

**ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
22 JUNE 2009**

ORDER OF THE DAY

ORDER 3	MEETING PROCESS REVIEW
LOCATION/ADDRESS:	N/A
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:	SALLY CALDER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ORGANISATION SYSTEMS AND SUPPORT
PREPARED BY:	NORM MCCLELLAND, GOVERNANCE ADVISOR
FILE NO.:	N/A
ATTACHMENTS:	ATTACHMENT 1 – PROPOSED COUNCIL MEETING CYCLE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is presented to Council so that it can consider amending various matters regarding its meeting process including locations of meetings; the 'order of business' for those meetings; the timing of publishing agendas on Council's website and the Council / Committee meeting cycle.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to:

- 2.1 Rotate the location of its Ordinary Council meetings between the St Kilda Town Hall Council Chamber, the Port Melbourne Town Hall Council Chamber and the South Melbourne Town Hall Hub Theatre.
- 2.2 Adopt the Ordinary Council / Statutory Planning Committee meeting cycle for the period July 2009 to January 2010 as contained in Attachment 1.
- 2.3 Adopt the following 'order of business' for Ordinary Council / Statutory Planning Committee meetings:
- 2.3.1 Apologies.
 - 2.3.2 Minutes of previous meeting.
 - 2.3.3 Declarations of conflicts of interest.
 - 2.3.4 Petitions and joint letters (Council meetings only).
 - 2.3.5 Sealing Schedule (Council meetings only).

- 2.3.6 Public question time.
- 2.3.7 Presentation of reports.
- 2.3.8 Notice of motion (only when required).
- 2.3.9 Reports by Councillor delegates.
- 2.3.10 Urgent business.
- 2.3.11 Confidential matters (only when required).
- 2.4 Note Ordinary Council and Statutory Planning Committee meeting agendas and reports will be published on the Council website by 12 noon on the Thursday prior to the meeting.
- 2.5 Note that a review of Council's Meeting Procedure Local Law will be undertaken in the second half of 2009.
- 2.6 Adopt the following as its monthly Ordinary Council / Statutory Planning meeting cycle commencing July 2009:
 - 2.6.1 Second Monday of the month – Ordinary Council meeting.
 - 2.6.2 Third Monday of the month – Statutory Planning Committee meeting.
 - 2.6.3 Fourth Monday of the month – Ordinary Council meeting.

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 Council through its draft 2009 - 2013 Council Plan has indicated its intention to review the way it conducts its meetings to ensure that its decision-making is both transparent and democratic and that community input and engagement is maximised.
- 3.2 To this end Council has requested options on improvements that can be implemented immediately in relation to the location, type, structure and timing of its meetings.

4. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 4.1. A Councillor briefing was held on this matter on 9 June 2009.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 OPTIONS:

5.1.1 Location of meetings –

5.1.1.1 Currently all Ordinary Council, Statutory Planning Committee and Strategy and Policy Review Committee meetings are held in the St Kilda Town Hall Council Chamber unless Council resolves otherwise.

5.1.1.2 The draft 2009 – 2013 Council Plan contains a specific action to review the locations of meetings. This report recommends that every second month an Ordinary Council meeting is to be held at either the Port Melbourne Town Hall Council Chamber or the South Melbourne Town Hall Hub Theatre. Both of these venues are logistically suitable and have disabled access. The aim of this proposed change is to strengthen opportunities for community engagement.

5.1.1.3 It is proposed that the St Kilda Town Hall is still the appropriate venue for key meetings that relate to the adoption of the budget and Council Plan, striking of the rate and election of the Mayor.

A schedule of meeting locations is attached (Attachment 1) for Council's approval.

5.1.2 Order of business –

5.1.2.1 Council through its Meeting Procedure Local Law has the power to determine the order of business for Ordinary Council and Special Committee meetings.

5.1.2.2 It is recommended that Council adopt the order of business for Ordinary Council and Statutory Planning Committee meetings as proposed in recommendation 2.3. The changes relate to the deletion of obsolete items such as correspondence and CEO's report and the addition of new items relating to the declaration of conflicts of interest and notice of motion by a Councillor.

5.1.3 Publishing reports on the web –

5.1.3.1 It is proposed that all reports will be available to the public on Council's website by 12 noon on the Thursday prior to the Monday meeting. This will increase the time that members of the public have to access Council reports.

5.1.4 Council / committee meeting cycle –

5.1.4.1 Council's current meeting cycle is as follows: First Monday of the month – Strategy and Policy Review Committee; Second Monday – Statutory Planning Committee; and Fourth Monday – Ordinary Council meeting.

5.1.4.2 The Strategy and Policy Review Committee is a Special Committee of Council, comprising all Councillors but has no delegated power. All recommendations from this committee require ratification by the Ordinary meeting of Council which is held three weeks later. This can be confusing for the public as it can be difficult to differentiate between the two meetings. In addition this cycle only allows for formal Council decision-making once a month.

5.1.4.3 It is proposed to simplify the structure by having two Ordinary Council meetings each month (on the second and fourth Mondays) and a Statutory Planning Committee meeting on the third Monday. This cycle allows Council to formally make decisions twice monthly and if necessary Council can defer consideration of an item and request further information at the next meeting to be held in two weeks time. It is not proposed to amend the starting time of 6.00pm.

5.1.5 Other matters –

5.1.5.1 Council's Meeting Procedure Local Law will be reviewed in the second half of 2009 and will address matters including the conduct of public question time and public comment relating to items on the agenda. The review will also amend the Local Law to align it with recent changes to the Local Government Act 1989.

5.2 ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN

5.2.1 The proposals contained in this report are consistent with Council's key direction of 'Engaging and governing the City' as contained in Council's draft 2009 – 2013 Council Plan. The Plan under strategy 1.2.2 commits to 'Provide for more community friendly Council committee structures and Council meeting arrangements' and it contains a specific action to 'review locations, logistics and types of meetings'.

5.3 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.3.1 Council's Meeting Procedure Local Law regulates the proceedings at all Council meetings and Special Committee meetings comprised solely of Councillors. All changes proposed in this report are consistent with Council's Local Law.

5.4 FINANCE / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.4.1 There will be minimal additional costs associated with the holding of meetings at alternate venues and these costs will be covered within existing budgets.

5.5 LEGAL & RISK IMPLICATIONS

5.5.1 Legal and risk implications are minimal. If Council decides to change its meeting cycle then appropriate notice will need to be given to the public of these changes via Council's website and through the local newspapers.

6. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

6.1 TIMELINE

6.1.1 This report recommends implementing these changes effective from the July Council meeting cycle. A full review of the Meeting Procedure Local Law is expected to occur over the period July – December 2009.

6.2 COMMUNICATION

6.2.1 An advertisement will be placed in the local newspaper advising of Council's newly adopted timetable. Individual advertisements are also placed for each meeting. Council's website will also be updated to reflect any changes made by Council.