

Our Ref: 4586659

25 August 2021

Brett Stevenson  
Co-Convenor  
A Better Eurobodalla  
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Dear Brett

Thank you for your letter dated 19 August 2021 in regard to the ruling at the public access session held on 17 August 2021. I provide the following responses to your questions:

*ABE notes that similar rulings have also affected recent ABE presentations to Council, and so now seeks formal written advice from you outlining:*

- 1. Relevant provisions of Council's Code of Meeting Conduct being used as the basis for your rulings regarding the restrictions on Councillors questions spokespersons who present on behalf of groups; and*  
The ruling at the Public Access session on 17 August 2021 was based on Council protocols and is not part of Council's Code of Meeting Practice.
- 2. The basis for how these provisions are being applied to Public Access and Public Forum sessions.*  
Council's protocol is to allow questions of presenters when they are able to demonstrate that they conclusively represent the organisation to which they refer in their submission to Council. This is demonstrated, for example, by the presenter being the Convenor or Co-convenor, President or member of the executive body. This provides both certainty for the Councillors and also does not place undue pressure on the speaker with the expectation that they would fully know and be able to articulate the views of the group they are speaking for.

For example, prior to this protocol being introduced, there was an incident where a presenter purported to be representing a group and spoke at Council on behalf of that organisation. Council was later informed by a member of their Executive that the presenter in question did not speak on behalf of that groups and did not represent their views on the particular matter in question.

The protocol that has now in place for some years makes it clearer for all participants, including members of the public and Councillors.

I trust this clarifies your concerns.

Yours sincerely

*Catherine Dale*

Dr Catherine Dale  
**General Manager**