

MINUTES

COMMUNITY FOCUS COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY, 9 JUNE 2020

7.00PM

HELD VIRTUALLY BY ZOOM AND
BROADCAST ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE

COUNCIL:

Cr S Asher (Bellarine Ward)

Mayor

Cr K Grzybek (Windermere Ward)

Deputy Mayor

Cr J Mason (Bellarine Ward)

Cr T Sullivan (Bellarine Ward)

Cr E Kontelj (Brownbill Ward)

Cr S Mansfield (Brownbill Ward)

Cr P Murrily (Brownbill Ward)

Cr B Harwood (Kardinia Ward)

Cr P Murnane (Kardinia Ward)

Cr R Nelson (Kardinia Ward)

Cr A Aitken (Windermere Ward)

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**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY FOCUS COUNCIL MEETING
HELD VIRTUALLY BY ZOOM AND BROADCAST ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE
TUESDAY, 9 JUNE 2020
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT: Cr S Asher (Mayor), Crs A Aitken, K Grzybek, B Harwood, E Kontelj, S Mansfield, J Mason, P Murnane, P Murrhly, R Nelson, T Sullivan

Also present: M Dugina (Acting Chief Executive Officer), R Leonard (Director Governance, Strategy and Performance)

OPENING: The Mayor declared the meeting open at 7.00pm

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Council acknowledged Wadawurrung Traditional Owners of this land and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

WELCOME:

The Mayor welcomed Junior Mayor, Farzana Hussaini and Deputy Mayor, Ashley Delaney to the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned from approximately 7:02pm and recommenced at approximately 7:18pm due to technical difficulties.

APOLOGIES: Nil.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:

Cr Mansfield moved, Cr Mason seconded -

That the Minutes of the Community Focus Council Meeting held on 12 May 2020 be confirmed.

Carried.

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: Nil.

PUBLIC QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME:

Vicki Perrett asked the following:

- 1) It is unfortunate that Council continues to take short cuts in the development of its Sustainability Framework and Action Plan. The extended public consultation period generated 96 survey responses and further direct submissions.

This level of interest should alert Councillors to the importance of this issue to the community and their desire to be part of the solution. I would agree that the revised objectives (previously called Priority Actions) in the Sustainability Framework 2020 have improved clarity and scope.

However, why is Council moving this amendment before receiving the full feedback report, which is not due to be tabled until 14 July? This does not seem to be in keeping with Local Government Act (LGA) s9(i) “the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured”.

Thank you for your questions Vicki :

On 25 February 2020 the Council approved the Sustainability Framework and endorsed seeking community feedback on the Action Plan. Whilst the engagement process was aimed at collecting community feedback about the Action Plan, some feedback related to the Framework itself. It was timely to update the Sustainability Framework to reflect the community feedback.

As planned, the Action Plan associated with the Sustainability Framework will now be revised based on the complete review of the feedback received from our community. The revised Action Plan will be tabled in July with the final engagement report. As the parent document to the Action Plan it is important that the Framework best reflects what our community has told us so that the City can now plan and deliver these objectives.

- 2) The objective to “Make the City’s operations carbon neutral” is unacceptably weak. Council’s own emissions account for only 1% of the region’s total carbon emissions. We are in a climate emergency. Sadly for all of us, weak targets will lock in failure.

Will the City of Greater Geelong set quantitative targets for the whole municipality on emissions reduction and renewable energy as required by the new overarching principles in the LGA section 9(h)?

Response :

The Local Government Act 2020 requires Councils to identify and address climate change risks and to consider any regional, state and regional plans and policies in our strategic planning and decision making.

The City has set its own carbon emissions reductions targets in the Zero Carbon Emission Strategy and aims to achieve a 100% emissions reduction target by 2050. The decision to become a carbon neutral organisation demonstrates that the City is leading by example.

Whilst the City can lead the conversation and set a good example regionally in relation to emissions reduction, the City is not able to set enforceable targets for emissions reduction, which is the role of the State and/or Federal governments.

- 3) The community needs hope and inspiration. We support your stated definition of sustainability - “Working together to position our community, environment and economy to meet our sustainability challenges now and in the future.” The community wants to work with Council but is currently only allowed to comment on drafts. Stakeholders should be collaborating on an effective climate action plan. Instead we are been worn down responding to more and more environmental plans and strategies.

Can we have a process like Warrnambool that has produced an excellent inclusive plan, W2040 www.w2040.com.au/w2040-plan)?

Response :

The proposed updated Sustainability Framework has an increased focus on community knowledge and input. We recognise that there is a wealth of experience, knowledge and skill in our community and that we can improve public participation in decision making. As part of the implementation of the Sustainability Framework we will identify how we can best activate this community expertise. Best practice initiatives by other local government authorities, such as W2040, will inform the final implementation plan.

Sally Fisher asked Council to explain how the Sustainability Framework is consistent with the new Local Government Act 2020 which requires : S9(c) the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted; (d) the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making; (f) collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought; (h) regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making; (i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured:

- when there are no targets to drive the municipal district's emissions reductions;
- the community has had minimal engagement in this critical process thus far;
- there is no evidence of collaboration with leading Councils or neighbouring Councils. Other leading Councils are now producing excellent plans addressing the climate emergency which we could learn much from eg Yarra Council;
- the "zero carbon" target is not aligned with the State Government's emissions reduction targets (which includes dates and interim targets) and neither is this critical target clear in the draft Environment Strategy. The Federal Government does not have a clear policy regarding targets; and
- and the community submissions on the Framework and Action Plan have not been made public.

Thank you for your questions Sally:

Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2020 identifies the overarching governance principles and supporting principles of Council and includes identification and addressing of climate change risks, engaging community, collaboration with others, the consideration of any regional, state and regional plans and ensuring transparency.

The proposed updated Sustainability Framework objectives include:

- *Recognise a global climate change emergency and take appropriate action;*
- *Understand and proactively manage our climate change risk;*
- *Partner with other organisations and groups to achieve more for our community; and*
- *Harness community knowledge to drive sustainable change*

The Sustainability Framework was first developed in February 2020 in response to community demand for action on climate change. Given the urgency, the Framework was informed by stakeholder feedback generated in a series of workshops. Consultation on the associated Action Plan was extended by several weeks to ensure that more members of our community could have their say. A final report on this consultation is currently being prepared and will be publicly available in July. All strategies and plans established or reviewed as part of the implementation will be made available to the community for feedback. City works with other local governments in a number of ways including the G21 Geelong Regional Alliance, made up of Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire, Golden Plains and the Borough of Queenscliffe. The City is actively participating in the recently established Barwon South West Greenhouse Alliance to ensure an integrated approach to climate risk is taken across the region.

It is important to recognise that large scale emissions reduction and renewable energy uptake is most impacted by State and Federal government policies and plans. The strategies and plans that support the Sustainability Framework align with relevant State and Federal government plans and policies including the Victorian Renewable Energy Target. The City has recently established an advocacy function to work better with other levels of government to deliver better outcomes for our community.

Neil Plummer asked:

For the first objective in the Sustainability Framework, i.e. “Recognise a global climate emergency and take appropriate action”, what differences will the Geelong community experience from a ‘global’ emergency as compared to a ‘local’ emergency?

Following on from this, what are three appropriate actions that the Geelong community will see over the next three years to mitigate our most serious risks from this emergency?

Thank you for your question Neil :

Recognising a global emergency acknowledges the interconnectedness of the modern world which provides both challenges and opportunities to the sustainability of our local region. We will use internationally recognised standards through the Global Reporting Initiatives while taking actions that have the biggest impact at a local level.

Priority objectives have been identified and a draft Action Plan was released for community feedback. The community consultation closed at the end of May and a full report will go to the Council in July with a revised Action Plan which will identify priority actions.

Sanja Van Huet asked that The Sustainability Framework should not be voted on in its current form. One of the biggest missteps Council can make will be to focus on Council-only carbon emissions over developing a whole of municipality action plan. 10% of carbon emissions come from Council only business – what of the other 90%, which are municipality generated?

My question is – when will Council make a serious evaluation of the impact they could make to address climate change factors?

This must include whole of municipality initiatives; working with citizens advocacy groups and amending the current Sustainability Framework accordingly. Transparency was one of the key points out of the 2017 Citizens Jury. Sadly; constituents who have been following Council decision making and public messages (via local news and letterbox drops) note with increasing frustration that this is missing in many aspects of Council operations. Clarity is being lost in polispeak. The language, rhetoric and narrowness of the scope of the Framework is just one example. Please make the correct decision for the right reasons.

Thank you for your question Sanja:

The decision to become a carbon neutral organisation demonstrates that the City is leading by example. It is important to the City that we report on the performance of the Sustainability Framework and that our targets are SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. We will continue to support emissions reduction across the municipality through our policies and plans including encouraging active transport through the Shared Trails Masterplan.

It is also important to recognise that large scale emissions reduction and renewable energy uptake is most impacted by State and Federal government policies and plans. The strategies and plans that support the Sustainability Framework align with relevant State and Federal government plans and policies including the Victorian Renewable Energy Target.

Karen Campbell writes as a Professor of Population Nutrition representing a group of colleagues within Deakin University's Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition. Further to our submission regarding the City of Greater Geelong's Sustainability Framework and Action Plan we are encouraged to see the revised Sustainability Framework now referencing community education regarding sustainable practice and importantly support for local sustainable food production. We would like to ask:

- 1) Can Council provide clear objectives and measurable, time specific outcomes to provide detail around how Council will support local sustainable food production?
- 2) Can Council expand this acknowledgement of sustainable food systems to include a whole of systems mission, thus addressing Council's role in promoting local food procurement, reducing food transport and actively seeking to reduce food waste (30% of all food goes is wasted)?
- 3) IPAN would welcome the opportunity to work with the City of Greater Geelong to progress this sustainability agenda offering high level skills in the areas of sustainable food systems, community health behaviour change and also in the domain of active transport. Can the Council confirm it will seek opportunities offered by local experts in the area of food sustainability and active transport to meet its obligations to engage with its municipal community (S9 Local Government Act)?

Thank you for your questions Karen:

The revised Framework includes an objective to "Encourage and support local, sustainable food production". If the revised Framework is adopted, items will be added to the associated Action Plan that will support this objective. We have noted your comments above and will look at how this and other feedback can be used in revising existing policies and plans to meet the desired outcomes.

We appreciate your offer to provide expertise on food systems and behaviour change and have noted your details and will ensure you and your colleagues are invited to engage further with the City on sustainable food.

Noreen Nicholson asked the following:

I am glad to see that there is a community request for Council recognition within the Sustainability Framework, that recognises not only are we in a global emergency but of course a local Climate Emergency declaration is required (emergency definition: a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action), which will need immediate attention and courageous leadership.

COVID-19 has established a new way of responding to an emergency...immediate, funded, whole of country (local, regional, state) unprecedented action! So given the overwhelming scientific evidence, why are we not taking the same measures for the Climate Emergency?

What are our immediate control and intervention measures for the Climate Emergency in the local and regional context.

ABC Science News report today: The next pandemic is coming - and sooner than we think, thanks to changes to the environment, link here. 'Researchers say human impacts on the natural world are causing new infectious diseases to emerge more frequently than ever before, meaning the next pandemic - one perhaps even worse than COVID-19 is only a matter of time.

"We know that it's a probability, not a possibility" Dr. Reid says. Cutting into forests or previously undisturbed ecosystems, often to expand agricultural land, drive out pathogens that were locked in the wild. Biodiversity and habitat loss helps diseases spread among wild animals. Dense human populations living together in greater numbers in cities facilitate their spread'. Given the projected growth in the Greater Geelong area over the coming years, what implications does this warning have for us all?

It is my understanding that there is a Council mindset that \$70K is sufficient for enviro grants as that covers the applications that are received. I would like to propose that the \$6K grant limit and onerous 13 page grant application for environmental and sustainability grants will never fund those more complex clever and creative projects that will make a world of difference in a climate emergency.

Gene Blackley from Drawdown Australia offered his vision for Greater Geelong as, "evolving into a net-zero emissions economy, accepting the extraordinary economic regeneration opportunities with a diversity of urban, agricultural, and marine environments together with a manufacturing, education and services economy". We look to you for Leadership in realising this vision for Geelong in this post COVID-19 recovery.

- 1) In your Community Grants review and updated Sustainability Framework Action Plan, are you seriously reconsidering the maximum funding required for environment/sustainability grants, that will support innovative enviro projects to maximise impact in the regions' recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and Climate Emergency, given the two are inextricably linked?

Thank you for your question Noreen :

The Council adopted a number of changes to the 2020-21 grants at its meeting on 24 March 2020. This included raising the maximum funding for individual Environment and Sustainability grants to \$10,000 and updating the guidelines to better reflect Council's policy. Every effort is made to streamline the application process for the many community groups applying for grants whilst maintaining appropriate governance arrangements. We welcome any feedback on the application process to assist us to improve.

PETITIONS: Nil.

1. YOUTH COUNCIL SECOND REPORT 2020

Source: Community Life – Connected
Communities
Director: Robyn Stevens
Portfolio: Leadership and Governance

Purpose

1. To note the second report to Council from the Youth Council Advisory Committee 2020, providing advice to Council on youth specific issues, consistent with the Terms of Reference (TOR).

Background

2. Twelve local young people were elected to the City of Greater Geelong Youth Council Advisory Committee (Youth Council), and during their 12-month term will serve as the region's official 'youth voice'.
3. Aged between 12 and 17, the Youth Councillors represent a spread of local towns and suburbs, with three representatives from each of the four Council wards – Bellarine, Brownbill, Kardinia and Windermere.

Key Matters

4. Deputy Junior Mayor, Ashley Delaney, has written the second of the Youth Council reports for 2020 about Youth Council tasks, findings and advice for Council's consideration (**Attachment 2**).
5. The focus of the Deputy Junior Mayor's report is to highlight Youth Council achievements since the first report was noted by Council in April 2020. This report notes recent actions undertaken including hosting the first Youth Council online meeting via Zoom, naming of the Native Vegetation Mascot, selection of the Youth Postcard Project winner and establishment of the Youth Council Instagram account.
6. Consistent with the TOR, Youth Council's role is to provide a platform for young people to advocate on priorities that are important to their lives and to provide a mechanism for Council to seek and receive advice and input from young people.
7. The report from the Youth Council Advisory Committee provides the City with a range of advice to consider including feedback on the draft Social Infrastructure Plan relating to the development of Youth Drop In facilities across the region.
8. Through the Junior Deputy Mayor's report, the Youth Council has provided advice in response to a question raised by Councillor Murrhly at the 28 April 2020, Ordinary Meeting of Council with regards to Youth Mental Health and Suicide. On this matter Youth Council has provided Council with two suggestions: the training of additional Youth Development staff in Mental Health First Aid programs; and advocacy from Council to encourage all schools to take up the Mental Health First Aid programs provided by Council as a matter of urgency.

Cr Grzybek moved, Cr Mason seconded -

9. That Council note:

- 9.1 The second report from the Youth Council Advisory Committee 2020;**
- 9.2 The Youth Council feedback on youth spaces in the Draft Social Infrastructure plan; and**
- 9.3 The Youth Council suggestions in relation to mental health support for young people and refer this to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration.**

Carried.

Attachment 1

Financial Implications

1. Funding for the Youth Council program and activities has been allocated as part of Council's annual budget process.

Community Engagement

2. Youth Councillors have engaged several young people in their wards to gain essential feedback and input. During COVID-19 restrictions, Youth Councillors will endeavour to continue this engagement, to the extent they are able, via online connections.

Social Equity Considerations

3. The Youth Council provides an opportunity for young people to contribute to and be included in civic life.

Policy/Legal/Statutory Implications

4. The activities of the Youth Council comply with the Committee's TOR.

Alignment to Council Plan

5. The Youth Council TOR ensures a forum for young people that aligns with Council Plan priorities of:
 - 5.1 Improved health and safety of our community – consult with the community on safety issues that are impacting them;
 - 5.2 A more inclusive and diverse community – further developing programs that support young people in our community;
 - 5.3 Effective environmental management – educating and assisting our community; and
 - 5.4 Organisational leadership, strategy and governance – communicating and engaging with the community.

Conflict of Interest

6. No City officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Risk Assessment

7. The Committee provides advice to Council on specific issues relating to young people in our community and do not speak on behalf of the Council or the City. The TOR for the Committee provides their framework and guidelines.

Environmental Implications

8. There are no environmental implications.

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

**YOUTH COUNCIL
PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL**

Tuesday 9 June 2020



**DEPUTY JUNIOR MAYOR – ASHLEY
DELANEY**

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Deputy Junior Mayor's Message

INTRODUCTION

Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge the Wadawurrung people, the traditional owners of this land, and pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, as well as acknowledging all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present this evening. Good evening Mayor Stephanie Asher, Greater Geelong Councillors and directors, Youth Councillors and the gallery.

PURPOSE

My name is Ashley Delaney, I am the Deputy Junior Mayor for the City of Greater Geelong. Tonight, I will outline the progress and achievements of the Youth Council since our last report. These last few months have looked very different for all of us and I am happy to say the Youth Council were still able to meet virtually during this challenging time. This has allowed us to complete all the expectations and goals the Youth Council would usually discuss and accomplish in our monthly meetings.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS

April meeting held via zoom

Our April meeting was unable to be conducted like our past meeting, although this did not stop our youth councillors. This meeting was held via zoom and was a great success for our first digital meeting. We were able to get through our agenda with no problems and we were lucky enough to have two presentations about the Aldershot Reserve Concept Plan and Council's Social Infrastructure Plan. The youth councillors were able to provide advice that focussed on helping young people in our community benefit from these plans as much as possible.

Voting completed by the Youth Council

Over the last few months one of the roles of the Youth Council was to vote on the Native Vegetation Mascot naming competition. This was a great success with many entries from the community and some fantastic name ideas. The Youth Council voted 'Owlfred' as the winning name. Our Junior Mayor Farzana and I were extended the opportunity to virtually meet and congratulate the winner. The Youth Council also got to vote on The Youth Postcard Project, which was another great initiative. The winning postcard design will be sent to isolated members in our community, hopefully bringing joy in a time of much uncertainty and hardship. There were many great designs created by the young people of our city and it was wonderful to see so many young people wanting to send messages of hope and love to those who need it.

Connecting with the Community

The Youth Council have discussed ways to communicate and engage with the community. We are excited to use the youth engagement app, which will be a great way for us to get feedback, opinions and information from the young people we are representing. The app's main focus at the moment is to ask young people about how they are coping with COVID-19 and what they think is needed during the recovery phase. An action arising from the Youth Council's April meeting was to provide suggested ideas and questions to ask on the app.

The Youth Council Instagram account has recently been created with plans to produce content to engage with the Geelong Community. The account will promote the Youth Council's current priorities and we also hope to post ideas on how to keep active and busy through this time to help our young people who are feeling isolated and uncertain. The account will be another engagement tool for the Youth Council to utilise during and beyond the COVID-19 situation. It would be our most effective form of communication to engage with a large number of young people, hopefully meaning we can reach a lot more of the Geelong community.

Geelong Youth Awards

One of the many privileges that the Youth Council have had is the chance to be involved in choosing the categories for the 2020 Geelong Youth Awards. The Youth Council chose six award categories including:

- Young Educator
- Equality Award
- Leadership/Positive Role Model
- Diverse Cultural Contribution
- Arts & Music
- Disability inclusion award

These categories were voted with the priorities and views of the Youth Council. The award categories represent the young people that play their part in making the Geelong community innovative and inclusive. Our Youth Council have been busy promoting the Youth Awards to young people across the Region and have been provided opportunities to promote the awards in the media with the Junior Mayor being interviewed by the Pulse community radio station and the Deputy Junior Mayor recording a voice over advertisement used to promote the awards on The Pulse.

YOUTH COUNCIL FEEDBACK

Social infrastructure

An interesting and concerning point was made at our April meeting regarding the lack of social infrastructure in the Geelong community that is fully dedicated to our youth. The fOrT "is a regional facility that provides free programs and a safe space for young people to relax, socialise and interact with other young people in the community." It is located in the Windermere ward and is the City's only fully dedicated youth infrastructure. It was brought forward by Youth Council members the importance of The fOrT and the benefits we would see if there was an increase in youth infrastructure in the Geelong community. Youth Council were impressed by the Cities draft Social Infrastructure Plan and agree that there should be additional dedicated and Integrated Youth Drop In Spaces across the municipality.

Youth Council advocates that:

- Council invest in the creation of 'fOrT'-like facilitates in all Council Wards across the Geelong Local Government Area.

Mental health

We acknowledge the amazing work done to date by the Council. Mental health is a major issue in not only our community but the world today. It is an issue that the Youth Council is very passionate about and is one of our priorities for 2020. We feel that there needs to be more done in the community regarding mental health acknowledgement and understanding for young people. The Council's Youth Development Unit provide a suite of Mental Health First Aid courses that have been rolled out in some Geelong secondary schools and we see this as a great start to improving this issue, but we do feel that it is crucial for all schools in Geelong to have this program to see the true benefits. We do understand that there is only a limited amount of staff trained to deliver this course and ask if there is an opportunity for more staff to be trained over the coming months as we feel, after restrictions are lifted, that mental health will be a critical issue for young people.

Youth Council advocates that:

- Additional Youth Development Staff are trained in Mental Health First Aid programs.
- Council publicly encourages all schools take up the opportunity provided by Council as a matter of urgency.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT TWO MONTHS

It is important that we continue to do as much as we can in these times of uncertainty. Our focus will be to continue to collaborate with more young people and to utilise the digital engagement tools that we have available to us. The Youth Council will continue to meet monthly to discuss ideas, proposals and provide advice to Council to better the Geelong community and help have a positive impact. We will continue to learn from those around us and share our thoughts through the Councillor Connect Mentoring Program sessions.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the Geelong Youth Council have been working very hard over the last two months and have faced challenges regarding COVID-19 but we have been able to work through these together.

The next report to council will be on Tuesday 25 August with another update on our work, achievements and potential proposals we may have. Thank you.

2. SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK UPDATE

Source:	Governance, Strategy & Performance - Strategy & Performance
Director:	Rebecca Leonard
Portfolio:	Leadership and Governance

Purpose

1. To present an updated Sustainability Framework 2020 for adoption by Council following community consultation.

Background

2. The initial Sustainability Framework was developed in response to Council's resolution of September 2019 and was adopted by Council on 25 February 2020.
3. A draft Action Plan was also presented to Council on 25 February 2020 and since then has been open for community consultation. Consultation on the draft Action Plan was facilitated by an online survey, and consultation was open for an extended period until the end of May 2020, to provide the community with adequate time to have their say during the COVID-19 restricted activity period.
4. In total, 96 responses were received via the survey during the consultation from individuals and community groups. In addition to completed surveys, several emails and letters were also received regarding the Action Plan and the Framework. A summary of the community consultation and the updated Action Plan will be provided to Council on 14 July 2020.

Key Matters

5. Whilst feedback was sought from the community on the draft Action Plan, the community also provided feedback in relation to the Sustainability Framework itself. The feedback received indicates broad support for the development of the Sustainability Framework and a summary of feedback themes is included in (**Attachment 2**).
6. In response to the feedback received in relation to the Sustainability Framework, and consistent with the City's commitment to listening to the community, some amendments are suggested for the Framework (**Attachment 3**).
7. The amendments to the Framework:
 - 7.1 Focus on ensuring the language is clear and is easy to understand;
 - 7.2 Ensure that the holistic nature of sustainability is represented;
 - 7.3 Recognise the important role of community education and involvement;
 - 7.4 Reiterate the acknowledgement of a climate emergency by the City and Council;
 - 7.5 Clarify the areas of focus and objectives; and
 - 7.6 Provide a strong foundation for the role of the City and Council, and their strategies and plans.
8. The updated Sustainability Framework 2020 will shape decision making for both Council and the City's operations. And now, in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of sustainability has been highlighted, particularly as it relates to the City's ability to provide the support needed by the community now and into the future.

Cr Asher moved, Cr Mansfield seconded -

9. That the report be deferred until the end of July.

Carried.

3. ROAD RENAMING – SECTION OF MANZEENE AVENUE, LARA

Source: Customer & Corporate Services – Financial Services
Director: Michael Dugina
Portfolio: Finance

Purpose

1. To seek Council approval to rename the northern section of Manzeene Avenue to Botanical Drive, Lara (refer **Attachment 2**).

Background

2. As part of the Urban Growth Lara West Structure Plan (2013) Manzeene Avenue has been shortened and truncated.
3. The middle section of Manzeene Avenue has been discontinued and made into a reserve.
4. The Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2016 require all roadways which become non navigable from Point A to point B in a direct manner to be separately.
5. The northern section of Manzeene Avenue is being re-aligned via sub divisional plans and it is proposed to continue Botanical Drive over this section of roadway.
6. Botanical Drive already exists in previous development, and as it intersects with the affected section of Manzeene Avenue, it has been chosen as the appropriate name by the developer.

Key Matters

7. Letters and surveys have been sent to affected property owners advising them of the alteration to their property addressing with no responses received.
8. Three properties will require re-addressing - one will require a Botanical Drive address and two will be renumbered to new roadways that they are accessing from (refer **Attachment 3**).
9. One property owner has already requested that their property be readdressed to the new address based on confusion with the property location.
10. The Office of Geographic Names have requested that a formal proposal to rename the roadway be approved by Council prior to gazettal and registration.

Cr Aitken moved, Cr Grzybek seconded -

11. **That Council approve the renaming of the northern section of Manzeene Avenue, Lara to Botanical Drive, Lara.**

Carried.

Attachment 1

Financial Implications

1. The approximate cost to the City is \$100. This includes notification to adjoining property owners and residents, and notification to authorities. Street signage to be altered by developer.

Community Engagement

2. Letters have been sent to affected and adjoining property owners. No advertisement required due to this being completed within sub divisional development.

Social Equity Considerations

3. The City has a responsibility to the community to ensure that all properties can be identified in a clear and logical manner for emergency services and visitors to the area.

Policy/Legal/Statutory Implications

4. The *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* and the *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2016* have been followed.

Alignment to Council Plan

5. The proposed renaming is consistent with Council Plan strategic priority for Improved Health and Safety of our Community by enabling emergency services to locate properties on this roadway in a timely manner with minimal confusion.

Conflict of Interest

6. No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

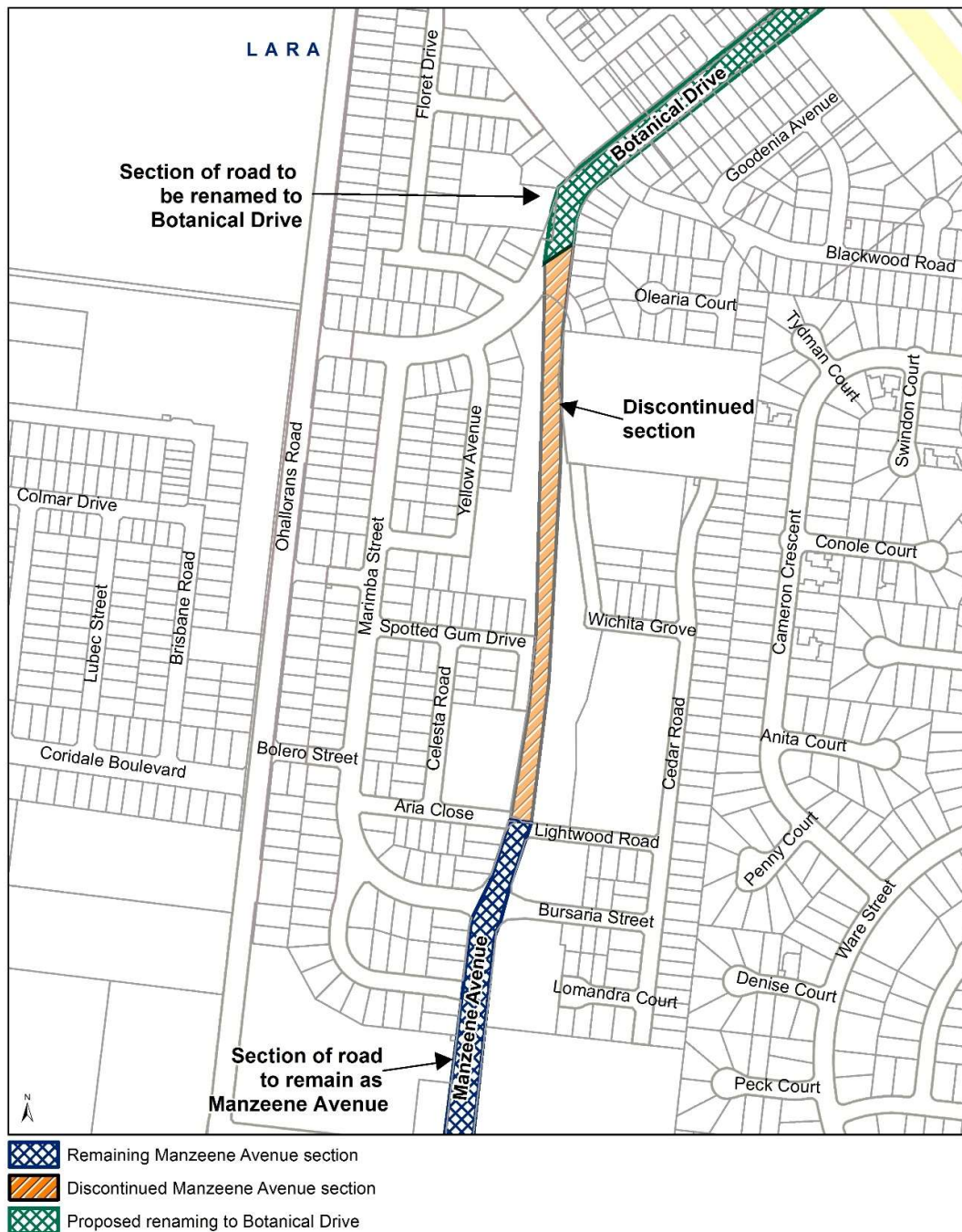
Risk Assessment

7. In an emergency situation, the City's proposal to rename this section of roadway will minimise the risk or failure to be able to access a situation in a timely manner.
8. Failure to rename this roadway will cause risk to public safety.

Environmental Implications

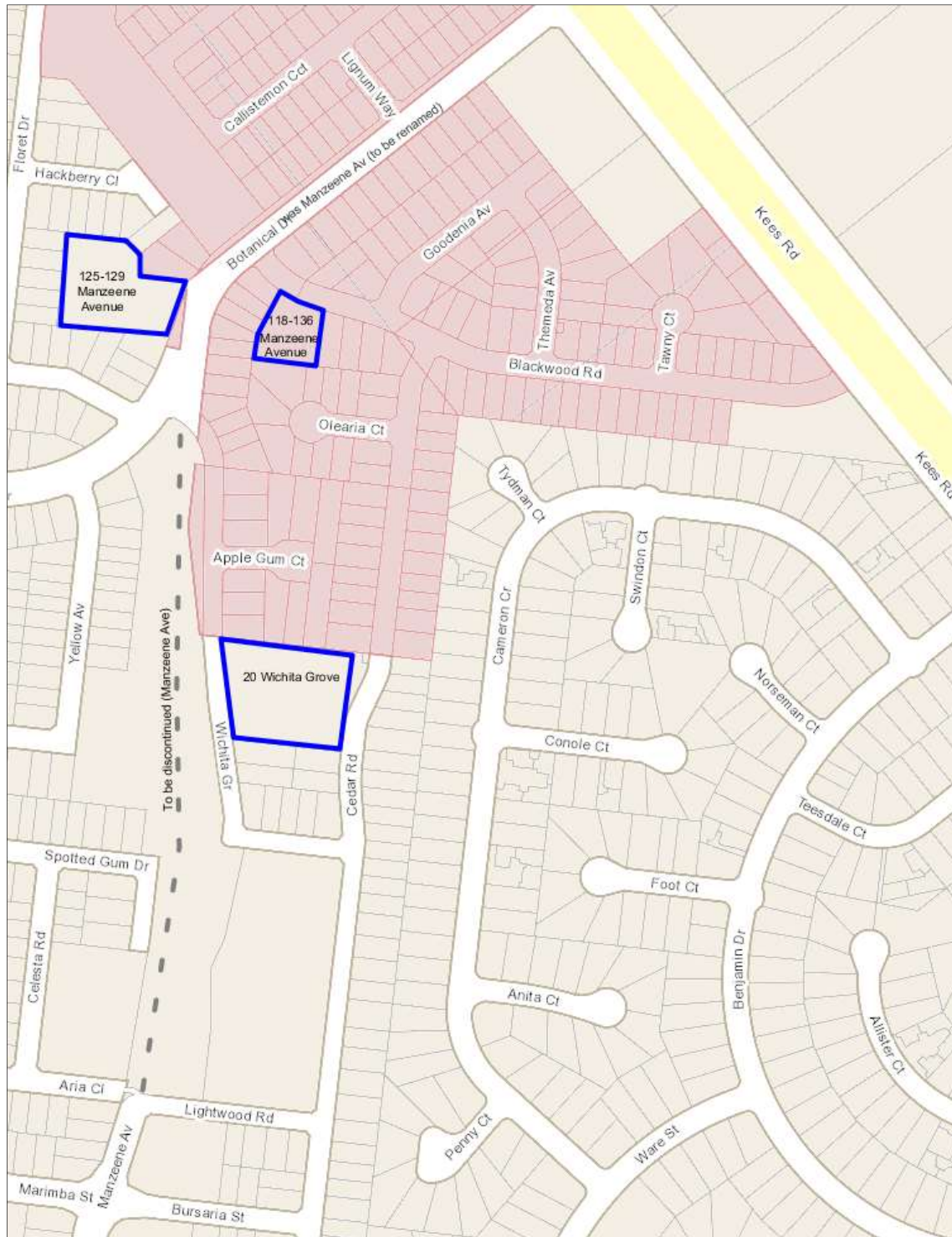
9. There are no environmental implications arising from the subject of this report.

Attachment 2



Attachment 3

Properties affected



4. CENTRAL GEELONG MARKETING COMMITTEE – EXTENSION OF COMMITTEE TENURE

Source: Economy, Investment & Attraction – Central Geelong Marketing
Director: Brett Luxford
Portfolio: Central and Civic Geelong

Purpose

1. To seek Council endorsement to extend the term of appointment of members to the Central Geelong Marketing Committee, whose terms are due to expire on 30 June 2020, until 30 June 2021.

Background

2. In February 2016, Council resolved to continue the Central Geelong special rate for a further five-year term until 30 June 2021 after consultation with Central Geelong business and property owners.
3. The Committee exists to market, promote and activate Central Geelong via the special rate and Committee members are appointed for a term of 2 years.
4. Seven Committee members' (four business representatives, one arts and culture representative, one commercial property representative and one accommodation provider representative) terms of appointment are due to expire on 30 June 2020. The Committee Terms of Reference require there to be an election by 30 June 2020 for Committee membership for those positions which are due to expire.
5. The current restrictions on businesses as a result of COVID-19 have greatly impacted Central Geelong businesses with many temporarily closed or having changed their service model to accommodate restrictions or impact of restrictions.

Key Matters

6. The Committee has requested Council to consider extending the two-year term of Committee members, whose terms would otherwise be due to end on 30 June 2020, for a further one-year period to 30 June 2021.
7. This extension will reduce demands on business operators during this significant disruption to trading and provide consistency of committee representation through the response and recovery phases as programs are developed to encourage people back into Central Geelong.

Cr Murrhiy moved, Cr Kontelj seconded -

8. **That Council, in response to the request of the Committee, approve the extension of the term of Committee members, whose term would otherwise expire on 30 June 2020, for a further one-year term.**

Carried.

Attachment 1

Financial Implications

1. There are no new financial implications arising from this report.

Community Engagement

2. CGMC regularly communicates and consults with business operators via newsletters, email communications, face to face meetings and feedback from event and activity participation. As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, all communications with business operators are digital.

Social Equity Considerations

3. The majority of activities delivered by Central Geelong Marketing are free and open to the public.

Policy/Legal/Statutory Implications

4. There are no Policy/ Legal/ Statutory implications associated with this report. The CGMC, as a S86 Committee has delegated authority and decision making within its allocated budget, Terms of Reference and agreed Strategic Plan.

Alignment to Council Plan

5. The Central Geelong Marketing program is a key strategy in delivering 'A thriving and sustainable economy'.

Conflict of Interest

6. There are no direct or indirect conflicts of interest in matters raised in this report.

Risk Assessment

7. The extension of the term of appointment of existing Committee members mitigates the risk of a loss of continuity in planning for the economic recovery from COVID-19.

Environmental Implications

8. There are no direct environmental implications associated with this report.

5. COUNCIL MEETINGS DURING COVID-19 AND AN UPDATE TO THE PUBLIC QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME POLICY

Source: Governance, Strategy & Performance - Governance
Director: Rebecca Leonard
Portfolio: Leadership and Governance

Purpose

1. To consider the changes to the Local Government Act 2020 through the introduction of the COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020 and to adopt an amended Public Question and Submission Time Policy (the Policy).

Background

2. On Thursday 23 April 2020, the Victorian Government passed the COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020 (Emergency Measures Act) which enacted temporary changes to the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic specifically relating to the conduct of council meetings and permitting virtual meetings of council.
3. The Minister for Local Government also introduced the Minister's Good Practice Guideline MGP-1: Virtual Meetings on 29 April 2020 (Ministerial Guidelines) (**Attachment 2**) which apply to all Council and Special Committee meetings.

Key Matters

4. Since the announcement of the State of Emergency in March, this Council has met without members of the public present at Council meetings, but has maintained public access to meetings by livestreaming the meetings and publishing recordings of the meetings online.
5. Public questions and submissions to Council have been received online and responded to before the meetings, as well as being published on the website and in the Minutes of the meetings.
6. The Council's Public Question and Submission Time Policy (**Attachment 3**) has been updated to reflect the temporary amendments introduced by the Emergency Measures Act as well as the Ministerial Guidelines. The key changes to the Policy include:
 - 6.1 Question and submissions lodged online by 12:00pm on the day before a meeting will be responded to in writing, published with any answer on the City's website before the meeting and recorded in the meeting minutes; and
 - 6.2 The Chief Executive Officer will determine how questions and submissions can be read out and answered safely at a Council meeting.
7. The City will continue to adjust how Council meetings are conducted to comply with any Victorian Government Directions as well as to ensure the health and safety of those people attending, including community members, Councillors and City employees. Changes to how Council meetings are conducted will be communicated publicly.

Cr Asher moved, Cr Grzybek seconded -

8. **That Council adopt the revised Public Question and Submission Time Policy (Attachment 3).**

Carried.

Attachment 1

Financial Implications

1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the matters in this report.

Community Engagement

2. Because the policy changes are implementing the legislative changes in the Emergency Measures Act, there is no proposed community consultation for these temporary changes.

Social Equity Considerations

3. The proposed changes provide the community the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions in relation to Council Business during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Policy/Legal/Statutory Implications

4. The Public Question and Submission Time Policy forms part of the Meeting Procedures Local Law 2017.
5. The proposed changes are in line with Part 12 COVID-19 temporary measures of the Act. Part 12 of the Emergency Measures Act is operative from 1 May 2020 until 1 November 2020 and provides for:
 - 5.1 Councillors to participate in Council meetings by electronic means of communication; and
 - 5.2 Council meetings no longer need to allow public attendance in person, but require meetings to be publicly accessible; and
 - 5.3 References to the *Local government Act (Vic) 1989* have been updated to reflect the provision of the new *Local Government Act (Vic) 2020*.

Alignment to Council Plan

6. The Public Question and Submission Time Policy aligns with How We Do Business.

Conflict of Interest

7. No Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared a conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

8. The measures that have been implemented through the Emergency Measures Act and the Ministerial Guidelines are all aimed at preventing and reducing the risks of infection of COVID-19.
9. The City will continue to implement appropriate measures to ensure the health and safety of the public, Councillors and City employees.

Environmental Implications

10. There are no direct environmental implications related to this policy amendment.



The Hon Adem Somyurek MP

Minister for Local Government

Minister's Good Practice Guideline MGPG-1: Virtual Meetings

This is a guideline issued by the Minister for Local Government pursuant to section 87 of the Local Government Act 2020.

Purpose

The Victorian Government's *COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020* has introduced into the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) new mechanisms that allows for virtual council meetings – to ensure local government decision-making can continue during the coronavirus pandemic. These new measures will be in force from 1 May 2020 until 1 November 2020.

This simple yet important change enables councils to continue to represent their communities and make critical decisions about the future.

This good practice guideline has been issued to assist councils to continue to conduct council meetings under the new Part 12 of the Act. Compliance by a council with a relevant good practice guideline can be used as evidence that the council has complied with the corresponding requirement under the Act.

This guideline takes effect from 1 May 2020.

Responsibilities of councillors and council staff

Councillors and council staff are required to continue to act in accordance with the Councillors Code of Conduct and the Local Government Acts 1989 and 2020, local laws and other Acts and policies as prescribed.

Requirements for conducting virtual council meetings

Requirement 1: Ordinary business of council can continue by electronic means of communication

Section 394 of the Act allows councillors and members of delegated committee, special committees, and governing bodies of regional libraries, to participate in meetings remotely by electronic means of communication. The intention is to ensure the normal ordinary business of council can continue through the use of electronic communication.

A member's attendance can only be recorded as present where the member can confirm that they meet all three of the following:

- They can hear proceedings;
- They can see other members in attendance and can be seen by other members;
- They can be heard (to speak).

Councils are encouraged to consider and adopt specific rules that provides guidance to the Chair when the three conditions cannot be met but a quorum is present.

A quorum of members of council is breached where a member forming a quorum cannot meet the above requirements.

Disclosure of conflicts of interest and rules relating to conflicts of interest remain. Councils need to ensure members can be removed from proceedings where required.

Requirement 2: All virtual meetings of council where public access is required under the Act must be made publicly available

Where councils take up the option to conduct virtual meetings, all council meetings and joint meetings of councils must be streamed live through the council's website.

Delegated committees and special committees can elect to either stream their virtual meetings live or make a recording available on the council's website following the meeting.

Confidential council meetings or confidential/closed sections of council meetings are not required to be streamed live and will not need to be electronically recorded.

Where the council experiences technical difficulties in being able to broadcast a meeting to the public the meeting must be adjourned until the issue is resolved or postponed to another time and date in accordance with council's meeting procedures, local laws or governance rules.

It may be prudent for the Chair to indicate at the commencement of a meeting that if technical problems are encountered by the council then the meeting will be adjourned until resolution or postponed.

The council is not responsible for any data usage charges or technical difficulties a member of the public may experience in accessing the livestream or recordings of meetings.

Meeting type	Live streamed	Recording to internet
a. Council meeting	Required for open meetings	Optional
b. A joint meeting of Councils	Required for open meetings	Optional
c. A meeting of a delegated committee or joint delegated committee	Required for open meetings if not recorded to internet	Required for open meetings if not live streamed
d. A meeting of a governing body of a regional library	Not applicable	Not applicable
e. A meeting of a special committee	Required for open meetings if not recorded to internet	Required for open meetings if not live streamed

Requirement 3: Representation at council meetings by members of the public

Councils are encouraged to make arrangements to allow members of the public who wish to appear before council to do so through virtual means or other alternatives, including the provision for written statements to be read out at the virtual council meeting or posted prior to the meeting.

From 1 May 2020 to 1 November 2020 (the prescribed period) Councils do not need to provide for members of the public to physically attend meetings. Providing public access to livestreamed events satisfies the public attendance test during the prescribed period.

Requirement 4: Confidentiality

Councils must ensure that where necessary confidential items are dealt with in an electronically secure environment. Councillors must be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Chair that the location that they are participating from is secure to ensure the deliberations are confidential.

I have issued this guideline pursuant to section 87 of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic).



**The Hon Adem Somyurek MP
Minister for Local Government**

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

PUBLIC QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME POLICY



VERSION: 1

Approval Date: 9 June 2020

Approved by: Council

Review Date: 12 May 2024

Responsible Officer: Director Governance, Strategy
and Performance

Authorising Officer: Chief Executive Officer

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Introduction

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the rules and guidelines by which the public asks questions or provides information at Council meeting under section 61 of the Act in a way that:

- provides a more resourceful and accountable platform for the public to submit questions or provide information to be considered at Council meetings; and
- allow Council sufficient time to consider the issues arising from the questions or information provided.

Definitions

This section defines the key terms used in this policy.

ACT

The *Local Government Act (Vic) 2020*

MEETING

Means an ordinary meeting of the Council under section 61 of the Act, a joint meeting of Councils under section 62 of the Act, a delegated committee under section 63 of the Act or a joint delegated committee under section 64 of the Act.

MEMBER

A Councillor or other member of a delegated committee under section 63 of the Act.

Policy

1. Public Question and Submission Time

Public Question and Submission Time will be provided at the start of a Meeting to enable members of the public to ask questions or make submissions to Council.

There will be no Public Question and Submission Time at a Meeting to consider the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

2. Time Allocation and Number of Questions

Forty five (45) minutes will be allocated for Public Question and Submission Time at a Meeting. The duration of Public Question and Submission Time may be extended by:

- the Chairperson, given due consideration to the business to be considered at the Meeting; or
- by resolution of the Meeting.

No more than two (2) questions may be asked or submissions made by any person at any one (1) Meeting. Questions or submissions made over and above these requirements, at the discretion of the Chairperson:

- may be deferred until all other persons wishing to ask a question or make a submission have had an opportunity to be heard; or
- may not be asked or submitted if the time allotted for public question and submission time has expired.

A maximum time limit of 3 minutes applies to each question asked or submission made by a person.

3. How to ask a question or make a submission

Questions to be asked or submissions to be made at a Meeting must be in writing, and state the name and address of the person submitting the question, and generally be in a form approved by the Chief Executive Officer; and lodged:

- in person at any Customer Service Centre within the City; or
- electronically, by using the online form provided on Council's website.

Questions and submissions lodged will be provided to the Members by the Chief Executive Officer before the Meeting.

4. Language and Accessibility

The Chief Executive Officer will use all reasonable endeavours to have a question or submission made in a language other than English translated into English before the Meeting. A question or submission that cannot be translated prior to the commencement of the Meeting will be translated prior to the next scheduled Meeting. The submitter will be notified accordingly.

The Chief Executive Officer will take reasonable steps to ensure that the processes and procedures provided for in this policy are accessible to all members of the community.

5. Questions Without Notice

At the Chairperson's discretion, a person can ask a question or make a submission at a Meeting without notice.

6. Responding to Questions

At a Meeting, preference will be given to hear from those people who have provided their questions or submissions to the City in writing by noon on the day prior to the scheduled Meeting.

The Chairperson may request the Chief Executive Officer, or the appropriate Member or a City employee, to respond to a question or a submission. The Chairperson or the Chief Executive Officer may reserve the right to take the question on notice and provide a written response to the person who asked the question within seven (7) days of the Meeting.

The person's name, question or submission, and any answer will be recorded in the Meeting minutes.

All questions, submissions and answers must be brief, and discussion will be entered into only for the purpose of clarification.

7. Question Eligibility

The Chairperson of a meeting may preclude a person from asking a question or making a submission if the Chairperson determines that it:

- relates to a matter outside the duties, functions and powers of Council;
- is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, vexatious, frivolous, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language;
- is the subject of a current dispute, whether formal or informal or is of a commercially sensitive nature;
- in the Chairperson's opinion, seeks to or has the potential to embarrass a Member or a City employee;
- relates to the matters of the City's personnel;
- relates to industrial matters;
- deals with subject matter already answered or declined;
- relates to contractual matters;
- relates to legal advice sought and/or obtained by Council or the City;
- relates to matters affecting the security of a City employee or their property;
- relates to any other matter which the Chairperson considers would prejudice Council, a City employee, or any person; or
- relates to a matter for which the meeting would normally be closed to the public in accordance with section 66 of the Act.

A copy of any question which has been precluded by the Chairperson must be made available to any other Member upon request.

Public Question and Submission Time is not a substitute for formal appeal and review systems, formal business procedures, formal Council decisions and any other legal processes required for the proper conduct of Council business.

8. Questions Considered in Bulk

Similar questions may be grouped together and a single answer provided by the Council.

9. Number of Questions

A Member or the Chief Executive Officer may advise the Chairperson that, in his or her opinion, any question to be asked or information to be submitted should be given in a Meeting that is closed to the public, stating the reasons for his or her opinion. Unless the Members of the Meeting resolve to the contrary, the question should be asked and answered, or the information submitted, in a Meeting closed to the public.

10. Special Consideration - *COVID-19 OMNIBUS (EMERGENCY MEASURES) ACT 2020*

The *COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020* prescribes new temporary mechanisms that allows for virtual Meetings to ensure local government decision-making can continue safely during the coronavirus pandemic. These temporary mechanisms are in place between 1 May 2020 and 1 November 2020 (the relevant time).

During the relevant time, the Council and the City remain committed to the transparency of conducting Council business and public participation in Meetings, as well as taking steps to ensure the safety of the community, Councillors and City employees and:

1. Meetings can be held remotely via electronic means;
2. Members of the public may not be permitted to physically attend Meetings; and
3. Public ordinary meetings of Council must be live streamed, and public Meetings other than ordinary meetings of Council may be recorded and the recording published on the Council's website.

During the relevant time, the processes for public question and submission time at Meetings may be varied to the following extent:

1. Members of the public who wish to appear at a Meeting may do so by providing a written question or submission to the City by using the online form provided on Council's website and submitting it by 12pm the day before the Meeting;
2. The City will post the question, together with the appropriate response, and/or the submission on the City's website before the meeting;
3. To ensure the health and safety of any members of the public, Councillors, Members or City employees physically attending a meeting, the Chief Executive Officer at their discretion will direct whether and how questions and submissions may be read out and/or answered at a Meeting, noting that the City is required to remove or mitigate risks associated with the prevention and spread of COVID-19; and
4. The City will publish the question and answer and/or the submission in the minutes of the meeting.

Implementation of this Policy

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The City’s Governance Strategy and Performance Directorate will monitor and report on public questions and submissions as requested from time to time.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The Responsible Officer for this policy manages the provision of advice to the organisation regarding this policy.

RECORDS

The City must retain records associated with this policy and its implementation for at least the period shown below.

Record	Retention / Disposal Authority	Retention Period	Location
Approved policy	Governance Officer	Permanent	Rex (Approved and archived documents folders)

REVIEW

The City should review and, if necessary, amend this policy within four years of the approval date.

References

Council Meeting Procedure Local Law (August 2017)

CLOSE OF MEETING

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 8.13pm. Tuesday, 9 June 2020.

Signed: _____
Cr Stephanie Asher (Mayor)

Date of Confirmation: _____.