elector's Meetings.*

#### **4 Drafting Motions:**

The purpose of a motion is a formal proposal put to elected members for a decision by council, to take a specific action.

Motions raised and supported by electors at a City of Joondalup Annual General Meeting of Electors or Special Meetings of Electors will progress to an Ordinary Meeting of Council at which decisions on electors' motions will be made by a majority vote of the members present at the meeting.

#### **5 How to Write a Motion:**

When submitting a motion at a City of Joondalup Annual General Meeting of Electors or Special Meetings of Electors the motion should include what you want done, by whom and, in some cases, when it should be done.

All motions should be clear as to:

- What positive action is to be taken.
- Who is to do it.
- How it is to be done.
- When it is to be done.
- The outcome required.
- The legislation under which the action can be taken (if known).

Outlined below are some characteristics to consider when drafting an effective motion. An example motion is also provided below:

MOVED xx SECONDED xx, that the Electors of the City of Joondalup REQUESTS Council to:

1. xx
2. xx

##### **5.1 Be Clear and Specific:**

- For a motion to be successful you need to spend the necessary time and effort to present a thoughtful and well worded motion.
- Consider what it is you want to achieve with the motion.
- Say it in the fewest number of words possible.
- Consider if your proposed motion can realistically be achieved and if it is something that other electors are likely to support.

##### **5.2 Content:**

- Have one idea per motion. If there is more than one issue, make it a separate motion.
- The motion must be able to stand alone without supporting documents.
- It must make sense and clearly state its purpose.

- If you want a report or a response to the action, include it in the motion.
- Include specific results that can be measured.
- Include a verb: your motion is a call for action.

### **5.3 Things that Detract from the Intent of your Motion:**

- Poor spelling and/or grammar.
- Poor wording, make sure the meaning is clear and don't be ambiguous.
- Frivolous, malicious or discriminatory intent.

### **5.4 Collaborate:**

- Ask for guidance in drafting your motion from the City of Joondalup Ward Councillors (details available on [Elected Members – City of Joondalup](#)).
- Seek guidance and collaborate with local community groups, residents' associations or other City of Joondalup electors.

### **5.5 City Support**

- The City's Governance Team will provide assistance in ensuring the motion is in due form only (that is meeting the requirements of Parts 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 above).

### **5.6 Submission of Motions to the City of Joondalup**

- Any motions to be moved at the Annual General Meeting of Electors should be received in writing by the City by 9:00am on the Friday immediately prior to the scheduled Annual General Meeting of Electors. Motions should be submitted via the online form on the City's website or sent via email to [council.questions@joondalup.wa.gov.au](mailto:council.questions@joondalup.wa.gov.au)
- Preference will be given to those electors that submit motions in writing by the required time. Time permitting, the Mayor may consider further motions from the floor.
- To give fair opportunity to all electors in attendance, an elector can only move one motion at a time.

#### **For further information, see:**

- Part 5, Division 2, Subdivision 4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (S5.26 to S5.33).
- The Department of Local Government Operational Guideline Number 7 – Clarity in Council Motions.

