



10 August 2022

The General Manager
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PSC Code of Meeting Practice Review

TRRA welcomes the proposed changes to Council's Code of Meeting Practice, including both those recommended in the agenda for the 14 June meeting and the amendments made at the 28 June meeting. In particular:

- We support the changes to clauses 3.5 & 3.7 re timing of business papers – these changes will give Councillors and the community an extra 4 days to consider the agenda (Councillors will still receive the papers 3 days before the public)

However, we continue to argue that another desirable change would be for Council to return to the practice of holding alternate meetings as Committees of the Whole and Full Council respectively (the practice at PSC before 2012). We argued the case for alternate meetings in our submissions on previous versions of the Code in 2017 and 2019.

An alternate Council-Committee meeting cycle would give even greater opportunity for Councillors, and the wider community, to consider proposals and seek feedback and input. We strongly believe that this would lead to better decision making by Council. Councillors will be aware of numerous examples since 2017 of controversial agenda items which would have benefited from a longer period of consideration. On several occasions, controversial decisions have led to rescission motions – we submit that in at least some cases this messy process could have been avoided by a better meeting cycle.

- We support provision in clauses 4.25 and 4.26 for webcasting of Public Access, with the speaker's consent. Clause 4.26 addresses the circumstance of some speakers not wishing to be included in the webcast.

There is clearly widespread support in the community and amongst those with experience of presenting in Public Access, and evidence that many other Councils do so without any apparent difficulties.

We understand the caution expressed by some Councillors in debates on 14 and 28 June about potential legal liability but do not see this as an obstacle to either webcasting Public Access or making the webcasts available after the event in the same way as the recording of the Council proceedings. The risks are similar, as are the appropriate responses such as immediate editing or take-down of sections of the recordings in response either to obvious transgressions, or to any complaint, pending review.



- the inclusion of clauses 11.6 and 20.23 providing for recording of all Council votes – the trial appears to have gone well and this will bring additional transparency and accountability.

Whilst it may not be prescribed in the Code, we also support the continuation of the recent practice of Councillors always speaking and voting while seated. Apart from being a sensible practical change, this also ensures that the Councillors' microphones better capture their speech, which has been problematic in the past, limiting the ability of the public in the gallery or viewing the webcast to follow proceedings, when Councillors were standing.

We note one inadvertent error - the reference in Clause 4.21 to '4.19' should be to '4.20' – as in clause 4.23 which has the correct cross-reference.

We have no objection to this submission being made public – in full and unredacted.

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