

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

14th December 2004

GM4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION
FILE: C18-22 AVB

SUMMARY:

To provide a procedure that allows members of the public to address Council on any Council issue.



Council at the November meeting resolved, "That the General Manager prepare a report on the feasibility and structure that would allow for the Council to have a maximum of 30 minutes at the beginning of Ordinary meetings of Council dedicated to public consultation".

Currently members of the public have access to Council and Councillors through mail and telephone and Councillors are able to act on concerns by liaising with the manager concerned, by submitting a Notice of Motion or by asking a question at a Council meeting.

Letters and telephone calls to staff are answered and requests implemented after receiving a priority and of course, are subject to financial resources being allocated by Council. I am not sure what is to be achieved by having an additional forum, other than Councillors being informed of issues affecting individuals. It is important that if this new consultation is introduced it does not breach the policy/implementation roles of Councillors and staff and that actions as a result of the forum have no more status than that of a Question Without Notice ie. Councillors can't move a resolution, in respect of any forum item, as notice has not been given in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice.

If the forum is to be introduced it should be at every Ordinary meeting of Council otherwise it will become very confusing to the public as to when forums are to be held. If they are held prior to the Council meeting there would be no incentive for Councillors to attend. If this method of consultation is to be adopted by Council the following structure could be introduced:-

- The forum be held as the first item following confirmation of minutes
- Requests to speak at a forum are to be received before the close of business on the Friday prior to the Council meeting
- The discussion topics can be any matter associated with Council's operations other than a matter on the business paper
- Speakers have a maximum time limit of five (5) minutes
- A maximum of thirty (30) minutes is to be made available for the forum
- Matters raised in the public forum will automatically be referred to the department concerned without resolution
- A person can only speak on one topic at any one meeting

- The priority order for speakers will be the order in which the request is received

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- ***Environmental***

Nil

- ***Social***

Nil

- ***Economic (Financial)***

Nil

- ***Policy or Statutory***

Council's Code of Meeting Practice will need to be altered to include any procedures

- ***General Manager's Review***

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

For Councils determination.

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A V Burgess
GENERAL MANAGER