



the bushland shire

creating a living environment

SUPPLEMENTARY BUSINESS PAPER

ORDINARY MEETING

**Wednesday, 18 August, 2010
at 6.30pm**

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20 DEFERRED REPORT - 21 JULY 2010 ORDINARY MEETING - REVIEW OF COUNCIL, WORKSHOP AND TASK FORCE MEETING SCHEDULES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the May 2010 Ordinary Meeting, the General Manager was requested to undertake a review of the meeting schedule for Council, Workshop and Task Force meetings to achieve greater efficacy and productivity. This Report responds to the resolution by providing background details associated with the different types of meetings as well as the time commitment of Councillors and senior staff in attending those meetings. It also provides four options to consider in respect of changing the current schedule.

The four options which have been developed by staff are the combination of the existing Ordinary and Planning Meetings into one meeting per month; the use of Workshop Meetings to formally consider and decide on matters where Council believes there would be value in receiving a presentation from staff and/or a consultant followed by input from interested members of the public; the use of informal briefing sessions to provide updates on a regular basis about topics and/or projects of interest to Councillors; and the creation of formal Committees (to replace Task Forces) which have a delegation from Council to make decisions and/or recommendations in respect of specified matters.

In respect of the options, a series of questions and issues have been provided for each option together with comments for Council to take into account as part of its decision on this matter. An assessment of the options by staff has resulted in a recommendation that all Task Forces be disbanded; formal Committees of Council not be formed at this stage; the need for working parties to monitor and provide guidance in respect of particular projects be reviewed annually in September each year or at other times as required; there be no change to Planning and Ordinary Meeting schedules; Workshop Meetings be held on the second and/or fourth Wednesday of the month as necessary; informal briefing sessions be held on the fifth Wednesday of the month (when they occur) or at other times at the discretion of the Mayor and General Manager; and the scheduling of existing Committee and other meetings be reviewed in an attempt limit them as much as possible to "free" Wednesday evenings.

It is considered that the recommendations, if adopted, will achieve greater efficacy and productivity in respect of the various types of meetings. The recommendations also provide an opportunity for Councillors (and relevant senior staff) to manage their diaries such that generally Wednesdays (from 6.30pm) are "Council meeting nights" and there would be a consequent reduction in the requirement for attendance at Council on multiple evenings of the week.

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this Report is to respond to Council's resolution in respect of Notice of Motion No. NOM6/10, which was adopted at the 19 May 2010 Ordinary Meeting, and to make recommendations in respect of future Council, Workshop and Task Force meetings.

DISCUSSION

At the 19 May 2010 Ordinary Meeting, Council considered Notice of Motion No. NOM6/10 – Review of Council, Workshop and Task Force Meeting Schedules and resolved that:

The General Manager arrange for a review to be undertaken of the scheduling of Council, Workshop and Task Force meetings to achieve greater efficacy and productivity. Such a review is to consider the consolidation of meetings on the one date; the use of formal Workshop Meetings (with all Councillors in attendance) to receive presentations and make decisions; and the restructuring of Task Forces into formal Committees of Council with delegation to make decisions or recommendations. The outcomes of the review are to be reported to Council at the July 2010 Ordinary Meeting such that any changes necessary can be adopted at the September 2010 Ordinary Meeting when Council determines its schedule of meetings, order of business and appointments to Committees, Working Parties and Task Forces for the period to September 2011.

Formal Council Meetings

Council's Code of Meeting Practice makes provision for three types of ordinary meetings. In this regard, ordinary meetings are defined in the Code as meetings of Council, other than extraordinary meetings, held during each year on such regular days and at such regular times as Council may appoint. They include:

Planning Meetings which are held at 6.30pm on the first Wednesday of each month (excluding January) to consider items relating to planning matters

Ordinary Meetings which are held at 6.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month (excluding January) to consider items other than planning matters

Workshop Meetings which are held at 6.30pm on the fourth and fifth Wednesdays of each month as required (excluding January) to consider relevant items, especially those where a presentation by Council staff or an external person or organisation is required

The decision to have one Planning Meeting per month was made by the current Council early in its term. For many years prior to that decision, Council had traditionally held two Planning Meetings per month (on the first and third Wednesdays). A factor in Council's decision to only have one Planning Meeting per month was that the number of items on the agenda had gradually been reducing (currently in the range of 5 – 10 per month) and the Meetings were being completed by early evening.

Council's Ordinary Meetings were traditionally held on the second Wednesday of the month. Since February 2010, however, they have been held on the third Wednesday of the month. This change to the third Wednesday appears to have been successful with no complaints having been received or issues raised by Councillors, staff or members of the public in the first few months of operation.

Since the election of the current Council in September 2008, no Workshop Meetings have been held. This has generally meant that the fourth Wednesday of the month has been free of formal Council meetings, and where there has been a fifth Wednesday in a month, it has been normally been set aside for an informal meeting between Councillors, the General Manager and Executive Managers and has included briefings on particular issues as required.

Task Forces

The previous Council created the following five Task Forces to specifically address significant challenges and help with the amount of business that needed to be considered by Council at the time:

- Community, Cultural and Recreation Facilities Task Force
- Employment and Economic Development Task Force
- Finance and Strategy Task Force
- Infrastructure and Asset Management Task Force
- Sustainability and Environment Task Force

The first three of the Task Forces have continued to meet on a regular basis throughout this Council's tenure, whilst the Infrastructure and Asset Management Task Force and the Sustainability and Environment Task Force are yet to meet.

The Community, Cultural and Recreation Facilities Task Force currently comprises eight Councillors and its role is to consider the provision of community, cultural and recreation facilities across the Shire using a coordinated, whole of Council approach. The Task Force meets on a monthly basis and has had involvement in or has maintained a watching brief on the progress of many projects e.g. the redevelopment of the Hornsby Aquatic Centre; the review of the management of Council's community centres and halls; the formation of a Hornsby Arts Reference Committee; the extension to the Hornsby Wood Working Men's Shed in Headen Park, Thornleigh; the extension to the Brooklyn Community Health Centre to provide a Meeting Room; the redevelopment of the Cherrybrook Community and Cultural Centre and the development of the Greenway Park Early Childhood Education Centre; the proposed upgrade of the Asquith Community Centre at Storey Park, Asquith; the development of the Community and Cultural Facilities Strategic Plan; and the establishment of the Wallarobba Arts and Cultural Centre at Willow Park in Hornsby.

The Employment and Economic Development Task Force currently comprises seven Councillors and meets on a two monthly basis with the aim of advancing employment and economic development opportunities across the Shire. The Task Force also acts as a conduit for internal and external stakeholders, including businesses, to receive and provide information on issues of interest. It provides a coordinated whole of Council forum for the debate and discussion of issues relating to employment and economic development. Projects to be considered arise directly from the adopted Economic Development Strategy, and include regular reviews of the Strategy and research into the barriers and opportunities for development in the Shire.

The Finance and Strategy Task Force currently comprises six Councillors, meets on a monthly basis and focuses on the financial sustainability of both the organisation and the proposed capital projects to be undertaken on behalf of the community. The Task Force does this by defining appropriate funding options for specific community projects taking into account the immediate and long term funding requirements and the competing priorities for various projects. In essence, the Task Force balances financial constraints with the social impact of programs and community expectations on the Council. Projects which have been considered by the Task Force include a review of each Division's budgetary responsibilities; an update of Council's Strategic Financial Plan; ongoing reviews of Council's investments and borrowings; and Council's application to the Minister for Local Government for approval to raise a levy for infrastructure works.

During the term of the current Council, issues have been raised about whether the operation of Task Forces continues to be an efficient and effective means of dealing with Council business. These issues include:

- The Task Forces have no delegation from Council. Their meetings are not advertised and structured to enable members of the public to attend and have input to matters that are being discussed. As such, they are unable to make decisions in respect of any matter or to make recommendations to Council.
- There are difficulties caused by the requirement for Councillors to travel to Council on multiple evenings during the week to attend Council, Task Force and other types of meetings. In respect of Task Forces, this can result in less than a full representation of Councillors at a meeting which may inhibit a full discussion of all issues associated with a particular matter. It also leads to the continuing need to relay information about discussion at meetings to Councillors who were not able to attend the Task Force meeting.
- There has been double handling of matters e.g. where the matter is firstly discussed by the Task Force, subsequently considered by Council but then referred back to the Task Force for further discussion. This would appear to be contrary to why the Task Forces were originally established i.e. to reduce the amount of time required to be spent on a matter when it comes before Council because there has been previous discussion at a Task Force meeting.
- As there is a minimum quorum requirement of two members in respect of all of the Task Forces, this can result in a different group of Councillors attending consecutive Task Force meetings and potentially having a different view on the same matter than those who attended the previous meeting. This can lead to confusion on the way forward in respect of particular matters.
- There has been a tendency for many items on agendas to be monthly updates from staff in respect of projects, rather than discussion of strategic approaches to organisational issues. The updates could be more efficiently provided by way of memo to all Councillors or through quarterly informal briefing sessions with all Councillors in attendance.

Scheduling of Meetings

In respect of Planning, Ordinary, Workshop and Task Force meetings, the current commitment by Councillors (if they are a member of a Task Force) can be summarised as:

- First Wednesday of the month – Planning Meeting – commencing at 6.30pm.
- Second Wednesday of the month – Finance and Strategy Task Force Meeting (each month) and Employment and Economic Development Task Force Meeting (every second month) - commencing at 4.30pm and 6.00pm respectively.
- Third Wednesday of the month – Ordinary Meeting – commencing at 6.30pm.
- Fourth Wednesday of the month – Workshop Meeting if required – commencing at 6.30pm.

- Fourth Thursday of the month – Community, Cultural and Recreation Facilities Task Force Meeting – commencing at 6.30pm.
- Fifth Wednesday of the month – Workshop Meeting if required (although this time has normally been set aside in this Council’s term for an informal meeting between Councillors, the General Manager and Executive Managers or for a briefing session).

It is noted that individual Councillors may also have a requirement to attend meetings on other days and evenings of the week as a consequence of their membership of Council Committees and Working Parties. In this regard, the existing membership of Committees, Working Parties and Task Forces, which was determined by Council at its 9 September 2009 Ordinary Meeting for the period to September 2010, are shown below:

Name of Committee/ Working Party/Task Force	Councillor Representation 2009/10
Bushland Management Advisory Committee	Wendy McMurdo, Steve Evans, Robert Browne, Andrew Martin
Catchments Remediation Rate Committee (CRR) Expenditure Review Committee	Wendy McMurdo, Robert Browne
Cherrybrook Technology High School Committee (MPC)	Bruce Mills, Dilip Chopra (Alternate)
Community, Cultural and Recreation Facilities Task Force	Robert Browne, Steve Evans, Steve Russell, Mick Smart, Dilip Chopra, Andrew Martin, Michael Hutchence, Bruce Mills
Dangar Island Vehicle Management Committee	Wendy McMurdo
Dural Service Centre Working Party	Steve Evans, Robert Browne, Steve Russell
Epping Town Centre Study Stakeholder Project Control Group	Robert Browne, Andrew Martin (Alternate), Michael Hutchence (Alternate)
Employment and Economic Development Task Force	Steve Evans, Robert Browne, Mick Smart, Steve Russell, Dilip Chopra, Michael Hutchence, Bruce Mills
Finance and Strategy Task Force	Nick Berman, Steve Russell, Mick Smart, Robert Browne, Michael Hutchence, Dilip Chopra
Floodplain Risk Management Committee (FRMC)	Wendy McMurdo, Andrew Martin (Alternate)
Friends of Lisgar Gardens	Robert Browne, Dilip Chopra, Michael Hutchence
Galston Village Masterplan Review Steering Committee	Wendy McMurdo, Steve Russell, Mick Smart
Hawkesbury/Nepean Local Government Advisory Group (HNLGAG)	Wendy McMurdo
Homelessness Task Force	Michael Hutchence
Hornsby Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee	Wendy McMurdo, Robert Browne, Andrew Martin
Hornsby Kuring-gai Police and Community Youth Club	Michael Hutchence, Dilip Chopra (Alternate)
Hornsby Rural Fire Service Liaison Committee	Mick Smart, Steve Russell (Alternate)
Hornsby Shire Access Committee	Nick Berman
Hornsby Shire Arts Reference Committee	Dilip Chopra (Chairperson), Robert Browne, Michael Hutchence (Alternate)
Hornsby Shire Council Centenary Publications Committee	Nick Berman, Steve Evans

Name of Committee/ Working Party/Task Force	Councillor Representation 2009/10
Hornsby Shire Heritage Advisory Committee	Robert Browne (Chairperson) , Michael Hutchence, Andrew Martin, Steve Evans
Hornsby Shire Local Traffic Committee	Michael Hutchence, Bruce Mills (Alternate), Dilip Chopra (Alternate)
Hornsby Shire Residents Sewerage Action Committee	Wendy McMurdo, Steve Russell, Mick Smart, Robert Browne, Michael Hutchence
Hornsby/Kuring-gai Bush Fire Management Committee	Mick Smart, Steve Russell (Alternate), Steve Evans (Alternate)
Housing Strategy Steering Committee	Nick Berman, Steve Evans, Robert Browne, Wendy McMurdo, Mick Smart, Bruce Mills, Steve Russell, Dilip Chopra, Michael Hutchence, Andrew Martin
Infrastructure and Asset Management Task Force	Robert Browne, Steve Evans, Wendy McMurdo, Steve Russell, Dilip Chopra, Michael Hutchence
Lillian Fraser Garden Management Committee	Robert Browne, Michael Hutchence
Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee	Wendy McMurdo (Chairperson), Mick Smart (Deputy Chairperson), Steve Russell
'Wellum Bulla' Hornsby Shire Council Materials Handling Facility Monitoring Committee	Wendy McMurdo, Steve Evans, Robert Browne, Mick Smart, Steve Russell
Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC)	Nick Berman, Robert Browne, Steve Russell (Alternate), Wendy McMurdo (Alternate)
Public Libraries (NSW) Metropolitan Association	Bruce Mills
RTA Sydney Consultative Forum	Bruce Mills, Steve Evans (Alternate)
Subregional Employment Study Working Party	Nick Berman, Robert Browne
Sullage Charges Investigation Committee	Steve Russell (Chairperson), Wendy McMurdo, Mick Smart, Robert Browne, Michael Hutchence, Bruce Mills
Sustainable Action Committee (SAC)	Wendy McMurdo, Robert Browne, Steve Evans, Andrew Martin
Sustainability and Environment Task Force	Wendy McMurdo, Steve Evans, Robert Browne, Dilip Chopra, Andrew Martin
Sydney Coastal Councils Group	Wendy McMurdo, Mick Smart (Alternate)
Terry's Creek FMC	Andrew Martin, Michael Hutchence (Alternate)
Thornleigh West Public School Hall Committee	Dilip Chopra
Wideview Public School Hall Committee	Mick Smart

These groups tend to meet on days and nights other than Wednesdays generally because the Wednesdays had been reserved for formal Council meetings and/or the other nights suited the specific membership of the group.

Apart from meetings of the above groups, Councillors also attend various informal briefings and workshops e.g. Housing Strategy workshops (five have been held in the last 12 months), Comprehensive LEP Workshops (three have been held in the last 12 months), Epping Town Centre workshops, Budget workshops, Parking workshops, Hornsby Quarry workshops, etc.

This review should, therefore, be seen as an opportunity to consider the scheduling of these other meetings such that attendance at Council by Councillors is limited as much as possible to Wednesday evenings.

Options to Consider

Having regard to Council's resolution in respect of NOM6/10, a number of meeting schedule and other options have been identified which may achieve a more efficient use of time by those Councillors and staff who are required to attend the meetings. These options, which are not mutually exclusive, include the following:

- The combination of the existing Ordinary and Planning Meetings into one meeting per month
- The use of Workshop Meetings to formally consider and decide on matters where Council believes there would be value in receiving a presentation from staff and/or a consultant followed by input from interested members of the public
- The use of informal briefing sessions to provide updates on a regular basis about topics and/or projects of interest to Councillors
- Creating formal Committees (to replace Task Forces) which have a delegation from Council to make decisions and/or recommendations in respect of specified matters

In considering those options, there are a number of questions and issues which may need to be considered. Those questions and issues are detailed under each of the options (repeated in bold below), and are followed by comments that Council may wish to take into account as part of its decision on this matter.

1. The combination of the existing Ordinary and Planning Meetings into one meeting per month

- Is it better that Ordinary and Planning Meetings be kept separate such that there is clarity about Council's decision making role i.e. as an approving authority in respect of planning matters; and as the corporate body or property owner in respect of most other matters?
- Is one longer meeting per month necessarily better than two shorter meetings?
- Is the number of planning matters considered by Council expected to increase in the foreseeable future and should this be considered as a reason for keeping the Meetings separate?
- What matters would be handled first at a combined meeting (planning or ordinary) and will this lead to confusion and frustration for affected members of the public?
- Would one combined meeting result in longer waiting periods for members of the public and Council staff in respect of their item/s of interest?

Comment

It is considered to be appropriate that Planning and Ordinary Meetings continue to be held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month respectively. This provides the best opportunity for all involved (i.e. Councillors, staff and members of the public) to be aware of and understand Council's decision making role at that particular meeting and for members of the public to spend as least time as possible in waiting for their item/s of interest to be considered by Council.

2. The use of Workshop Meetings to formally consider and decide on matters where Council believes there would be value in receiving a presentation from staff and/or a consultant followed by input from interested members of the public

- Are Workshop Meetings a good way of involving the public in some decisions of Council?
- Would the use of Workshop Meetings provide an opportunity for Council decisions on difficult and topical issues to be more open and accountable?
- Is a Workshop Meeting an appropriate time to make a decision on a matter?
- If a Workshop Meeting is not the right time to make a decision in respect of a matter, could it still be used as an opportunity to hear the presentations but defer the decision to another meeting if necessary?
- Would the informality of Workshop Meetings assist in the consideration of issues?
- Are the appropriate administrative processes, staffing and equipment in place to allow Workshop Meetings to be held?
- Is there value in workshopping some matters (with members of the public in attendance) whereby report/s are prepared and listed on the website as part of a formal Agenda and Business Paper?
- Have there been opportunities over the past 18 months for using Workshop Meetings to receive presentations and discuss certain items of business?
- When is the appropriate time in a decision making process for the public to have an opportunity to make submissions or to comment on a matter before Council?
- Would the use of Workshop Meetings reduce multiple considerations of a matter e.g. when the matter is considered at a Task Force meeting (with some Councillors present) followed by an Ordinary Meeting (with all Councillors present)?
- If Task Forces are disbanded, could some matters which are currently considered be handled at Workshop Meetings with the remainder handled at informal briefings?

Comment

Up until June 2010, the current Council has not utilised Workshop Meetings to assist in the consideration of matters. It may, therefore, be appropriate that Workshop Meetings at least be tested such that Councillors can determine if the opportunities provided to staff, consultants and members of the public would lead to better and more timely decision making in respect of some matters. Ideally, this testing should occur prior to any decision to proceed down the path of establishing, under the Local Government Act, formal Committees of Council to replace the existing Task Forces.

In previous Councils, the use of Workshop Meetings appears to have been successful. Councillors, consultants and members of the public appreciated the opportunity to be more involved in the discussion and debate prior to a decision being made by Council. Presentations by consultants and/or staff helped all concerned to gain a better understanding of a matter. Workshop Meetings also provide an opportunity to remove some of the double handling of matters that currently occurs when a matter has been discussed at a Task Force meeting prior to being formally considered at an Ordinary Meeting.

Workshop Meetings are provided for within Council's existing Code of Meeting Practice and as a consequence, associated administrative processes are in place to cater for the production/distribution of the required Agendas, Business Papers and Minutes as well as the physical set up needs of the meeting. "Guidelines for Workshop Meetings" were last adopted by Council in 2007. They have been updated to reflect the

meeting arrangements recommended in this Report and are attached for the information of Council.

3. The use of informal briefing sessions to provide updates on a regular basis about topics and/or projects of interest to Councillors

- Could informal briefing sessions be held once per quarter (on the fifth Wednesday of the month) to provide Councillors with the updates they require in respect of particular projects or issues?
- If once a quarter is not often enough for informal briefings, could the second or fourth Wednesday of particular months be used if no Workshop Meetings are scheduled?
- What about another night for an informal briefing if absolutely necessary?
- How should Councillors determine the issues on which they would like to be briefed on a regular basis?
- Could the informal briefing sessions cover off on a majority of the monthly updates currently provided at Task Force meetings?
- Could an agenda (with specific timing) be developed for informal briefings such that Councillors could choose the individual briefings they wished to attend?

Comment

The scheduling of informal briefing sessions on fifth Wednesdays of the month when they occur, which is approximately quarterly, would reduce the need for staff to provide updates about projects or issues at monthly Task Force meetings. If Councillors consider that further briefing sessions are necessary for specific topics, they could be scheduled as required. It is noted that there are also other avenues of providing updates in respect of particular matters e.g. through the weekly Councillors Bulletin produced by the General Manager. Moving to an arrangement where informal briefings are provided on a regular basis would separate issues which simply require a status update from those where a formal decision of Council is necessary.

4. Creating formal Committees (to replace Task Forces) which have a delegation from Council to make decisions and/or recommendations in respect of specified matters

- Is there enough business to warrant Committees?
- How many Committees would be required?
- How many Councillors should be on each Committee?
- Could the Committees meet simultaneously (e.g. on the second Wednesday of each month) such that the business of Council is spread among the Councillors?
- What if a Councillor wanted to be on two or more Committees which met simultaneously?
- Is Council prepared to delegate responsibility in respect of some matters to a Committee which does not include all Councillors?
- Should the delegation to a Committee be to make a decision or to make a recommendation to the full Council?
- As formal Committees require publicly available agendas, business papers and minutes, would expenditure and time on administration and support of Committees be well spent?
- How would members of the public react to the ability of Committees (of which all Councillors may not be members) to make decisions or recommendations?

- Would the replacement of Task Forces with Committees better meet the requirements of the Division of Local Government's Meetings Practice Note?
- Are there occasions where a working party should be created for a major project which is to occur within a defined timeframe and which requires the ongoing involvement of Councillors e.g. reconstruction/redevelopment of the Hornsby Aquatic Centre?

Comment

It would seem appropriate that Workshop Meetings should at least be tested by the current Council prior to any decision to proceed down the path of establishing formal Committees of Council. If Council wished to move to a Committee structure, this would require that each Committee have its own Agendas, Business Papers and Minutes and the meetings would need to be advertised and the public invited to attend. This would create an additional load on staff and resources than currently exists.

The above testing would not preclude Council from creating a working party to monitor and provide guidance in respect of a particular project. This should only occur, however, on an as needs basis and the working party should have a sunset provision built into its terms of reference. In this regard, working parties could consist of all or some Councillors and could be created in Council's annual review of committees, working parties and task forces each September, or at any other time that Council determines. Working parties would, however, have the same issues that Task Forces currently have in respect of making a decision, or making a recommendation to Council, unless they were provided with specific delegations by Council and members of the public were able to attend their meetings.

Conclusion

Based on an assessment of the above options, it is considered that the following would be an appropriate course of action to achieve greater efficacy and productivity in respect of Council, Task Force and other meetings:

- All Task Forces be disbanded.
- Formal Committees of Council not be formed at this stage to replace Task Forces.
- The need for working parties to monitor and provide guidance in respect of a particular project (e.g. reconstruction/redevelopment of the Hornsby Aquatic Centre) be reviewed annually in September each year or at other times as required.
- There be no change to Planning Meetings i.e. they continue to be held on the first Wednesday of the month to consider items relating to planning matters.
- There be no change to Ordinary Meetings i.e. they be held on the third Wednesday of the month to consider items other than planning matters.
- Workshop Meetings be held on the second and/or fourth Wednesday of the month as necessary to consider items where there is a presentation by Council staff or a consultant as well as an opportunity for comments/questions from members of the public, prior to any decision making by Council. This could include consideration of

some strategic items which are currently reviewed periodically at Task Force meetings.

- Informal briefing sessions be held quarterly (on the fifth Wednesday of the month) to receive updates about Councillor nominated projects or issues. This could include those updates which are currently received monthly at Task Force meetings.
- Other informal briefing sessions be held as necessary at the discretion of the Mayor and General Manager. This could include sessions being scheduled to follow Planning or Ordinary Meetings as appropriate or on the second or fourth Wednesday of the month when no Workshop Meetings are to be held.
- The scheduling of existing Committee and other meetings be reviewed in an attempt limit them as much as possible to “free” Wednesday evenings.

The major benefit in supporting the above is that it would provide an opportunity for Councillors (and relevant senior staff) to manage their diaries such that a Wednesday (from 6.30pm) would be “Council meeting night” – whether that be for formal Planning, Ordinary or Workshop Meetings; for existing Committee, Working Party or other meetings; or for informal briefing sessions. This would assist in reducing the need for attendance at Council on multiple evenings of the week.

BUDGET

There are no budgetary implications associated with this Report.

POLICY

There are no policy implications associated with this Report.

CONSULTATION

There has been consultation with the General Manager, ExCo members and other relevant staff in the preparation of this Report.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE SUMMARY

Triple Bottom Line is a framework for improving Council decisions by ensuring accountability and transparency on social, environmental and economic factors. It does this by reporting upon Council’s strategic themes.

This Report simply provides Council with information and seeks endorsement of standard expenditure according to legislation and within current budgetary considerations. It does not propose any actions which require a sustainability assessment and as such no Triple Bottom Line considerations apply.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The officers responsible for the preparation of this Report are the Manager, Administration Services Branch – Mrs Robyn Abicair and the Executive Manager, Corporate and Community Division – Mr Gary Bensley. They can be contacted on 9847-6608 and 9847-6605 respectively.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. The Community, Cultural and Recreation Facilities Task Force; the Employment and Economic Development Task Force; the Finance and Strategy Task Force; the Infrastructure and Asset Management Task Force; and the Sustainability and Environment Task Force be disbanded
2. The Task Forces not be replaced by formal Committees of Council at this stage
3. The need for working parties to monitor and provide guidance in respect of particular projects be reviewed annually in September each year, or at other times as required.
4. There be no change to Planning Meetings i.e. they continue to be held on the first Wednesday of the month to consider items relating to planning matters
5. There be no change to Ordinary Meetings i.e. they be held on the third Wednesday of the month to consider items other than planning matters
6. Workshop Meetings be held on the second and/or fourth Wednesday of the month as necessary to consider items where there is a presentation by Council staff or a consultant as well as an opportunity for comments/questions from members of the public, prior to any decision making by Council. This could include consideration of some strategic items which are currently reviewed periodically at Task Force meetings
7. Informal briefing sessions be held quarterly (on the fifth Wednesday of the month) to receive updates about Councillor nominated projects or issues. This could include those updates which are currently received monthly at Task Force meetings
8. Other informal briefing sessions be held as necessary at the discretion of the Mayor and General Manager. This could include sessions being scheduled to follow Planning or Ordinary Meetings as appropriate or on the second or fourth Wednesday of the month when no Workshop Meetings are to be held.
9. The scheduling of existing Committee and other meetings be reviewed in an attempt limit them as much as possible to “free” Wednesday evenings.

ROBYN ABICAIR
Manager - Administration Services
Corporate and Community Division

GARY BENSLEY
Executive Manager
Corporate and Community Division

Attachments:

1. Guidelines for Council Workshop Meetings
File Reference: F2004/07032
Document Number: D01470874

Guidelines for Council Workshop Meetings

1. Council's Schedule of Council Meetings, which is normally adopted in September of each year, provides for the holding of Workshop Meetings on the second or fourth Wednesday of the month as required.
2. The main purpose of Workshop Meetings is to provide a forum to present matters which require discussion in a less formal context, especially those where a presentation by Council staff or an external person or organisation is required.
3. In the absence of a specific resolution of Council, the need for holding Workshop Meetings, and the item/s to be included on the Agenda for such Meetings, will be determined by agreement between the Mayor and General Manager.
4. If a Division has an item it would like included on a Workshop Meeting Agenda, the Executive Manager should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with the General Manager.
5. To allow the necessary planning and advertising to be undertaken in respect of Workshop Meetings, the Administration Services Branch is to be provided with notice from the relevant Executive Manager no later than two weeks prior to the proposed date of the Workshop Meeting.
6. Once the conduct and Agenda of a Workshop Meeting are confirmed, the responsible Division is to prepare and finalise a report in InfoCouncil in respect of the item/s on the Agenda and advise the Business Paper Coordinator in accordance with normal procedures and timelines.
7. If the item is simply a presentation, the report need only indicate who is making the presentation and provide a brief background on the subject matter. A recommendation in this case may be along the lines "That the presentation be received and noted".
8. Where a presentation on an item is required, it should be brief, informative, interactive and interesting. Presentations should generally be no longer than 15 minutes, with a further 30 minutes generally allowed for questions.

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ATTACHMENT 1 - ITEM 20