



City of  
**STONNINGTON**

# Governance Rules

FEBRUARY 2024

## Governance Rules

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## Document Authorisation

City of Stonnington	
<b>Manager</b>	Marlo Emmitt – Manager Governance
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	19 February 2024

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## COMMITMENT

The Council seeks to apply good governance in order to:

- » engage our community in decision making;
- » achieve the best outcomes for the Stonnington community, including future generations;
- » ensure transparency of Council decisions, actions and information;
- » ensure the ongoing financial viability of the Council;
- » improve our performance; and
- » spend public monies wisely.

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. Purpose

These Governance Rules determine the way in which the Council will:

- » make decisions:
  - in the best interests of the Stonnington community;
  - fairly and on the merits of the matter before the Council; and
  - in a way that ensures any person whose rights will be directly affected by any or all decisions, will be entitled to communicate their views and have their interests considered;
- » elect its Mayor and Deputy Mayor;
- » conduct meetings of the Council and Delegated Committees;
- » give notice and make records of meetings;
- » be informed in its decision making through community engagement and Council officer reports; and
- » require the disclosure of all Councillor and management conflicts of interest.

These Governance Rules also include the Election Period Policy

## 2. Principles

The Council must, in the performance of its role, give effect to the overarching governance principles outlined in the Local Government Act 2020.

These principles are:

- (a) council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant Act;
- (b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the community, including future generations;
- (c) promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipality, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks;
- (d) the community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;
- (e) pursue innovation and continuous improvement;
- (f) collaborate with other councils, governments and statutory bodies;
- (g) ensure the ongoing financial viability of the Council;
- (h) consider regional, state and national plans and policies in strategic planning and decision making; and
- (i) maintain the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information.

To successfully implement the overarching governance principles, the Council must take into account the following:

- (a) community engagement;
- (b) public transparency;
- (c) strategic planning;
- (d) financial management; and
- (e) service performance.

### 3. Nature of Rules

These are the Governance Rules of the Stonnington City Council, made in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

### 4. Date of Commencement

These Governance Rules commence on 13 September 2022.

### 5. Contents

These Governance Rules are divided into the following Chapters:

Chapter	Name
Chapter 1	Governance Framework
Chapter 2	Meeting Procedure for Council Meetings
Chapter 3	Meeting Procedure for Delegated Committees
Chapter 4	Meeting Procedure for Community Asset Committees
Chapter 5	Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest
Chapter 6	Miscellaneous
Chapter 7	Election Period Policy

## 6. Definitions

In these Governance Rules, unless the context suggests otherwise the following words and phrases mean:

*Act* means the *Local Government Act 2020*.

*agenda* means the notice of a meeting setting out the business to be transacted at the meeting and includes a revised agenda.

*attend, attending* and *in attendance* include attend, attending or in attendance by electronic means.

*authorised officer* means a member of Council staff who is authorised by Council to carry out specific functions in relation to these Rules.

*Chair* means the Chair of a meeting and includes an acting, a temporary and a substitute Chair

*Chief Executive Officer* includes an Acting Chief Executive Officer.

*Community Asset Committee* means a Community Asset Committee established under section 65 of the Act.

*Council* means Stonnington City Council.

*Council meeting* has the same meaning as in the Act.

Delegated Committee means a Delegated Committee established under section 63 of the Act.

*General Business* means business of a minor or routine nature.

*majority of the votes* means the votes cast by a majority of the Councillors or members of the *Delegated Committee* present at the time the vote is taken.

*Mayor* means the Mayor of *Council*.

*minute book* means the collective record of the proceedings of the *Council*.

*municipal district* means the municipal district of the *Council*.

*notice of motion* means a notice setting out the text of a motion, which it is proposed to move at the next relevant meeting

*notice of rescission* means a notice of motion to rescind a resolution made by the *Council*.

these *Rules* means these Governance Rules.

*Repetitious motion* means:

- a) a motion moved that is to the same effect, even if it is in a different form, as a motion (with or without amendment) that has been rejected by the Council at the same meeting; or
- b) a motion that substantially covers the same ground as a motion or amendment already dealt with by the Council at the same meeting.

*Urgent Business* means a matter that relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda and cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting or Delegated Committee meeting

visitor means any person (other than a Councillor, member of a Delegated Committee, or member of the Council staff) who is in attendance at a *Council* meeting or *Delegated Committee meeting*.

*written* includes duplicated, lithographed, photocopied, printed and typed.

# CHAPTER 1 – GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

## 1. Context

These Governance Rules determine the way in which the Council will:

These Rules should be read in the context of and in conjunction with:

- (a) the overarching governance principles specified in section 9(2) of the Act; and
- (b) the following documents adopted or approved by the Council:
  - (i) Audit and Risk Committee Charter
  - (ii) Community Engagement Policy
  - (iii) Complaints Policy
  - (iv) Councillor Code of Conduct
  - (v) Councillor Expense Policy
  - (vi) Councillor Gift Policy
  - (vii) Public Transparency Policy
  - (viii) Mutual Respect Charter

Guidance and overview notes within these Rules are intended to be explanatory and included for guidance and do not form part of these Rules. These Rules will be monitored and updated to reflect changes to legislation or to assist interpretation and understanding.



## 2. Decision Making

- (a) In any matter in which a decision must be made by the Council (including persons acting with the delegated authority of the Council), the Council must consider the matter and make a decision:
  - (i) fairly, by giving consideration and making a decision which is balanced, ethical and impartial; and
  - (ii) on the merits, free from favouritism or self-interest and without regard to irrelevant or unauthorised considerations
- (b) The Council must, when making any decision to which the principles of natural justice apply, adhere to the principles of natural justice (including, without limitation, ensuring that any person whose rights will be directly affected by a decision of the Council is entitled to communicate their views and have their interests considered).
- (c) Without limiting anything in paragraph (b) of this sub-Rule:
  - (i) before making a decision that will directly affect the rights of a person, the Council (including any person acting with the delegated authority of the Council) must identify the person or persons whose rights will be directly affected, give notice of the decision which the Council must make and ensure that such person or persons have an opportunity to communicate their views and have their interests considered before the decision is made;
  - (ii) if a report to be considered at a Council meeting concerns subject-matter which will directly affect the rights of a person or persons, the Report must record whether the person has or persons have been provided with an opportunity to communicate their views and have their interests considered;
  - (iii) if a report to be considered at a Delegated Committee meeting concerns subject-matter which will directly affect the rights of a person or persons, the Report must record whether the person has or persons have been provided with an opportunity to communicate their views and have their interests considered; and
  - (iv) if a member of Council staff proposes to make a decision under delegation and that decision will directly affect the rights of a person or persons, the member of Council staff must, when making that decision, complete a Delegate Report that records that notice of the decision to be made was given to the person or persons and such person or persons were provided with an opportunity to communicate their views and their interests considered.

## CHAPTER 2 – MEETING PROCEDURE FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

### PART A – INTRODUCTION

#### 1. Title

This Chapter will be known as the “Meeting Procedure Chapter”.

#### 2. Purpose of this Chapter

The purpose of this Chapter is to:

- 2.1 provide for the election of the Mayor and any Deputy Mayor;
- 2.2 provide for the appointment of any Acting Mayor; and
- 2.3 provide for the procedures governing the conduct of Council meetings.

#### 3. Definitions and Notes

- 3.1 In this Chapter unless the context suggests otherwise the definitions of words are to be taken to be the same as those outlined in Item 6 (‘Definitions’) of these Rules.
- 3.2 Introductions to Parts, headings and notes are explanatory notes and do not form part of this Chapter. They are provided to assist understanding.

### PART B – ELECTION OF MAYOR

**Introduction:** This Part is concerned with the annual election of the Mayor. It describes how the Mayor is to be elected.

#### 4. Election of the Mayor

The Chief Executive Officer must facilitate the election of the Mayor in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

#### 5. Method of Voting

The election of the Mayor must be carried out by a show of hands or such other visual or audible means as the Chief Executive Officer determines

#### 6. Determining the Election of the Mayor

- 6.1 The Chief Executive Officer must open the meeting at which the Mayor is to be elected, and invite nominations for the office of Mayor.
- 6.2 The process for the election of the Mayor is as follows:
  - 6.2.1 the Chief Executive Officer must invite nominations for the office of the Mayor; and
  - 6.2.2 the nomination must be seconded by another Councillor.

- 6.3 Once nominations for the office of Mayor have been received, the following provisions will govern the election of the Mayor:

Single Nomination

- 6.3.1 if there is only one nomination, the candidate nominated must be declared to be duly elected.

Multiple Nominations and Candidates Elected On First Vote

- 6.3.2 if there is more than one nomination, the Chief Executive Officer, will invite the candidates to speak for 3 minutes in support of their nomination;
- 6.3.3 if there is more than one nomination, the Councillors in attendance at the meeting must vote for one of the candidates;
- 6.3.4 in the event of a candidate receiving the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors, that candidate is declared to have been elected.

Three or More Nominations and No Candidate Obtaining Absolute Majority on First Vote

- 6.3.5 in the event that there are three or more candidates, no candidate receives the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors; and it is not resolved to conduct a new election at a later date and time, the candidate with the fewest number of votes must be declared to be a defeated candidate. The Councillors in attendance at the meeting will then vote for one of the remaining candidates.
- 6.3.6 if one of the remaining candidates receives the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors, that candidate is duly elected. If none of the remaining candidates receives the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors and it is not resolved to conduct a new election at a later day and time, the process of declaring the candidates with the fewest number of votes a defeated candidate and voting for the remaining candidates must be repeated until one of the candidates receives the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors. That candidate must then be declared to have been duly elected.
- 6.3.7 for the purposes of sub-Rules 6.3.5 and 6.3.6 if no candidate can be determined to have the fewest number of votes due to two or more candidates having an equality of votes then the candidate who is to be declared a defeated candidate will be determined by lot.
- 6.3.8 if a lot is conducted, the Chief Executive Officer will have the conduct of the lot and the following provisions will apply:
- (a) each candidate who has an equal number of votes with another candidate or candidates will draw one lot;
  - (b) the order of drawing lots will be determined by the alphabetical order of the surnames of the Councillors who received an equal number of votes except that if two or more such Councillors' surnames are identical, the order will be determined by the alphabetical order of the Councillors' first names; and
  - (c) as many identical pieces of paper as there are Councillors who received an equal number of votes must be placed in a receptacle. If the lot is being conducted to determine who is a defeated candidate, the word "Defeated" shall be written on one of the pieces of paper, and the Councillor who draws the paper with the word "Defeated" written on it must be declared the defeated candidate (in which event a further vote must be taken on the remaining candidates until one of those candidates receives the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors).

#### Two Nominations or Two Remaining Candidates and No Candidate Obtaining an Absolute Majority On First Vote

- 6.3.9 in the event of two candidates being nominated or remaining , and neither candidate receiving the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors, the Councillors in attendance at the meeting will consider whether to resolve to conduct a new election at a later date and time.
  - 6.3.10 if it is resolved to conduct a new election at a later date and time a new election will take place at the date, time and location resolved upon. In that event the provision of this Rule 6 will continue to govern the election of the Mayor, and ultimately any candidate whose nomination is the sole nomination or any candidate who receives the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors will be duly elected; and
  - 6.3.11 if it is not resolved to conduct a new election at a later date and time Councillors must continue to vote until one of the candidates receives the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors, at which point that candidate will be duly elected. If, after two or more further votes are taken and neither candidate receives the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors, the provisions of sub-Rule 6.3.9, sub-Rule 6.3.10 and this sub-Rule 6.3.11 must again be followed.
- 6.4 After the election of the Mayor is determined, the Mayor must take the chair, and preside over the meeting pursuant to the Governance Rules.

## 7. Election of Deputy Mayor and Chairs of Delegated Committees

Any election for:

- 7.1 any office of Deputy Mayor; or
- 7.2 Chair of a Delegated Committee will be regulated by Rules 4-6 (inclusive) of this Chapter, as if the reference to the:
- 7.3 Chief Executive Officer is a reference to the Mayor; and
- 7.4 Mayor is a reference to the Deputy Mayor or the Chair of the Delegated Committee (as the case may be).

## 8. Appointment of Acting Mayor

If the Council has not established an office of Deputy Mayor and it becomes required to appoint an Acting Mayor, it can do so by:

- 8.1 appointing the immediate past mayor; or
- 8.2 resolving that a specified Councillor be so appointed; or
- 8.3 following the procedure set out in Rules 5 and 6 (inclusive) of this Chapter, at its discretion.

## PART C – MEETINGS PROCEDURE

**Introduction:** This Part is divided into a number of Divisions. Each Division addresses a distinct aspect of the holding of a meeting. Collectively, the Divisions describe how and when a meeting is convened, and when and how business may be transacted at a meeting.

### Division 1 – Notice of Meetings and Delivery of Business Papers

#### 9. Dates and Times of Meetings Fixed by the Council

Subject to Rule 11, the Council must from time to time fix the date, time and place of all Council meetings.

#### 10. Council May Alter Meeting Dates

- 10.1 The Council may change the date, time and place of any Council meeting which has been fixed by it and must provide reasonable notice of the change to the public.
- 10.2 The Chief Executive Officer shall consult with the Mayor, before changing the date, time and place of any meeting which has been fixed.

#### 11. Meetings Not Fixed by the Council (Unscheduled or Special Meetings)

- 11.1 The Mayor or at least 3 Councillors may by a written notice call a Council meeting.
- 11.2 The notice must specify the date and time of the Council meeting and the business to be transacted.
- 11.3 The Chief Executive Officer must convene the Council meeting as specified in the notice.
- 11.4 Unless all Councillors are in attendance and unanimously agree to deal with any other matter, only the business specified in the written notice can be transacted at the Council meeting.

#### 12. Notice of Meeting

- 12.1 A notice of meeting, incorporating or accompanied by an agenda of the business to be dealt with, must be delivered (whether personally, email or otherwise) or made available electronically to every Councillor for all Council meetings at least 48 hours before the meeting.
- 12.2 Notwithstanding sub-Rule 12.1, a notice of meeting need not be made available to any Councillor who has been granted leave of absence unless the Councillor has requested the Chief Executive Officer in writing to continue to give notice of any meeting during the period of their absence.
- 12.3 Reasonable notice of each Council meeting must be provided to the public. The Council may do this:
  - 12.3.1 for meetings which it has fixed by preparing a schedule of meetings annually or from time to time, and arranging publication of such schedule in a newspaper generally circulating in the municipal district or on the Council website at various times throughout the year, or prior to each such Council meeting; and
  - 12.3.2 for any meeting by giving notice on its website and in each of its Customer Service Centres and Council Libraries

## Division 2 – Quorums

The quorum for Council meetings is the presence of a majority of the Councillors.

### 13. Inability to Obtain a Quorum

If after 30 minutes from the scheduled starting time of any Council meeting, a quorum cannot be obtained,

- 13.1 the meeting will be deemed to have lapsed;
- 13.2 the Mayor must convene another Council meeting, the agenda for which will be identical to the agenda for the lapsed meeting; and
- 13.3 the Chief Executive Officer must give all Councillors notice of the meeting convened by the Mayor.

### 14. Inability to Maintain a Quorum

- 14.1 If during any Council meeting, a quorum cannot be maintained then Rule 13 will apply as if the reference to the meeting is a reference to so much of the meeting as remains.
- 14.2 Sub-Rule 14.1 does not apply if the inability to maintain a quorum is because of the number of Councillors who have a conflict of interest in the matter to be considered.
- 14.3 If a quorum cannot be achieved or maintained due to the disclosure of conflicts of interest by the majority of Councillors, the Council must consider whether the decision can be made by dealing with the matter in an alternative manner as provided for by section 67 of the Act.
- 14.4 Subject to complying with any requirements under any other Act if a Council is unable to use an alternative manner, the Council may decide to establish a Delegated Committee to make the decision in regard to the matter consisting of:
  - (a) All the Councillors who have not disclosed a conflict of interest in regard to the matter;
  - (b) Any other person or persons that the Council considers suitable.

### 15. Adjourned Meetings

- 15.1 The Council may adjourn any meeting to another date or time but cannot in the absence of disorder or a threat to the safety of any Councillor or member of Council staff adjourn a meeting in session to another place.
- 15.2 The Chief Executive Officer must give notice to all Councillors and members of the public, of the date, time and place to which the meeting stands adjourned and of the business remaining to be considered.
- 15.3 If it is impracticable for the notice given under sub-Rule 15.2 to be in writing, the Chief Executive Officer must give notice to each Councillor by telephone or in person.

## **16. Time limits for Meetings**

- 16.1 A Council meeting must not continue after 11.00pm unless a majority of Councillors who are in attendance vote in favour of it continuing.
- 16.2 A meeting cannot be continued for more than 30 minutes (or a further 30 minutes, if a majority of Councillors has already voted to continue it for 30 minutes).
- 16.3 If a matter before the meeting has not concluded by the time the 30 minute time extension has expired, the matter before the meeting may continue until such time as the matter has been resolved. No further matters may be considered after the conclusion of the matter before the meeting.
- 16.4 In the absence of such continuance, the meeting must stand adjourned to a time, date and place announced by the Chair immediately prior to the meeting standing adjourned. In that event, the provisions of sub-Rules 15.2 and 15.3 apply.

## **17. Cancellation or Postponement of a Meeting**

- 17.1 The Chief Executive Officer may, in the case of an emergency necessitating the cancellation or postponement of a Council meeting, cancel or postpone a Council meeting.
- 17.2 The Chief Executive Officer, after consulting the Mayor or Chair of a Delegated Committee, may cancel a meeting if there is no business to be transacted.
- 17.3 The Chief Executive Officer must present to the immediately following Council meeting a written report on any exercise of the power conferred by sub-Rule 17.1.

## Division 3 – Business of Meetings

### 18. Agenda and the Order Of Business

The agenda for and the order of business for a Council meeting is to be determined by the Chief Executive Officer so as to facilitate and maintain open, efficient and effective processes of government. In setting the order of business the Chief Executive Officer should have regard to:

- 18.1 the expected duration of the meeting;
- 18.2 potential implications for subsequent meetings or events
- 18.3 the sensitivity of any particular item;
- 18.4 the anticipated community interest in any particular item;
- 18.5 where practicable, feedback from the Mayor;
- 18.6 the urgency of any particular item; and
- 18.7 any other relevant factor which may impact on the processes and good governance of the Council.
- 18.8 The order of business of any Council meeting, must be as follows
  - 18.8.1 Reading of the Statement of Reconciliation
    - (a) The Chair will read the Statement of Reconciliation
  - 18.8.2 Reading of Statement of Commitment
    - (a) The Chair will read the Statement of Commitment
  - 18.8.3 Introductions of Councillors and Executive Staff
    - (a) The Chair will introduce the Councillors and the Chief Executive Officer present at the meeting.
    - (b) The Chief Executive Officer will introduce the Council Officers present at the meeting
  - 18.8.4 Apologies
  - 18.8.5 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
  - 18.8.6 Disclosure of any Conflicts of Interest
  - 18.8.7 Questions From the Community
  - 18.8.8 Business
  - 18.8.9 Correspondence
  - 18.8.10 Tabling of Petitions and Joint Letters
  - 18.8.11 Notices of Motion
  - 18.8.12 Reports by Councillors
  - 18.8.13 Questions to Council Officers
  - 18.8.14 Urgent Business
  - 18.8.15 General Business
  - 18.8.16 Confidential Business



## 19. Change to Order of Business

Once an agenda has been made available to Councillors, the order of business for that Council meeting may be altered:

- 19.1 prior to the meeting by the Chief Executive Officer by issuing a revised agenda in accordance with Rule 18; or
- 19.2 by resolution, or with the consent of the Council at the meeting.

## 20. Urgent Business

A Councillor proposing an item of Urgent Business, must, without speaking to it, briefly state its nature and intent. Business cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of Council and only then if it:

- 20.1 relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and
- 20.2 cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting.

## 21. General Business

- 21.1 When dealing with General Business on the Agenda, a Councillor may make a statement on an issue of concern to the City or to a Ward. Only business of a minor or routine nature should be admitted as general business and there shall be no debate or resolution arising from that statement.
- 21.2 A Councillor must not speak longer than 2 minutes, unless granted an extension by the Chair.

## Division 4 – Motions and Debate

### 22. Councillors May Propose Notices of Motion

Councillors may ensure that an issue is listed on an agenda by lodging a Notice of Motion in accordance with Rule 23.

### 23. Notice of Motion

- 23.1 A Notice of Motion must be in writing signed by three Councillors, and be lodged with the Chief Executive Officer (whether personally, email or otherwise) by 12 noon on a business day not less than five days prior to the next Council meeting at which the notice or motion may be considered. If a notice of motion is received after that time it must, unless withdrawn, be included in the agenda for the following Council meeting.
- 23.2 A Notice of Motion may be withdrawn by a request in writing received (whether personally, email or otherwise) from the three Councillors who signed the motion, prior to the publication of the agenda for which the Notice of Motion was intended. Otherwise, the item must be dealt with at a Council meeting.
- 23.3 The Chief Executive Officer must make reasonable attempts to give Councillors notice of any notice of motion no less than 48 hours before the Council meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered.
- 23.4 The Chief Executive Officer may reject any Notice of Motion which:
  - 23.4.1 is potentially defamatory
  - 23.4.2 is objectionable in language or nature
  - 23.4.3 is vague or unclear in intention
  - 23.4.4 is outside the powers of the Council; or
  - 23.4.5 if passed would result in the Council otherwise acting invalidly
- 23.5 If a Notice of Motion is rejected under sub-Rule 23.4 , the Chief Executive Officer must:
  - 23.5.1 give the Councillor who lodged it an opportunity to amend it prior to rejection, if it is practicable to do so; and
  - 23.5.2 notify in writing the Councillor who lodged it of the rejection and the reasons for the rejection.
- 23.6 The full text of any Notice of Motion accepted by the Chief Executive Officer must be included in the agenda.

- 23.7 The Chief Executive Officer must cause all notices of motion to be numbered, dated and entered in the notice of motion register in the order in which they were received.
- 23.8 Except by leave of the Council, each Notice of Motion before any meeting must be considered in the order in which they were submitted.
- 23.9 If a Councillor who has given a Notice of Motion is absent from the meeting or fails to move the motion when called upon by the Chair, any other Councillor may move the motion.
- 23.10 If a Notice of Motion is not moved at the Council meeting in accordance with sub-Rule 23.9, the Notice of Motion shall be deemed to have lapsed for want of a mover.
- 23.11 The Chief Executive Officer may provide a report to the Council detailing the implications for the Council and the community in respect of any Notice of Motion which has been submitted for inclusion on the agenda paper.

## 24. Chair's Duty

Any motion or amendment which is determined by the Chair to be:

- 24.1 potentially defamatory;
- 24.2 objectionable in language or nature;
- 24.3 vague or unclear in intention;
- 24.4 outside the powers of the Council; or
- 24.5 if passed would result in the Council otherwise acting invalidly; or
- 24.6 irrelevant to the item of business on the agenda and has not been admitted as General Business or Urgent Business, or purports to be an amendment but is not,

must not be accepted by the Chair.

## 25. Introducing a Report

- 25.1 Before a written report is considered by Council and any motion moved in relation to such report, a member of Council staff may introduce the report by indicating in not more than 2 minutes:
- 25.1.1 its background; or
- 25.1.2 the reasons for any recommendation which appears.
- 25.2 Unless Council resolves otherwise, a member of Council staff need not read any written report to Council in full.

## 26. Introducing a Motion or an Amendment

The procedure for moving any motion or amendment is:

- 26.1 the mover must state the motion without speaking to it;
- 26.2 the motion must be seconded and the seconder must be a Councillor other than the mover. If a motion is not seconded, the motion lapses for want of a seconder;
- 26.3 if a motion or an amendment is moved and seconded, the Chair must ask the mover to speak to the motion;
- 26.4 after the mover has addressed the meeting, the seconder may address the meeting (the seconder may reserve their right to speak until later in the debate);
- 26.5 after the seconder has addressed the meeting (or after the mover has addressed the meeting if the seconder does not address the meeting,) the Chair must invite debate by calling on any Councillor who wishes to speak to the motion; and
- 26.6 if, after the mover has addressed the meeting, the Chair has invited debate and no Councillor speaks to the motion, then the Chair must put the motion to the vote.
- 26.7 no discussion on the item being considered may take place until such time as a motion is before the Chair. Questions of clarification may be asked of the Chair or members of Council staff present at the meeting.

## 27. Right of Reply

- 27.1 The mover of a motion, including an amendment once debate has been exhausted, has a right of reply to matters raised during debate. The mover of the motion cannot introduce new matters when exercising the right of reply.
- 27.2 After the right of reply has been taken but subject to any Councillor exercising their right to ask any question concerning or arising out of the motion, the motion must immediately be put to the vote without any further discussion or debate.

## 28. Moving an Amendment

- 28.1 Subject to sub-Rule 28.2 a motion which has been moved and seconded may be amended by leaving out or adding words. Any added words must be relevant to the subject of the motion.
- 28.2 A motion to confirm a previous resolution of Council cannot be amended.
- 28.3 An amendment must not be directly opposite to the motion.

## **29. Who May Propose an Amendment**

- 29.1 An amendment may be proposed or seconded by any Councillor, except the mover or seconder of the original motion.
- 29.2 No Councillor can move more than two amendments in succession.
- 29.3 Any Councillor can debate an amendment irrespective of whether the Councillor has spoken or proposes to speak to the original motion.
- 29.4 Debate on an amendment must be restricted to the terms of the amendment.

## **30. How Many Amendments May be Proposed**

- 30.1 Any number of amendments may be proposed to a motion but only one amendment may be accepted by the Chair at any one time.
- 30.2 No second or subsequent amendment, whether to the motion or an amendment of it, may be taken into consideration until the previous amendment has been dealt with.

## **31. An Amendment Once Carried**

- 31.1 If the amendment is carried, the motion as amended then becomes the motion before the meeting, and the amended motion must then be put.
- 31.2 The mover of the original motion retains the right of reply to that motion.

## **32. Foreshadowing Motions**

- 32.1 At any time during debate a Councillor may foreshadow a motion so as to inform the Council of their intention to move a motion at a later stage in the meeting, but this does not extend any special right to the foreshadowed motion.
- 32.2 A motion foreshadowed may be prefaced with a statement that in the event of a particular motion before the Chair being resolved in a certain way, a Councillor intends to move an alternative or additional motion.
- 32.3 A motion foreshadowed has no procedural standing and is merely a means to assist the flow of the meeting.
- 32.4 The Chief Executive Officer or person taking the minutes of the meeting is not expected to record foreshadowed motions in the minutes until the foreshadowed motion is formally moved.
- 32.5 The Chair is not obliged to accept foreshadowed motions.

### **33. Withdrawal of Motions**

- 33.1 Before any motion or amendment is put to the vote, it may be withdrawn by the mover and seconder with the leave of the Council.
- 33.2 If the majority of Councillors object to the withdrawal of the motion or amendment, it may not be withdrawn.

### **34. Separation of Motions**

Where a motion contains more than one part, a Councillor may request the Chair to put the motion to the vote in separate parts.

### **35. Chair May Separate Motions**

The Chair may decide to put any motion to the vote in several parts.

### **36. Priority of address**

In the case of competition for the right to speak, the Chair must decide the order in which the Councillors concerned will be heard.

### **37. Motions in Writing**

- 37.1 All motions, except procedural motions, should be in writing.
- 37.2 The Chair may adjourn the meeting while the motion is being written or the Council may defer the matter until the motion has been written, allowing the meeting to proceed uninterrupted.

### **38. Repeating Motion and/or Amendment**

The Chair may request a Council Officer to read the motion or amendment to the meeting before the vote is taken.

### **39. Debate Must be Relevant to the Motion**

- 39.1 Debate must always be relevant to the motion or question before the Chair, and, if not, the Chair must request the speaker to confine debate to the motion or question.
- 39.2 If after being requested to confine debate to the motion before the Chair, the speaker continues to debate irrelevant matters, the Chair may direct the speaker to not speak further in respect of the motion then before the Chair.
- 39.3 A speaker to whom a direction has been given under sub-Rule 39.2 must comply with that direction.

## 40. Speaking Time Limits

- 40.1 A Councillor must not speak longer than the time set out below, unless granted an extension by the Chair:
- 40.1.1 the mover of a motion or an amendment which has been opposed: 5 minutes;
  - 40.1.2 any other Councillor: 3 minutes; and
  - 40.1.3 the mover of a motion exercising a right of reply: 2 minutes.
- 40.2 Only one extension is permitted for each speaker.
- 40.3 A motion to extend the speaking time cannot be moved:
- 40.3.1 until the original speaking time has expired; and
  - 40.3.2 if another speaker has already commenced their contribution to the debate; and must be seconded.
- 40.4 Any extended speaking time must not exceed 1 minute.
- 40.5 All speakers must be timed, and a warning signal sound when 30 seconds of the allocated time is remaining.
- 40.6 In relation to Public Submissions under the Community Engagement Policy and for all other purposes where otherwise not specified in the Rules a 3 minute time limit will apply.

## 41. Addressing the Meeting

If the Chair so determines:

- 41.1 any person addressing the Chair must refer to the Chair as Mayor or Chair, as the case may be;
- 41.2 all Councillors, other than the Mayor, must be addressed as

Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ (family name)

- 41.3 all members of Council staff, must be addressed by the appropriate title

\_\_\_\_\_ (family name) as appropriate or by their official position title.

## **42. Right to Ask Questions**

- 42.1 A Councillor may, when no other Councillor is speaking, ask any question concerning or arising out of the motion or amendment before the Chair.
- 42.2 The Chair has the right to limit questions and direct that debate be commenced or resumed.

## **43. Questions From Councillors to Council Officers**

- 43.1 An opportunity will be provided at each Council meeting for Councillors to direct questions to Council Officers on any matter relevant to a particular directorate.
- 43.2 A time limit of 3 minutes will apply to each Councillor.

## **Division 5 – Procedural Motions**

### **44. Procedural Motions**

- 44.1 Unless otherwise prohibited, a procedural motion may be moved at any time and must be dealt with immediately by the Chair.
- 44.2 Procedural motions require a seconder.
- 44.3 Procedural motions may only be moved and seconded by Councillors as specified in the Procedural Motions Table.
- 44.4 Notwithstanding any other provision in this Chapter, procedural motions must be dealt with in accordance with the Procedural Motions Table.



## Procedural Motions Table

Procedural Motion	Form	Mover & Seconder	Matter in Respect of Which Motion May be Moved	When Motion Prohibited	Effect if Carried	Effect if Lost	Debate Permitted on Motion
1. Adjournment of debate to later hour and/or date	That this matter be adjourned to *am/pm and/or *date	Any Councillor	Any matter	(a) During the election of a Chair; (b) When another Councillor is speaking	Motion and amendments postponed to the stated time and/or date	Debate continues unaffected	Yes
2. Adjournment of debate indefinitely	That this matter be adjourned until further notice	Any Councillor	Any matter except: (a) election of a Chair	(a) During the election of Ma Chair; (b) When another Councillor is speaking	Motion and any amendment postponed but may be resumed at any later meeting if on the agenda	Debate continues unaffected	Yes
3. The closure	That the motion be now put	A Councillor who has not spoken to the motion or any amendment of it	Any matter	During nominations for Chair	The Chair must call on the mover of the original motion or amendment of it amendment in respect of which the closure motion is carried to reply to the debate on the original motion or amendment and then immediately put the original motion or amendment to the vote. No further debate on, or amendment to the original motion or amendment is	Debate continues unaffected	No
4. Laying a question on the table	That the question lie on the table	A Councillor who has not spoken to the motion or any amendment of it	Any matter	(a) During the election of a Chair	Motion and amendments not further discussed or voted on until:  (a) Council resolves to take the question from the table at the same meeting; (b) The matter is placed on an agenda and Council resolves to take the question from the table	Debate continues unaffected	No

Procedural Motion	Form	Mover & Seconder	Matter in Respect of Which Motion May be Moved	When Motion Prohibited	Effect if Carried	Effect if Lost	Debate Permitted on Motion
5. Previous question	That the question be not now put	A Councillor who has not spoken to the motion or any amendment of it	Any matter except: (a) election of a Chair;	a) During the election of a Chair; b) When another Councillor is speaking; c) When an amendment is before Council	a) No vote or further discussion on the motion until it is placed on an agenda for a later meeting; b) Proceed to next business	Motion (as amended up to that time) put immediately without further amendment or debate	Yes
6. Proceeding to next business	That the meeting proceed to the next Business: Note this Motion  (a) May not be amended (b) May not be debated (c) Must be put to the vote as soon as Seconded	A Councillor who has not spoken to the motion or any amendment of it	Any matter except: (a) Election of Chair	(a) During the election of a Chair b) When another Councillor is speaking	If carried in respect of: (a) An amendment – Council considers the motion without reference to the amendment:  (b) A motion – no vote or further discussion on the motion until it is placed on an agenda for a later meeting	Debate continues unaffected	No
7. Repetitious motion	The motion is a repetitious motion	A Councillor who has not spoken to the motion or any amendment of it	Any matter except: (a) Election of a Chair	(a) During the election of a Chair b) When another Councillor is speaking	a) No vote or further discussion on the motion unless it is placed on an agenda for a latter meeting b) Proceed to next business	Debate continues unaffected	Yes

Procedural Motion	Form	Mover & Seconder	Matter in Respect of Which Motion May be Moved	When Motion Prohibited	Effect if Carried	Effect if Lost	Debate Permitted on Motion
8. Dissent from the Chair's ruling	That the Chair's ruling be dissented from	Any Councillor 1. Once moved and seconded, the Chair must leave the Chair and a temporary Chair elected 2. The temporary Chair must invite the mover and seconder to state the reasons for his or her dissent and the Chair may then reply. 3. The motion must then be put	Any ruling made by the Chair		If carried, the Chair must resume the Chair, reverse his or her previous ruling and proceed.  The motion is in no way a motion of censure or non-confidence, and should not be so regarded	If lost, the Chair resumes the Chair and the meeting proceeds	No, other than that the mover and seconder may state the reasons for his or her dissent and the Chair may then reply
9. Suspension of standing orders	That standing orders be suspended	Any Councillor	Any matter		1. The formalities of the meeting procedure are temporarily disposed of 2. No motion can be accepted by the Chair or lawfully be dealt until standing orders	The formalities of the meeting procedure remain in place	Yes
10. Resumption of standing orders	That standing orders be resumed	Any Councillor	Any matter	When standing orders have not been suspended	The formalities of the meeting procedure are reinstated	1. The formalities of the meeting procedure remain temporarily disposed of. 2. No motion can be accepted by the Chair or lawfully be dealt until standing orders are resumed	Yes

Procedural Motion	Form	Mover & Seconder	Matter in Respect of Which Motion May be Moved	When Motion Prohibited	Effect if Carried	Effect if Lost	Debate Permitted on Motion
11. Close the meeting to the public	That the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with section 66 of the Act to Consider.... Because....	Any Councillor	Any matter included in the definition of Confidential Information prescribed in section 3 of the Act	When the meeting is already closed to the public	The meeting is closed to the public	The meeting remains open to the public	Yes
12. Reopen the meeting to the public	That the meeting be reopened to the Public	Any Councillor	Any matter	When the meeting is already open to the public	The meeting is opened to the public	The meeting remains closed to the public	Yes
13. Continuance of Meeting	That the meeting continue to #.##pm	Any Councillor	Any matter		The time limit specified in Rule 16 is to be substituted with the time limit specified in the continuance motion	The meeting stands adjourned to a time, date and place to be then and there announced by the Chair	No
14. No recording of proceedings	That Council revokes consent for the recording of the Meeting	Any Councillor	A decision to record, or consent to recording of proceedings under Rule 69		Consent to record proceedings is revoked	The meeting continues unaffected	Yes
15. En bloc motions	That the following Items .... Be moved en bloc as per the Council Officers' recommendation	Any Councillor	Only for matters listed on the agenda under the heading 'Business'	Items relating to planning matters or that involve statutory third party rights	Move to next item of business	The meeting continues unaffected	Yes

## Division 6 – Rescission Motions

### 45. Notice of Rescission

- 45.1 A Councillor may propose a motion to rescind or to vary a previous resolution of the Council by a notice of rescission provided:
- 45.1.1 the resolution proposed to be rescinded has not been acted on; and
  - 45.1.2 it has been signed and dated by at least three Councillors;
  - 45.1.3 the notice of rescission is delivered to the Chief Executive Officer within 24 hours of the resolution having been made setting out -
    - (a) the resolution to be rescinded; and
    - (b) the meeting and date when the resolution was carried.
- 45.2 The Chief Executive Officer or an appropriate member of Council staff, may implement a resolution at any time after the close of the meeting at which it was made. A resolution will be deemed to have been acted on if:
- 45.2.1 its contents have or substance has been communicated in writing to a person whose interests are materially affected by it; or
  - 45.2.2 a statutory process has been commenced
- so as to vest enforceable rights in or obligations on the Council or any other person.
- 45.3 The Chief Executive Officer or an appropriate member of Council staff must defer implementing a resolution which:
- 45.3.1 has not been acted on; and
  - 45.3.2 is the subject of a notice of rescission which has been delivered to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with sub-Rule 45.1.3,
- unless deferring implementation of the resolution would have the effect of depriving the resolution of efficacy.

### 46. If Lost

If a notice of rescission is lost, a similar motion may not be put before the Council for at least three months from the date it was last lost, unless Council resolves that the notice of motion be re-listed at a future meeting.

### 47. If Not Moved

If a motion for rescission is not moved at the meeting at which it is listed, it lapses and a similar motion may not be put before the Council for at least three months from the date on which it lapsed.

## 48. May be Moved by Any Councillor

A motion for rescission listed on an agenda may be moved by any Councillor present, but may not be amended.

## 49. When Not Required

49.1 Unless sub-Rule 49.2 applies, a motion for rescission is not required where the Council wishes to change policy.

49.2 The following standards apply if the Council wishes to change a policy:

49.2.1 if the policy has been in force in its original or amended form for less than 12 months, a notice of rescission must be presented to the Council; and

49.2.2 any intention to change a Council policy, which may result in a significant impact on any person, should be communicated to those affected and this may include publication and consultation, either formally or informally.

## Division 7 – Points of Order

### 50. Chair to Decide

The Chair must decide all points of order by stating the provision, rule, practice or precedent which they consider applicable to the point raised without entering into any discussion or comment.

### 51. Chair May Adjourn to Consider

51.1 The Chair may adjourn the meeting to consider a point of order but otherwise must rule on it as soon as it is raised.

51.2 All other questions before the meeting are suspended until the point of order is decided.

### 52. Dissent From Chair's Ruling

52.1 A Councillor may move that the meeting disagree with the Chair's ruling on a point of order, by moving:

52.2 "That the Chair's ruling [setting out that ruling or part of that ruling] be dissented from".

52.3 When a motion in accordance with this Rule is moved and seconded, the Chair must leave the Chair and the Deputy Mayor (or, if there is no Deputy Mayor or the Deputy Mayor is not in attendance, temporary Chair elected by the meeting) must take their place.

52.4 The Deputy Mayor or temporary Chair must invite the mover and seconder to state the reasons for their dissent and the Chair may then reply.

- 52.5 The Deputy Mayor or temporary Chair must put the motion in the following form:
- 52.6 “That the Chair’s ruling be dissented from.”
- 52.7 If the vote is in the negative, the Chair resumes the Chair and the meeting proceeds.
- 52.8 If the vote is in the affirmative, the Chair must then resume the Chair, reverse or vary (as the case may be) their previous ruling and proceed.
- 52.9 The defeat of the Chair’s ruling is in no way a motion of censure or non- confidence in the Chair, and should not be so regarded by the meeting.

### **53. Procedure for Point Of Order**

A Councillor raising a point of order must:

- 53.1 state the point of order; and
- 53.2 state any section, Rule, paragraph or provision relevant to the point of order

### **54. Valid Points Of Order**

- 54.1 A point of order may be raised in relation to:
- 54.1.1 a motion, which, under Rule 24, or a question which, under Rule 55, should not be accepted by the Chair;
  - 54.1.2 a question of procedure;
  - 54.1.3 a Councillor who is not conducting themselves in accordance with the Councillor Code of Conduct;
  - 54.1.4 debate that is irrelevant to the matter under consideration;
  - 54.1.5 constitutes a tedious repetition of something already said;
  - 54.1.6 a matter that is outside the powers of the Council;
  - 54.1.7 is offensive; or
  - 54.1.8 any act of disorder.
- 54.2 A point of order may not be raised to express a mere difference of opinion or to contradict a speaker

## Division 8 – Questions From the Community

### 55. Question Time

- 55.1 There must be a public question time at every Council meeting fixed under Rule 9 to enable members of the public to submit questions to the Council, except in meetings that are closed to the public in accordance with section 66(2) of the Act.
- 55.2 Public question time will not exceed 30 minutes in duration, unless by Council resolution, in which case the time may be extended for one period of up to 15 minutes.
- 55.3 Questions/Statements submitted to the Council:
- 55.3.1 must be in writing, state the name, telephone number and address of the person submitting the question and the date;
  - 55.3.2 must be sent electronically or received by the Chief Executive Officer prior to 12noon on the day of the Council meeting; and
  - 55.3.3 will have the details of the authors verified as far as practicable.
- 55.4 Members of the public may speak to up to three (3) minutes, and may make statements or ask questions on general matters, or those that relate to a topic on the agenda. Questions may only be asked of Council and may not be directed to individual Councillors or officers.
- 55.5 No person may submit more than two (2) questions to be answered at any one (1) meeting. A question may be split into a maximum of two parts only. If more than two parts to a question are received, only the first two parts will be considered. Similarly, if more than two questions are received to be answered in person, only the first two questions will be considered. All parts of the question must be relevant to the same subject.
- 55.6 All questions and answers must be as brief as possible, and no further questions will be taken from the answers given, and no discussion may be allowed other than by Councillors for the purposes of clarification.
- 55.7 A maximum of three (3) questions will be heard on any one subject. Like questions may be grouped together and a single answer provided. Questions in relation to the listed agenda items will be given priority, and if time allows, questions about items other than those listed will be considered.
- 55.8 Questions that relate to items on the meeting agenda will not be referred to officers. A Councillor may facilitate a question received at the time on the agenda that the item is to be discussed.
- 55.9 Members of the public submitting questions or making statements should be in person in the gallery at the Council meeting. For members of the public unable to attend the meeting in person, consideration may be given for the requester to attend a meeting via electronic communications.
- 55.10 Where the requirements to present a question in writing and/or in English unreasonably prevents or hinders participation in public question time, assistance with submitting questions is available from Council, via an interpreter service if required.
- 55.11 The Chair may, subject to rule 55.12, permit a representative to attend or read a question on behalf of a person who is unable to attend the meeting, or read a question, because of a personal characteristic or attribute protected by law, such as (but not limited to) having a disability, their age or status as a carer.
- 55.12 The Chair shall not exercise his or her discretion to permit a representative in accordance with sub-Rule 55.11 on the ground of inconvenience alone.
- 55.13 Members of the public are requested to ensure their input remains constructive and of value to Council decision-making.
- 55.14 The Chair may respond or may nominate an Officer to respond to a question.



- 55.15 The Chair or the CEO may require a question to be put on notice. If a question is put on notice, a written copy of the answer will be sent to the person who asked the question.
- 55.16 The CEO may advise the Council that the reply to a question should be given in a meeting closed to members of the public. The CEO must state briefly the reason why the reply should be so given and, unless Council resolves to the contrary, the reply to such question must be given so.
- 55.17 A written response to a question will be sent to any person who chooses not to ask a question to Council in person or via electronic means (virtually). A copy of these questions and responses will be tabled and inserted into the minutes of the following Council meeting.
- 55.18 The name of the person, the statement or question and the response (if the question and response are read out at the meeting) must be recorded in the Minutes, as an official record of the questions dealt with at the Meeting.
- 55.19 A question/statement may be disallowed by the Chair if the Chair determines that it:
- 55.19.1 relates to a matter outside the duties, functions and powers of the Council;
  - 55.19.2 is potentially defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance;
  - 55.19.3 deals with a subject matter already answered;
  - 55.19.4 is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or a member of Council staff;
  - 55.19.5 relates to personnel matters;
  - 55.19.6 relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer;
  - 55.19.7 relates to industrial matters;
  - 55.19.8 relates to contractual matters;
  - 55.19.9 relates to proposed developments;
  - 55.19.10 relates to legal advice;
  - 55.19.11 relates to matters affecting the security of Council property;
  - 55.19.12 relates to any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person; or
  - 55.19.13 relates to electoral matter during an election period.
- 55.20 Any question which has been disallowed by the Chair must be made available to any other Councillor upon request.

## Division 9 – Petitions and Joint Letters

### 56. Petitions and Joint Letters

- 56.1 Unless the Council determines to consider it as an item of urgent business, no motion (other than a motion to receive the same) may be made on any petition, joint letter or other like application until the next fixed Council meeting after that at which it has been presented.
- 56.2 It is incumbent on every Councillor presenting a petition or joint letter to acquaint themselves with the contents of that petition or joint letter, and to ascertain that it does not contain language which is disrespectful towards the Council and that the contents do not violate a Local Law.
- 56.3 Every Councillor presenting a petition or joint letter to the Council must:
- 56.3.1 write or otherwise record their name at the beginning of the petition or joint letter; and
  - 56.3.2 confine themselves to a statement of the persons from whom it comes, the number of signatories to it, the material matters expressed in it and the text of the preamble or request.
- 56.4 Every petition or joint letter presented to Council must be in writing, and contain the request of the petitioners or signatories and be signed by at least 5 people.
- 56.5 A petition may include a preamble on every page of a petition, consisting of the following words: “We the undersigned hereby petition the Stonnington City Council...”
- 56.6 Every petition or joint letter must be signed by the persons whose names are appended to it by their names or marks, and, except in cases of incapacity or sickness, by no one else and the address of every petitioner or signatory must be clearly stated.
- 56.7 Any signature appearing on a page which does not bear the text of the whole of the petition or request may not be considered by the Council.
- 56.8 Electronic or online petitions, joint letters, memorials or like applications must contain the name and email address of each petitioner or signatory, which details will, for the purpose of this Rule 56, qualify as the address and signature of such petitioner or signatory.
- 56.9 If a petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application relates to an operational matter, the Council must refer it to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration.

## **Division 10 – Public Submissions**

### **57. Public Submissions Under the Community Engagement Policy**

Where a person is given a right to make a submission under the Community Engagement Policy and requests to appear in person (or to be represented by a person specified in the submission) at a Council meeting to be heard in support of the submission, the time limit for such hearing shall be 3 minutes, except that the Chair may allow the hearing to exceed 3 minutes.

## **Division 11 – Voting**

### **58. How Motion Determined**

To determine a motion before a meeting, the Chair must first call for those in favour of the motion and then those opposed to the motion, and if required, identify a Councillor who has abstained from voting, and must then declare the result to the meeting.

### **59. Silence**

Subject to Rule 62, voting must take place in silence.

### **60. Recount**

The Chair may direct that a vote be recounted to satisfy themselves of the result.

### **61. Casting Vote**

61.1 In the event of a tied vote, the Chair must exercise a casting vote.

61.2 The Chair may adjourn a meeting to consider how their casting vote will be cast.

### **62. How Votes Are Cast**

Voting on any matter is by show of hands or such other visible or audible means as the Chair determines.

## 63. Procedure for a Division

- 63.1 Immediately after any question is put to a meeting and before the next item of business has commenced, a Councillor may call for a division.
- 63.2 When a division is called for, the vote already taken must be treated as set aside and the division shall decide the question, motion or amendment.
- 63.3 When a division is called for, the Chair must:
  - 63.3.1 first ask each Councillor wishing to vote in the affirmative to raise a hand and, upon such request being made, each Councillor wishing to vote in the affirmative must raise one of their hands. The Chair must then state, and an authorised officer must record, the names of those Councillors voting in the affirmative; and
  - 63.3.2 then ask each Councillor wishing to vote in the negative to raise a hand and, upon such request being made, each Councillor wishing to vote in the negative must raise one of his or her hands. The Chair must then state, and an authorised officer must record, the names of those Councillors voting in the negative.
  - 63.3.3 if required, then ask each Councillor wishing to abstain from voting to raise a hand and, upon such request being made, each Councillor wishing to abstain from voting must raise one of their hands. The Chair must then state, and an authorised officer must record, the names of those Councillors abstaining from voting.

## 64. No Discussion Once Declared

Once a vote on a question has been taken, no further discussion relating to the question is allowed unless the discussion involves:

- 64.1 a Councillor requesting, before the next item of business is considered, that their opposition to a resolution be recorded in the minutes; or
- 64.2 foreshadowing a notice of rescission where a resolution has just been made, or a positive motion where a resolution has just been rescinded.

## Division 12 – Minutes

### 65. Confirmation of Minutes

- 65.1 At every Council meeting the minutes of the preceding meeting(s) must be dealt with as follows:
- 65.1.1 a copy of the minutes must be made available to each Councillor no later than 48 hours before the next meeting;
  - 65.1.2 if no Councillor indicates opposition, the minutes must be declared to be confirmed;
  - 65.1.3 if a Councillor indicates opposition to the minutes:
    - (a) they must specify the item(s) to which they object;
    - (b) the objected item(s) must be considered separately and in the order in which they appear in the minutes;
    - (c) the Councillor objecting must move accordingly without speaking to the motion;
    - (d) the motion must be seconded;
    - (e) the Chair must ask:  
“Is the motion opposed?”
    - (f) if no Councillor indicates opposition, then the Chair must declare the motion carried without discussion and then ask the second of the questions described in sub-Rule 65.1.3(k);
    - (g) if a Councillor indicates opposition, then the Chair must call on the mover to address the meeting;
    - (h) after the mover has addressed the meeting, the seconder may address the meeting;
    - (i) after the seconder has addressed the meeting (or after the mover has addressed the meeting if the seconder does not address the meeting), the Chair must invite debate by calling on any Councillor who wishes to speak to the motion, providing an opportunity to alternate between those wishing to speak against the motion and those wishing to speak for the motion;
    - (j) if, after the mover has addressed the meeting, the Chair invites debate and no Councillor speaks to the motion, the Chair must put the motion; and
    - (k) the Chair must, after all objections have been dealt with, ultimately ask:  
“The question is that the minutes be confirmed” or  
“The question is that the minutes, as amended, be confirmed”,  
and they must put the question to the vote accordingly;
  - 65.1.4 a resolution of the Council must confirm the minutes and the minutes must, if practicable, be signed by the Chair of the meeting at which they have been confirmed;
  - 65.1.5 the minutes must be collated annually and
  - 65.1.6 unless otherwise resolved or required by law, minutes of a Delegated Committee requiring confirmation by the Council must not be available to the public until confirmed by the Council.

## 66. No Debate on Confirmation of Minutes

No discussion or debate on the confirmation of minutes is permitted except where their accuracy as a record of the proceedings of the meeting to which they relate is questioned.

## 67. Deferral of Confirmation of Minutes

The Council may defer the confirmation of minutes until later in the Council meeting or until the next meeting if considered appropriate.

## 68. Form and Availability of Minutes

- 68.1 The Chief Executive Officer (or other person authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to attend the meeting and to take the minutes of such meeting) must keep minutes of each Council meeting, and those minutes must record:
- 68.1.1 the date, place, time and nature of the meeting;
  - 68.1.2 the names of the Councillors in attendance and the names of any Councillors who apologised in advance for their non-attendance;
  - 68.1.3 the names of the members of Council staff in attendance;
  - 68.1.4 any disclosure of a conflict of interest made by a Councillor, including the explanation given by the Councillor under Chapter 5 and whether the conflict of interest was said by the Councillor to be a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest;
  - 68.1.5 arrivals and departures (including temporary departures) of Councillors during the course of the meeting;
  - 68.1.6 each motion and amendment moved (including motions and amendments that lapse for the want of a seconder);
  - 68.1.7 the vote cast by each Councillor upon a division and any abstention from voting;
  - 68.1.8 the vote cast by any Councillor who has requested that their vote be recorded in the minutes;
  - 68.1.9 questions upon notice;
  - 68.1.10 the failure of a quorum;
  - 68.1.11 any adjournment of the meeting and the reasons for that adjournment; and
  - 68.1.12 the time at which standing orders were suspended and resumed.
- 68.2 The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the minutes of any Council meeting are:
- 68.2.1 published on the Council's website; and
  - 68.2.2 available for inspection at the Council's office during normal business hours.
- 68.3 Nothing in sub-Rule 68.2 requires the Council or the Chief Executive Officer to make public any minutes relating to a Council meeting or part of a Council meeting closed to members of the public in accordance with section 66 of the Act.

## Division 13 – Recording of Proceedings

### 69. Recording of Proceedings

- 69.1 Subject to any resolution of the Council, the Chief Executive Officer (or other person authorised by the Chief Executive Officer) may record the proceedings of a Council meeting electronically.
- 69.2 Subject sub-Rule 69.1, a person must not operate photographic, audio or video recording equipment or any other recording device at any Council meeting without first obtaining the consent of the Chair. Such consent may at any time during the course of such meeting be revoked by the Chair or resolution of the Council.

## Division 14 – Behaviour

### 70. Display of Placards and Posters

- 70.1 A person must not display any placards or posters in the Council Chamber or in any building where a Council meeting or a Delegated Committee meeting is being or about to be held, other than outside the entrance to the building and even then only if it does not obstruct the entrance of the building.
- 70.2 A person must not:
- (a) display any offensive, indecent, insulting or objectionable item or words in the Council Chamber; or
  - (b) obstruct the entrance to the Council Chamber or a building where a Council meeting or a Delegated Committee meeting is being or about to be held.

### 71. Public Addressing the Meeting

- 71.1 Members of the public are not permitted to address the Council and may only do so with the consent of the Chair or by prior arrangement.
- 71.2 Any member of the public addressing the Council must extend due courtesy and respect to the Council and the processes under which it operates and must take direction from the Chair whenever called on to do so.
- 71.3 A member of the public in attendance at a Council meeting must not disrupt the meeting.

### 72. Chair May Remove

The Chair may order and cause the removal of any person, other than a Councillor, who disrupts any meeting or fails to comply with a direction given under sub-Rule 71.2.

### **73. Chair May Adjourn Disorderly Meeting**

If the Chair is of the opinion that disorder at the Council table or in the gallery makes it desirable to adjourn the Council meeting, the Chair may adjourn the meeting to a later time on the same day or to some later day as they think proper. In that event, the provisions of sub-Rules 15.2 and 15.3 apply.

### **74. Suspensions**

- 74.1 The Council may via a resolution of the Council suspend from a meeting any Councillor whose actions have disrupted the business of the Council, and have impeded its orderly conduct.
- 74.2 The duration of any suspension under this Rule shall be at the Council's discretion but shall not exceed the balance of the meeting.

### **75. Removal From Chamber**

- 75.1 The Chair must order the removal of any Councillor who has been suspended by the Council in accordance with Rule 74;
- 75.2 The Chair may order the removal of:
  - 75.2.1 any person, who disrupts any meeting or fails to comply with a direction;
  - 75.2.2 any person, who the Chair reasonably believes has acted in breach of this Chapter; or
  - 75.2.3 any person who the Chair reasonably believes has acted in breach of the Summary Offences Act 1966;
- 75.3 The Chair may issue a warning to any person before exercising the powers in sub-Rules 75.2 and 75.4.
- 75.4 The Chair may ask an authorised officer, security guard or member of the Victoria Police to cause the removal of any person who is the subject of an order under sub-Rules 75.1 or 75.2.



## Division 15 – Additional Duties of Chair

### 76. The Chair's Duties and Discretions

In addition to the duties and discretions provided in this Chapter, the Chair:

- 76.1 must not accept any motion, question or statement which:
  - 76.1.1 may reasonably be considered to be defamatory, derogatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance of any Councillor, member of Council staff, or member of the community;
  - 76.1.2 relates to a matter outside the duties, functions and powers of Council;
  - 76.1.3 is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor, a member of Council staff or member of the community; and
- 76.2 must call to order any person who is disruptive or unruly during any meeting.

## Division 16 – Suspension of Standing Orders

### 77. Suspension of Standing Orders

- 77.1 The Chair or any Councillor can move a motion which must be seconded (and the seconder must be a councillor other than the mover) indicating a desire to suspend standing orders to expedite the business of a meeting. In which case:
  - 77.1.1 the Chair may suspend standing orders with the support of the meeting;
  - 77.1.2 standing orders may be suspended by procedural motion.
- 77.2 the suspension of standing orders should be used to enable full discussion of any issue without the constraints of formal meeting procedure.
- 77.3 The suspension of standing orders should not be used purely to dispense with the processes and protocol of the government of the Council. An appropriate motion would be:

“That standing orders be suspended to enable discussion on.....”
- 77.4 No motion can be accepted by the Chair or lawfully be dealt with during any suspension of standing orders.
- 77.5 Once the discussion has taken place and before any motions can be put, the resumption of standing orders will be necessary. An appropriate motion would be:

“That standing orders be resumed.”

## Division 17 – Physical and Remote Attendance

### 78. Mode of Attendance

- 78.1 Each notice of meeting must indicate whether the relevant Council meeting is to be conducted:
- 78.1.1 wholly in person;
  - 78.1.2 wholly by electronic means; or
  - 78.1.3 partially in person and partially by electronic means.
- 78.2 The indication in the notice of meeting must be consistent with any Resolution of Council that has expressed a preference for, or otherwise specified, when Council meetings are to be conducted:
- 78.2.1 wholly in person;
  - 78.2.2 wholly by electronic means; or
  - 78.2.3 partially in person and partially by electronic means.
- 78.3 If a Council meeting is to be conducted wholly in person a Councillor may nonetheless request to attend by electronic means.
- 78.4 Any request made under sub-Rule 78.3 must:
- 78.4.1 be in writing;
  - 78.4.2 be given to the Chief Executive Officer no later than 3 hours prior to the scheduled commencement time of the relevant Council meeting; and
  - 78.4.3 specify the reasons why the Councillor is unable or does not wish to attend the Council meeting in person.
- 78.5 The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that any request received in accordance with sub-Rule 78.4 and any other request received from a Councillor to attend by electronic means is made known at the commencement of the relevant Council meeting.
- 78.6 Council may approve and must not unreasonably refuse any request.
- 78.7 In considering whether to approve or refuse any request the Council must consider:
- 78.7.1 whether conducting the meeting partially by electronic means is physically and technically feasible;
  - 78.7.2 the reason specified by the Councillor who has requested to attend by electronic means;
  - 78.7.3 whether personal or other circumstances beyond the Councillor's control mean that it would be unjust to deny the Councillor attendance by electronic means; and
  - 78.7.4 the effect which the Councillor's attendance by electronic means would have or be likely to have on the effective and efficient conduct of the meeting.
- 78.8 A Councillor who is attending a Council meeting by electronic means is responsible for ensuring that they are able to access such equipment and are present in such an environment that facilitates participation in the Council meeting.

- 78.9 Without detracting from anything said in sub-Rule 78.8, a Councillor who is attending a meeting by electronic means must be able to:
- 78.9.1 hear the proceedings;
  - 78.9.2 be heard when they speak;  
and should be able to:
  - 78.9.3 see all Councillors and members of Council staff who are also attending the Council meeting, at least while a Councillor or member of Council staff is speaking;
  - 78.9.4 be seen by all Councillors, members of Council staff and members of the public who are physically present at the Council meeting.
- 78.10 If the conditions of sub-Rule 78.9.1 and sub-Rule 78.9.2 cannot be met by one or more Councillors attending a Council meeting, whether because of technical difficulties or otherwise:
- 78.10.1 the Council meeting will nonetheless proceed as long as a quorum is present; and
  - 78.10.2 the relevant Councillor (or Councillors) will be treated as being absent from the Council meeting or that part of the Council meeting
- unless the Council meeting has been adjourned in accordance with these Rules.
- 78.11 Nothing in this Rule 78 prevents a Councillor from joining (or re-joining) a Council meeting at the time that they achieve compliance with sub-Rule 78.9 even if the Council meeting has already commenced or has continued in their absence.

## **79. Meetings Conducted Remotely**

If:

- 79.1 a Council meeting is to be conducted the Chair may, with the consent of the meeting, modify the application of any of the Rules in this Chapter to facilitate the more efficient and effective transaction of the business of the meeting.

## **Division 18 – Miscellaneous**

### **80. Criticism of Members of Council Staff**

- 80.1 The Chief Executive Officer may make a brief statement at a Council meeting in respect of any statement by a Councillor made at the Council meeting criticising them or any member of Council staff.
- 80.2 A statement under sub-Rule 80.1 must be made by the Chief Executive Officer, through the Chair, as soon as it is practicable after the Councillor who made the statement has finished speaking.

### **81. Procedure not provided in this Chapter**

In all cases not specifically provided for by this Chapter, resort must be had to the Standing Orders and Rules of Practice of the Upper House of the Victorian Parliament (so far as the same are capable of being applied to Council proceedings).

## CHAPTER 3 – MEETING PROCEDURE FOR DELEGATED COMMITTEES

### 1. Meeting Procedure Generally

If the Council establishes a Delegated Committee:

- 1.1 all of the provisions of Chapter 2 apply to meetings of the Delegated Committee; and
- 1.2 any reference in Chapter 2 to:
  - 1.2.1 a Council meeting is to be read as a reference to a Delegated Committee meeting;
  - 1.2.2 a Councillor is to be read as a reference to a member of the Delegated Committee; and
  - 1.2.3 the Mayor is to be read as a reference to the Chair of the Delegated Committee.

### 2. Meeting Procedure can be Varied

Notwithstanding Rule 1, if the Council establishes a Delegated Committee that is not composed solely of Councillors:

- 2.1 the Council may; or
- 2.2 the Delegated Committee may, with the approval of the Council

resolve that any or all of the provisions of Chapter 2 are not to apply to a meeting of the Delegated Committee, in which case the provision or those provisions will not apply until the Council resolves, or the Delegated Committee with the approval of the Council resolves, otherwise.

## **CHAPTER 4 – MEETING PROCEDURE FOR COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEES**

### **1. Introduction**

In this Chapter, “Instrument of Delegation” means an instrument of delegation made by the Chief Executive Officer under section 47(1)(b) of the Act.

### **2. Meeting Procedure**

Unless anything in the Instrument of Delegation provides otherwise, the conduct of a meeting of a Community Asset Committee is in the discretion of the Community Asset Committee.

## CHAPTER 5 – DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

### 1. Definition

In this Chapter:

- 1.1 “meeting conducted under the auspices of Council” means a meeting of the kind described in section 131(1) of the Act, and includes a meeting referred to in Rule 1 of Chapter 6 (whether such a meeting is known as a ‘Councillor Briefing’ or by some other name); and
- 1.2 a member of a Delegated Committee includes a Councillor.

### 2. Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Council Meeting

- 2.1 are in attendance must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those in attendance at the Council meeting immediately before the matter is considered and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; or
- 2.2 intend to attend must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer before the Council meeting commences a written notice:
  - 2.2.1 advising of the conflict of interest;
  - 2.2.2 explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; and
  - 2.2.3 detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor’s relationship with or a gift from another person, the:
    - (a) name of the other person;
    - (b) nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and
    - (c) nature of that other person’s interest in the matter,and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those in attendance that they have a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the Chief Executive Officer under this sub-Rule.

The Councillor must, in either event, leave the Council meeting immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

### 3. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest at a Delegated Committee Meeting

A member of a Delegated Committee who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Delegated Committee meeting at which they:

- 3.1 are in attendance must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those in attendance at the Delegated Committee meeting immediately before the matter is considered and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; or
- 3.2 intend to attend must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer before the Delegated Committee meeting commences a written notice:
  - 3.2.1 advising of the conflict of interest;
  - 3.2.2 explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; and

- 323 detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a member of a Delegated Committee's relationship with or a gift from another person the:
- (a) name of the other person;
  - (b) nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and

324 nature of that other person's interest in the matter,

and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those in attendance that they have a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the Chief Executive Officer under this sub-Rule.

The member of a Delegated Committee must, in either event, leave the Delegated Committee meeting immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been dealt with.

#### **4. Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Community Asset Committee Meeting**

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Community Asset Committee meeting at which they:

4.1 are in attendance must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the Community Asset Committee meeting immediately before the matter is considered and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; or

4.2 intend to attend must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer before the Community Asset Committee meeting commences a written notice:

4.2.1 advising of the conflict of interest;

4.2.2 explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; and

4.2.3 detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a member of a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person the:

(a) name of the other person;

(b) nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and

4.2.4 nature of that other person's interest in the matter,

and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those in attendance that they have a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the Chief Executive Officer under this sub-Rule.

The Councillor must, in either event, leave the Committee Asset Committee meeting immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been dealt with.

## 5. Disclosure at a Meeting Conducted Under the Auspices of Council

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered by a meeting held under the auspices of the Council at which they are present must:

- 5.1 disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those in attendance at the meeting immediately before the matter is considered and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest;
- 5.2 absent themselves from any discussion of the matter; and
- 5.3 as soon as practicable after the meeting concludes provide to the Chief Executive Officer a written notice recording that the disclosure was made and accurately summarising the explanation given to those in attendance at the meeting.

## 6. Disclosure by Members of Council Staff Preparing Reports for Meetings

6.1 A member of Council staff who, in their capacity as a member of Council staff, has a conflict of interest in a matter in respect of which they are preparing or contributing to the preparation of a Report for the consideration of a:

- 6.1.1 Council meeting;
- 6.1.2 Delegated Committee meeting;
- 6.1.3 Community Asset Committee meeting

must, immediately upon becoming aware of the conflict of interest, provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer disclosing the conflict of interest and explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest.

- 6.2 The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the Report referred to in sub-Rule6.1 records the fact that a member of Council staff disclosed a conflict of interest in the subject-matter of the Report.
- 6.3 If the member of Council staff referred to in sub-Rule6.1 is the Chief Executive Officer:
  - 6.3.1 the written notice referred to in sub-Rule6.1 must be given to the Mayor; and
  - 6.3.2 the obligation imposed by sub-Rule6.2 may be discharged by any other member of Council staff responsible for the preparation of the Report.



## **7. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest by Members of Council Staff in the Exercise of Delegated Power**

- 7.1 A member of Council staff who has a conflict of interest in a matter requiring a decision to be made by the member of Council staff as delegate must, immediately upon becoming aware of the conflict of interest, provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest.
- 7.2 If the member of Council staff referred to in sub-Rule 7.1 is the Chief Executive Officer the written notice must be given to the Mayor.

## **8. Disclosure by a Member of Council Staff in the Exercise of a Statutory Function**

- 8.1 A member of Council staff who has a conflict of interest in a matter requiring a statutory function to be performed under an Act by the member of Council staff must, upon becoming aware of the conflict of interest, immediately provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest.
- 8.2 If the member of Council staff referred to in sub-Rule 8.1 is the Chief Executive Officer the written notice must be given to the Mayor.

## **9. Retention of Written Notices**

The Chief Executive Officer must retain all written notices received under this Chapter for a period of three years.

## CHAPTER 6 – MISCELLANEOUS

### 1. Informal Meetings of Councillors

If there is a meeting of Councillors that:

- 1.1 is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of the Council or briefing Councillors;
- 1.2 is attended by a majority of councillors;
- 1.3 is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- 1.4 is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting

the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:

- (a) tabled at the next convenient Council meeting; and
- (b) recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

### 2. Confidential Information

- 2.1 If, the Chief Executive Officer is of the opinion that information relating to a meeting is confidential information within the meaning of the Act, they may designate the information as confidential and advise Councillors and/or members of Council staff in writing accordingly.
- 2.2 Information which has been designated by the Chief Executive Officer as confidential information within the meaning of the Act, and in respect of which advice has been given to Councillors and/or members of Council staff in writing accordingly, will be presumed to be confidential information.
- 2.3 Nothing in sub-Rule 2.2 will, without more, mean that information designated by the Chief Executive Officer under sub-Rule 2.1 satisfies the definition of “confidential information” contained in section 3(1) of the Act.

## CHAPTER 7 – ELECTION PERIOD POLICY

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## **13 Advertising Signage on Council-controlled Land**

## **14 Breaches**

## **15 Councillor Code of Conduct**

## **16 Review**

## 1. Introduction

The Local Government Act 2020 ('the Act') requires the Council to include and adopt an Election Period Policy (Policy) in its Governance Rules.

This Policy provides a framework for decisions prohibited by the Council during the election period in accordance with the Act, and the procedures to be applied by Council during the election period.

The 'election period' as defined by the Act for the 2024 local government elections will commence on 24 September 2024 and end at 6pm on election day, 26 October 2024.

This policy replaces the Election Period Policy adopted by the Council on 31 August 2020.

## 2. Purpose

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Act and to ensure the Stonnington City Council elections on Saturday 26 October 2024 (and subsequent elections) are conducted in a manner that is ethical; fair and equitable; and are publicly perceived as such.

The policy contains:

- (a) procedures intended to assist the Council in making appropriate decisions and using resources appropriately during the election period before an election;
- (b) guidelines on public consultation and the scheduling of Council events; and
- (c) procedures to ensure that access to information held by the Council is made equally available and accessible to candidates during the election.

## 3. Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION	SOURCE
Advertising sign	<p>Means any placard, board, poster, banner, sign, card, structure or other similar device, whether portable or affixed or attached to any land, building, vehicle, trailer, person or other thing, used for the purpose of soliciting goods or services or displaying information but excludes any placard, board, poster, banner, sign, card or similar device attached to or on any vehicle or trailer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) and used for the purpose of promoting a registered political party or a person's candidature or prospective candidature at an election; or</li><li>(b) if the use of the vehicle or trailer is ancillary to another use connected with activities being carried out on land (such as the use of a vehicle or trailer in connection with building or commercial activities being carried out on land).</li></ul>	Policy

TERM	DEFINITION	SOURCE
Candidate	<p>Means a person:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who has nominated as a candidate for an election under section 256 of the Act.</li> <li>2. Who has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• publicly expressed an intention to run as a candidate in the election; and or</li> <li>• a person who has formally nominated as a candidate in the election with the Election Manager.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>A candidate is a “known candidate” when a person has actual knowledge of the candidate’s identity and that they meet the above definition.</p>	<p>Act s.3</p> <p>Policy</p>
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	<p>Means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The person appointed by a Council to be its Chief Executive Officer under section 44 of the Act or any person acting in that position; and/or</li> <li>(b) The Chief Executive Officer’s delegate</li> <li>(c) Such other person that the Chief Executive Officer selects for the purpose of giving effect to this Policy.</li> </ol>	<p>Act s.3</p> <p>Policy</p> <p>Policy</p>
Council	<p>Means the Stonnington City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.</p>	<p>Policy</p>
Council- controlled land	<p>Means any land which Council, owns, occupies, manages, has leased or licensed to another person or is otherwise under Council’s control and management, other than a road.</p>	<p>Policy</p>
Councillor- Candidate	<p>Means a current Councillor who has nominated, or is considering nominating for election in the 26 October 2024 Council elections.</p>	<p>Policy</p>
Electioneering	<p>Means any action, statement and or publication that contains material directly related to, or likely to influence, a Councillor’s re-election or a candidate’s election.</p>	<p>Policy</p>
Election Manager	<p>Means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The Victorian Electoral Commission; or</li> <li>(b) The person appointed in writing by the Victorian Electoral Commission.</li> </ol>	<p>Act s.3</p>
Electoral material	<p>Means an advertisement, handbill, pamphlet or notice that contains electoral matter, but does not include an advertisement in a newspaper that is only announcing the holding of a meeting.</p>	<p>Act s.3</p>

TERM	DEFINITION	SOURCE
Electoral matter	<p>Matter which is intended or likely to affect voting in an election but does not include any electoral material produced by or on behalf of the Election Manager for the purposes of conducting an election</p> <p>Without limiting the generality of the definition of electoral matter, matter is to be taken to be intended or likely to affect voting in an election if it contains an express or implicit reference to, or comment on -</p> <p>(a) the election; or</p> <p>(b) a candidate in the election; or</p> <p>(c) an issue submitted to, or otherwise before, the voters in connection with the election.</p> <p>Electoral matter includes material which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicises the strengths or weaknesses of a candidate</li> <li>Advocates the policies of the Council or of a candidate</li> <li>Responds to claims made by a candidate</li> <li>Publicises the achievements of the elected Council.</li> </ul>	Policy
Election Period	<p>Means the period that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>starts at the time that nominations close on nomination day; and</li> <li>ends at 6 p.m. on election day;</li> </ul> <p>[That is, 24 September 2024 through to 6pm on 26 October 2024.</p>	Act s.3
Nomination Day	<p>Means the last day on which nominations to be a candidate at a Council election may be received in accordance with this Act and the regulations.</p>	Act s.3
Prohibited decision	<p>Means any decision -</p> <p>(a) relating to the appointment or remuneration of a Chief Executive Officer, but not to the appointment or remuneration of an Acting Chief Executive Officer; or</p> <p>(b) commits the Council to expenditure exceeding 1% of the Council's income from general rates, municipal charges and service rates and charges in the preceding financial year; or</p> <p>(c) the Council considered could be reasonably deferred until the next Council is in place; or</p> <p>(d) that Council considered should not be made during an election period; or</p> <p>(e) that would enable the use of Council's resources in a way that is intended to influence voting at an election.</p> <p>(f) Means an irrevocable decision that significantly affects the municipality.</p>	Act s.69

TERM	DEFINITION	SOURCE
Publication	<p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a published work in any form (e.g. hardcopy or digital) including but not limited to brochures, articles, letters, posters, policies, strategies, papers, letters, commentary.</li> <li>b) the act or process of publishing.</li> </ul>	Policy
Publish	Means publish by any means including by publication on the Internet.	Act s.3
Public consultation	Means a process which involves an invitation or invitations to individuals, groups or organisations or the community generally to comment on an issue, proposed action or proposed policy, and includes discussion of that matter with the public.	Policy
Road	<p>Road includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a street; and</li> <li>b) a right of way; and</li> <li>c) a public highway; and</li> <li>d) any land reserved or proclaimed as a street or road under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 or the Land Act 1958; and</li> <li>e) a public road under the Road Management Act 2004; and</li> <li>f) a passage; and</li> <li>g) a cul de sac; and</li> <li>h) a by-pass; and</li> <li>i) a bridge or ford; and</li> <li>j) a footpath, bicycle path or nature strip; and</li> <li>k) any culvert or kerbing or other land; and</li> <li>l) works forming part of the Road</li> </ul>	Policy
Staff, Council staff or Staff member	Means any employee of Council whether permanent or temporary or casual, and includes contractors, and volunteers carrying out work for or on behalf of Stonnington City Council.	Policy



## 4. Accountability

### 4.1. Council

**Council** will function in accordance with this Election Period Policy during the **election period**.

### 4.2. Chief Executive Officer

In addition to the **Chief Executive Officer's** statutory responsibilities, the **Chief Executive Officer** will:

- » Ensure as far as possible, that all councillors and officers are informed of the application of this policy 30 days prior to the commencement of the **election period**.
- » Ensure as far as possible, that matters of **Council** business requiring **prohibited decisions** are scheduled for **Council** to consider prior to the commencement of the **election period**, or deferred where appropriate for determination by the incoming **Council**.
- » Not include in the order of business for any Council meeting scheduled during the **election period**, any matters requiring **prohibited decisions** or matters that could be considered **prohibited decisions**.

The **Chief Executive Officer** may issue guidelines to **staff** on the role and responsibilities of **staff** in the implementation of this policy.

The **Chief Executive Officer** may also issue guidelines to councillors to inform them about changes to services, processes and procedures that may impact them in their role during the **election period**.

## 5. Decisions by Council

### 5.1 Decisions - Council and Delegated Committee Meetings

During the **election period** reports to **Council** and Delegated Committee meetings will be carefully vetted to avoid listing matters on the agenda which could foreseeably influence voters' intentions at the forthcoming election; or encourage **Councillor- candidates** to use the matter as part of their election platform.

Councillors commit to refrain from moving motions on, or raising matters at Council or Delegated Committee meetings that could potentially influence voting at the election.

### 5.2 Decisions - Delegates

The ordinary, day-to-day business of local government must continue throughout the election period. That business will be conducted by Council, its delegates and **staff** in a responsible and transparent manner, in accordance with statutory requirements.

Most **Council** decisions are not made at meetings of the **Council**. Significant decision - making power is formally delegated to **staff** and the decision of a delegate is 'deemed' to be a decision by **Council**. Because a delegate's decision is the same as a **Council** decision, the same constraints that apply to decisions made in **Council** and Delegated Committee meetings apply when delegates make decisions. Delegates should therefore give careful consideration to the exercise of their powers during the **election period**.

Should a delegate be required to make a decision(s) under delegation in the ordinary course of **Council** business during the **election period**, the delegate must satisfy themselves beforehand that the decision is not a **prohibited decision**.

The following matters may also be considered a **prohibited decision** during the **election period**:

- » Allocation of community grants;
- » Direct funding to community organisations;
- » Major planning scheme amendments; or
- » Changes to strategic objectives and strategies in the **Council Plan**.

### 5.3 Invalid Decisions

In accordance with section 69(4) of the Act, if the following decision are made during the **election period**, the decisions are invalid:

- » relating to the appointment or remuneration of the **Chief Executive Officer**, but not the appointment or remuneration of an Acting **Chief Executive Officer**; and
- » committing the **Council** to expenditure exceeding 1% of the **Council's** income from general rates, municipal charges and service rates and charges in the preceding financial year.

### 5.4. Compensation

In accordance with section 69(5) of the Act, any person who suffers any loss or damage as a result of acting in good faith on a **Council** decision that is an invalid decision, is entitled to compensation from the **Council** for that loss or damage.

## 6. Public Consultation

Consultation is an integral part of **Council's** policy development process and operations.

Surveys, blogs, invitations to put forward submissions, and other community engagement activities should be avoided during the **election period**.

Council will not continue or commence **public consultation** on **prohibited decisions**, contentious or politically sensitive matters after the commencement of the **election period**.

However, some **public consultation** activities may be necessary during the **election period** to facilitate the day-to-day business of **Council**.

**Public consultation** associated with activities and decisions which are the subject of statutory processes, for example:

- » Applications under the Planning and Environment Act 1987  
can be expected to continue through the **election period** to ensure **Council** does not breach its statutory obligations.

**Public consultation** not associated with activities and decisions which are the subject of statutory processes shall only proceed if prior approval is given by the **Chief Executive Officer**.

Where community engagement has occurred prior to the **election period** but the report has not yet proceeded to a **Council** or Delegated Committee meeting, results of the consultation will also not be provided to a Council or Delegated Committee meeting until the **election period** has concluded.

Any **public consultation** that does proceed during the **election period** will be vetted for **electoral matter** and express or implicit links to the election.

## 6.1 Postponing consultation

In view of the potential for a matter or issue to become contentious or politically sensitive in the course of the **election period**, **Council** reserves the right where possible and practicable, to postpone **public consultation** and any associated decisions where the matter is considered likely to affect voting in the election.

## 7. Council Publications

### 7.1 Prohibition on Publishing Material during the Election Period

**Council** must not publish **electoral material** that contains **electoral matter**. The words “advertisement, handbill, pamphlet or notice” are to be interpreted broadly and will include, amongst other things:

- » Brochures, pamphlets, handbills, flyers, magazines and books
- » Newsletters and other circulars (hardcopy and/or electronic)
- » New website material and social media posts
- » Mass mail outs or letters to a large number of people
- » Media releases
- » Material to publicise a function or event
- » Notices or posters placed on **Council** controlled property, including walls, noticeboards, and electronic noticeboards and screens

This does not apply to the publishing of any document published before the commencement of the **election period** or **publication** of any document required to be published in accordance with, or under, any Act or regulation.

### 7.2 Council Publications Including Councillor Information

References to councillors who are standing for re-election in **Council publications** printed, **published** or distributed during the **election period** could be considered **electoral matter** and will be carefully vetted during the certification process.

### 7.3 Existing Publications

Existing **publications** will be reviewed at the start of the **election period**.

**Publications** or material which is prominently displayed and might be regarded as likely to influence how people vote may be temporarily removed from display. Any material so removed may still be provided to members of the community upon request.

In the context of **Council’s** website, prominently displayed means content visible on the City of Stonnington’s website: [www.stonnington.vic.gov.au](http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au) and all pages contained within.

During the **election period** Councillor profile pages will be limited to names, contact details, date elected and councillor assignments. There will be no biographies or policy statements.

#### 74 Annual Report

**Council** is required by the Act to produce its Annual Report. The 2023-24 Annual Report will be **published** during the **election period**. The Annual Report will not contain any material that could be regarded as overt **electioneering** or that inappropriately promotes individual councillors.

Any publication of an extract or summary of the Annual Report should not contain information that could be considered **electoral matter**.

#### 75 Council and Delegated Committee Meetings

**Council** is required by the Governance Rules to:

- » Give public notice of **Council** meetings and Delegated Committee meetings; and
- » Produce and make available agendas and minutes of **Council** meetings and Delegated Committee meetings.

#### 76 Social Media

At the start of the **election period** a message will be posted on **Council's** social media channels and website stating these channels will have no new content added until after the **election period** unless it relates to existing **Council** services.

Any new **publication** on social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs and wiki pages created by Council during the **election period** should not contain information that could be considered **electoral matter**.

As public comments posted on Council's social media sites could be considered **electoral matter**, **staff** responsible for administering social media sites will, where possible, disable public commenting. Where public commenting cannot be disabled, **staff** will monitor their respective sites during the **election period** and where possible, remove information that could be considered **electoral matter** as soon as reasonably practicable after it is posted.

## 8. Council Events

Where practicable, civic and ceremonial **Council** events should not be scheduled during the **election period**. Civic and ceremonial events do not include routine events and programs conducted as part of Council's day-to-day activities (e.g. immunisation sessions, gallery exhibitions, library programs).

Any civic or ceremonial Council event held during the election period should meet one or more of the following criteria:

- » It is a planned event endorsed by the current Council Plan;
- » It is routinely held at the same time of year;
- » It is a commemorative or anniversary event held on or near the anniversary date;
- » It demonstrates a clear community benefit, or serves an educational or welfare purpose; or
- » It contributes to cultural development, social awareness or sense of community identity.

Councillors may attend events as required by their **Council** duties, but are not permitted to use these appearances for **electioneering**.

## 9. Council Resources

### 9.1 Application of Resources

**Council** resources, including offices, **staff**, hospitality, services (including phone, internet and email), property, equipment and stationary must be used exclusively for normal **Council** business during the **election period** and must not be used in connection with any election campaign or issue.

**Councillor-candidates** must not use **Council** resources in connection with any activities associated with their election campaigns, regardless of any entitlement to “reasonable personal use” of **Council** equipment under any other policy, protocol or terms of use.

**Councillor-candidates** should also be mindful to manage any perceived conflicts even where a direct expense isn't incurred, this may include for example:

- » Where campaign-related emails are received in a **Council** email account, send any responses from a private email and encourage the correspondent to use that account in future.
- » Where campaign-related calls are received on a **Council** device, provide and encourage the caller to use a non-council number for future calls.

### 9.2 Role of Governance staff

The Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillors, and other Legal and Governance **staff**, will not be asked to undertake any tasks connected directly or indirectly with the election campaign of a councillor standing for re-election.

### 9.3 Use of Council Equipment by Councillors

Councillors may continue to use any **Council** equipment provided to them to facilitate their performance of normal **Council** duties during the **election period**, subject to existing protocols and terms of use.

### 9.4 Councillors' Entitlement to Reimbursement

Reimbursements of councillors' out-of-pocket expenses during the **election period** will only apply to expenses incurred in the performance of normal **Council** duties, and not for expenses that support or are connected with a **candidate's** election campaign.

### 9.5 Council Branding

No **Council** logos, letterheads, **Council** taken photos or other Stonnington City Council branding may be used for, or linked in any way to, a **candidate's** election campaign.

### 9.6 Cessation of the Meet Your Councillors Program

The Meet Your Councillors Program and ward-specific **publications** will not be arranged by **Council** during the election period.

### 9.7 Councillor Correspondence

While the routine business of **Council** must continue, it is important that the administration is not perceived as providing **Councillor-candidates** any undue advantage whilst campaigning.

During the **election period**, any responses prepared by the administration in response to correspondence addressed to a **Councillor-candidate**, will therefore be signed by the **Chief Executive Officer** or relevant Director or Manager as appropriate. Such responses will acknowledge the administration is responding due to limitations imposed upon councillors during the **election period**.

## 9.8 Officers' Discretion

The **Council** will ensure that due propriety is observed in the use of all **Council** resources, and **Council staff** are required to exercise appropriate discretion in that regard.

Where the use of Council resources appears to relate to the election campaign of a councillor standing for re-election, the matter must be referred to the Chief Executive Officer.

## 10. Media Services

### 10.1 Restriction on Services

During the **election period**, Council resources must not be used in any way that might promote a councillor as an election **candidate**.

New Council publicity during the **election period** will be restricted to communicating normal **Council** activities and initiatives and subject to approval by the **Chief Executive Officer**.

### 10.2 Media Releases/Spokespersons

Media releases during the **election period** will minimise references to specific councillors and will not identify any councillor in a manner that could promote a councillor as an election **candidate**. Where it is necessary to identify a spokesperson, the **Chief Executive Officer** or their delegate will be consulted.

### 10.3 Councillors

Councillors must not use their position as an elected representative or their access to **Council staff** and other **Council** resources to gain media attention during the **election period** in support of an election campaign.

### 10.4 Council Employees

During the **election period** no **Council** employee may make any public statement that relates to an election issue unless prior approval from the **Chief Executive Officer** has been obtained.

## 11. Information

### 11.1 Candidates' Access to Information

Council recognises that all election **candidates** have certain rights to information relevant to their election campaigns from the **Council** administration subject to legislative constraints such as:

- » Sections 123 of the Act which prohibit **Councillor-candidates** from misusing or inappropriately making use of their position; and
- » the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.

Councillors will continue to receive information that is necessary to fulfil their existing elected roles. Beyond that, only information that is readily available to any member of the community will be provided to any **candidate**.

## 11.2 Information Request Register

An Information Request Register will be maintained by the Executive Manager Legal and Governance during the **election period**. This Register will be a public document and record requests by persons who identify themselves as **candidates** when seeking information relating to **electoral matters** or when making other general enquiries. The register will also record the responses provided.

Any **candidate** may, upon request, obtain information about the recorded requests made by another **candidate** as recorded in the Information Request Register and a copy of information given in response to the request.

The Executive Manager Legal and Governance may, at his or her discretion, automatically circulate to all **candidates**, the response to any request recorded in the Information Request Register.

## 12. Assistance to Candidates

All election related enquiries from **candidates**, whether sitting councillors or not, will be directed to the **Election Manager** or, where the matter is outside the responsibilities of the **Election Manager**, to the **Chief Executive Officer**.

### 12.1. Candidate Information

**Council** will provide **candidates** with a Councillor Candidate Information Kit to assist them in running and nominating for **Council**.

The Councillor Candidate Information Kit may include:

- » Information about this policy;
- » Information about nominating as a **candidate**;
- » Information about other sources of information, including from the Victorian Electoral Commission and the **Election Manager**; or
- » Information about election campaign donation returns.

### 12.2. Council staff

Upon becoming a **candidate** in a Stonnington City Council election, the **Council staff**

member must:

- » Inform the Chief Executive Officer;
- » Take leave from their duties at least for the duration of the **election period** in accordance with sections 34 and 256 the Act;
- » Return any Council equipment (including, but not limited to, motor vehicles, telephones and computers), documents or information that is not available to the public at least for the duration of the **election period**; and
- » If elected, immediately resign from their employed position at Council, in accordance with sections 34 and 256 Act.

### 12.3. Member of Council Delegated or Advisory Committees

Upon becoming a **candidate**, any person who is a member of one of **Council's** Delegated committees or Advisory committees is expected to:

- » Comply with this policy;
- » Inform the **Chief Executive Officer**;
- » Take leave from the Delegated committee or Advisory committee
- » Return any Council equipment, documents or information which is not available to the public for the duration of their candidacy and/or the **election period**; and
- » If elected, immediately resign from the Delegated committee or Advisory committee

## 13. Advertising Signage on Council-controlled Land

**Candidates** and their supporters are not permitted to affix, attach or place advertising signs on **Council-controlled land** or a Council road during election campaigns including during the **election period**.

## 14. Breaches

Sections 123 of the Act prohibits Councillors from misusing or inappropriately making use of their position. A breach of section 123 attracts serious penalties, including possible imprisonment. Allegations of breaches of the Act are independently received and investigated by the Local Government Inspectorate.

Section 304 of the Act prohibits Councillors or a member of **Council staff** from using resources in a way that is intended to or likely to affect the result of an election.

In addition, section 304 of the Act also prohibits Councillors or a member of **Council staff** from using **Council** resources to intentionally or recklessly print, **publish** or distribute or cause, permit or authorise to be printed, published or distributed any **electoral material** during the **election period** on behalf of, or purporting to be on behalf of, the **Council** unless the **electoral material** only contains information about the election process or is otherwise required in accordance with, or under, any Act or regulation.

## 15. Councillor Code of Conduct

Allegations of breaches of this Policy will be dealt with under the Dispute Resolution Procedures of the Councillor Code of Conduct. The Chief Executive Officer will take the place of the Mayor in managing complaints received under the Election Period Policy.

Complaints must be directed to the **Chief Executive Officer** in writing, providing details of the alleged contravention, when it occurred and who it involved.

The **Chief Executive Officer** will assess the information and follow the provisions of the Dispute Resolution Procedures of the Councillor Code of Conduct including, where necessary, the appointment of an external arbiter.

## 16. Review

Council will review and, if required, amend the policy not later than 12 months before the commencement of the next general **election period**.