



MINUTES  
of the  
SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL  
held on  
WEDNESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2013  
in the  
ALEXANDRA COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
commencing at  
5.00 pm

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**1. PRAYER & RECONCILIATION STATEMENT**

The meeting was opened with Prayer and reading of the Reconciliation Statement.

**2. APOLOGIES AND REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Cr Cris Ruhr tendered an apology for being unable to attend the meeting.

Cr Andrew Derwent tendered an apology for being unable to attend the meeting at its commencement.

**RESOLUTION:**

Cr J Kennedy / Cr M Rae

That the apologies from Cr Ruhr and Cr Derwent be accepted.

**CARRIED**

***Present:***

Crs J Walsh (Chair), A Derwent, C Challen, J Kennedy, B Magner, M Rae

***In attendance:***

Chief Executive Officer: Margaret Abbey

General Manager - Sustainability: Michael Chesworth

General Manager Corporate & Community Services: Rob Cherry

General Manager Infrastructure Services: Tamara Johnson

Manager Customer & Communications: Damien Cocks

**3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

File No: 12/01/05

Nil.

**4. OPEN FORUM**

There were no attendees at the Open Forum session.

**5. HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS**

No submitters attended the hearing.

***Cr A Derwent attended the meeting at 5.03pm***

## **6. AUDIT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

File No: 24/03/08

### ***Purpose:***

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with background information to the recommendation for appointment of positions to Council's Audit Committee.

### ***Recommendation:***

**That Mr Robert Richards and Mr Ian McKaskill be appointed to the Audit Committee in accordance with membership provisions of the Audit Committee Charter.**

### ***Background:***

The Audit Committee, as an independent Advisory Committee to Council, is responsible to Council for the provision of advice and recommendations on matters relevant to its Charter in order that Council's decisions may be appropriately facilitated.

The primary objective of the Audit Committee is to assist Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities for financial reporting, management of risk, maintaining a reliable system of internal controls and facilitating the organisation's ethical development.

The Audit Committee is established to assist the co-ordination of relevant activities of management, the internal audit function and the external auditor to facilitate achieving overall organisational objectives in an efficient and effective manner.

The Charter of the Audit Committee is the primary instrument outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Audit Committee and Audit Committee members.

### ***Council Plan/Strategies:***

This report is consistent with the 2009-13 Council Plan Governance theme strategies that espouse to:

*"Improve governance systems, processes and relationships,"  
"Be consistent, fair and transparent in our decision making," and  
"Provide sound financial management."*

### ***Legal/Policy /Financial/Resources/Risk Issues***

Appointment of two members to the Audit Committee is consistent with the Audit Committee Charter Clause 2 (b) which allows membership of three external independent persons.

### ***Financial/Resources/Risk***

The honorarium paid to external independent members of the Audit Committee is \$2000.00 per annum. Prior to the recent amendment to the Audit Committee Charter membership, honoraria for two independent members had been budgeted and the provision of an additional external independent member is not currently allowed for in the 2012-13 adopted budget. However, there are some unutilised budget funds for the current year which can be offset against potential claims for new member honorariums.

### ***Discussion:***

With the recent election (October 2012) of one serving member to Council, only one independent member of the Committee remained. Following amendment of the Audit Committee Charter, by resolution of Council on 23 January, 2013 (which now allows for membership of three independent members), Council may appoint an additional two external independent members to the Committee.

Council has sought expressions of interest from the community to fill two positions on the committee. Three expressions of interest were received and interviews for the positions were conducted with the three submitters on 25 January 2013. The interview panel comprised the Chief Executive Officer and the General Manager Corporate and Community Services.

Based on the interview and reference checking process, it is recommended that Council consider appointment of Mr. Robert Richards and Mr. Ian McKaskill to the Audit Committee.

**Consultation:**

Expressions of interest in two positions for the Audit Committee were advertised in the following publications:

<b>Newspaper / Other</b>	<b>Publishing Date(s)</b>
<b>Newspaper:</b>	
Alexandra Standard	21 November 2012
Yea Chronicle	21 November 2012
Marysville Triangle	22 November 2012
The Granite News	22 November 2012
Mountain Views	20 November 2012
Council website	20 November 2012

The closing date for submissions was Monday 17 December 2012.

**Conclusion:**

Appointment of two additional external independent members to the Audit Committee will address potential membership issues and provide continuity and stability of representation in successive years.

**RESOLUTION:**

Cr M Rae / Cr J Kennedy

That Mr Robert Richards and Mr Ian McKaskill be appointed to the Audit Committee in accordance with membership provisions of the Audit Committee Charter.

**CARRIED**

**7. CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS - MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCES**

File No: 12/02/04

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with a summary of the submission received in relation to the revised Mayoral and Councillors Allowances.

**Recommendation:**

**That Council considers the submission received in relation to the revised Mayoral and Councillor Allowances.**

**Background:**

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 26 November 2012, the revised Mayor and Councillor Allowances were endorsed for public consultation in accordance with Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act).

Submissions were sought from the public and advertisements were placed in the relevant weekly newspapers in the Shire and Council's website.

One (1) submission was received and a scanned copy of the submission has been provided to Councillors under separate cover.

An acknowledgement letter has been sent to the submitters, confirming receipt of their submission and informing them of the opportunity to attend the Special Meeting on the 13 February 2013 to speak to their submission if they wish.

**Council Plan/Strategies:**

This report is consistent with the Council Plan 2009-2013 Governance theme to ensure that Council is exercising good governance principles.

**Legal/Policy Issues:**

Within six months after each general election, Council is required to review and determine the annual allowances that will be paid to the Mayor and Councillors. Allowances are to be within the allowance range set by the Government for Category 1.

**Financial/Resources/Risk**

The Minister for Local Government has reviewed the limits and ranges of the current Mayoral and Councillor allowances and has determined under Section 73B of the Act that these allowances be increased by 2.5% effective from 27 October 2012. These increases are outlined in detail in the Local Government Victoria (LGV) Circular 39/2012 and were also published in the *Victoria Government Gazette* S360.

**Discussion:**

One (1) submission was received in respect of the proposed Mayor and Councillor Allowances.

The submission can be summarised as follows:

- Are expenditures fully itemised and accounted for?
- Would Councillors be out of pocket without the increase?
- Do Councillors spend their entire allowance on the purpose for which it is intended?
- We want reassurance that our ever increasing rates aren't benefitting Councillors personally.

Following consideration of the submission, the submitters will receive a reply in respect of their individual concerns raised.

**Consultation:**

Public submissions in relation to Council's initial allowance determination were invited under section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act). Subsequent annual adjustments to allowance levels are not subject to Council reviews or the section 223 public submission processes otherwise required under section 74 or section 223 of the Act.

The proposed Councillor and Mayoral allowances were advertised for public consultation and submissions in the following publications.

<b>Newspaper / Other</b>	<b>Publishing Dates</b>
<b>Newspapers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Alexandra Standard</i></li><li>• <i>Yea Chronicle</i></li><li>• <i>Marysville Triangle</i></li><li>• <i>North Central Review</i></li></ul>	5 December 2012 5 December 2012 6 December 2012 4 December 2012

The closing date for submissions to be received on Councillor and Mayoral allowances was Friday 4 January 2013.

The period for public consultation is in effect 28 days from the last publishing date of proposed allowances. This period has now passed and Council is required to consider the submission received.

***Conclusion:***

It is appropriate that Council considers the submission received for relevance and its influence on allowances for the Mayor and Councillors prior to adoption.

**RESOLUTION:**

Cr J Kennedy / Cr C Challen

That Council considers the submission received in relation to the revised Mayoral and Councillor Allowances.

**CARRIED**

**There being no further items of Business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 5.12 pm.**

**CONFIRMED THIS** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHAIRPERSON** \_\_\_\_\_