

**POLICY NO: 4.2.3**

**COUNCIL MEETINGS AND FORUMS – FORMAT, PROCEDURES AND MAXIMUM DURATION**

**OBJECTIVE**

To provide:

- a format and guidelines for Council Meetings and Forums to ensure for the efficient and effective decision making;
- protocols and procedures for the orderly and efficient processing of Council Member pre-Council Meeting enquires and requests; and
- a maximum duration in order that Council Meetings and Forums do not continue longer than a reasonable time.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

**1. COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Council Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1995, its regulations and the City of Vincent Local Law relating to Standing Orders.

This policy is in addition to the legislative requirements.

**1.1 Maximum Duration**

The Council shall aim to conclude Council Meetings by 10:00pm or in any case after a maximum duration of four (4) hours.

**1.2 Issue of Agendas**

- Agenda closes Friday, 9 days prior to the meeting;
- Agenda finalisation – Monday and Tuesday following the Friday close-off;
- Agenda issued to Council Members on Tuesday; and
- Agenda to be placed on the City's website as from midday Wednesday.

**1.3 Pre-Council Meeting Protocols and Procedures**

Pre-Council Meeting requests and enquiries shall be in accordance with the attached Policy Guidelines and Procedures.

**2. FORUMS**

There is a need for the Council to meet and discuss matters relating to the operation and affairs of the City outside the formal Council Meeting framework prescribed by the *Local Government Act 1995* which sets out the formal procedures that apply to such meetings. The Council may from time-to-time wish to conduct Forums which are not prescribed under the *Local Government Act 1995*.

This policy sets out the requirements which apply to Forums.

## 2.1 Maximum Duration

It is aimed to conclude Forums by 9:00pm or in any case after a maximum duration of three hours.

## 2.2 Forum Guidelines

- (a) The conduct of Forums is controlled by the City of Vincent Local Law relating to Standing Orders Clause 12.9 which states:

*"The Council may prescribe guidelines and procedures for the management of Forums."*

- (b) Forums shall be conducted in accordance with the *"Forum Guidelines"* adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 10 August 2004 subsequently amended from time-to-time.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following Guidelines and Procedures.

<b>Date Adopted:</b>	<b>28 October 1996</b>
<b>Date Amended:</b>	<b>23 November 2010</b>
<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	<b>22 July 2003, 22 April 2008, 23 November 2010</b>
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	<b>November 2015</b>

**GUIDELINES AND POLICY PROCEDURES FOR CONCIL MEETINGS AND FORUMS – FORMAT, PROCEDURES AND MAXIMUM DURATION  
POLICY NO. 4.2.3**

**1. Pre-Council Meeting Protocols and Procedures**

Pre-Council Meeting requests and enquiries shall be in accordance with the attached Guidelines.

Objective:

To improve efficiency, reduce duplication, better co-ordination and use of resources and to minimise pressure on Employees and Council Members for pre-Council Meeting enquiries and requests.

**(a) Closing Time for Council Member Requests and Enquiries**

Council Member requests and enquiries should preferably be submitted to the City's Administration by **midday on the Friday and no later than 9.00am on the Monday** before the Ordinary Council Meeting on Tuesday.

**(b) Enquiries received after Closing Time**

Any enquiries received after the 9.00am closing time (on Monday prior to the meeting) are to be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration.

**(c) Enquiries to be copied to the Chief Executive Officer**

Where Council Members send an email direct to a Director, a copy is also to be sent to the Chief Executive Officer. This will ensure that enquiries are not duplicated and the most appropriate officer researches the matter.

**(d) Nature of Enquiry**

The Local Government Act prescribes that Council Members are only entitled to be provided with sufficient information for them to "*make an informed decision and to perform their duties*".

To comply with good governance requirements, it is requested that Council Members keep this in mind when submitting a request for information.

**(e) Multiple or complex Enquiries about an Item/Matter**

Where a Council Member has multiple (or complex) enquiries about an item/matter, it is preferable for them to send an email and to also request a meeting with the appropriate Director (or Chief Executive Officer if applicable). This will ensure that the matter can be more efficiently/better explained and will minimise the impact on resources.

**(f) Requests for Amendments**

The Administration will provide "*alternative recommendations*" and amendments of a substantial or complex nature. If the request is received by the Monday morning cut-off time, these will be prepared and emailed on the Monday evening (or prior to the meeting) – this will allow Council Members to check the amendment and to ensure that they are satisfied that it meets their request.

Straightforward and simple amendments should be moved at the Meeting.