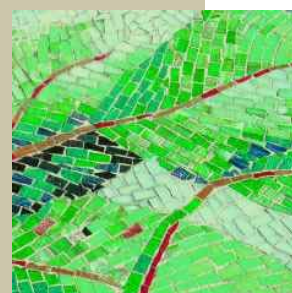


GETTING THE BEST OUT OF YOUR PRECINCT MEETINGS

Queries, requests for information and motions



May 2007



Queries, requests for information and motions

Introduction

Residents can ring Waverley Council's Call Centre to log requests for work to be done or to make a complaint or to give a compliment. This does not need to be a precinct matter.

Precinct matters are generally more complex and relate to wider issues. This fact sheet provides information to Precinct members about how to effectively deal with matters arising during precinct meetings

How to lodge a request as an individual community member

You can

- Phone Council's **Call Centre** staff on **9369 8000**
- Or email via **Email Us** on Council's website (www.waverley.nsw.gov.au)
- All requests are logged onto **Service Desk**

Service Desk is Council's computerised customer request, action and tracking system. Requests logged on Service Desk are forwarded to Council Officers for action. The system sends automatic reminders when actions are not completed.

Other Ways of Getting information

Waverley Council's website contains a large amount of useful information. This ranges from minutes of all the Standing Council meetings listed below, management plans, policies, major reports, information on different Council departments, garbage collection dates and plans and documents that are on public exhibition. The Active Projects Bulletin is posted on the web site monthly and contains information on all the projects being undertaken throughout the LGA.

Just go to www.waverley.nsw.gov.au and find the relevant link to the information you are seeking.

Plans and documents that are out on public exhibition are also generally available at Waverley Library, 32 – 48 Denison Street Bondi Junction, Council Chambers, Bondi Road, corner of Paul Street and at Council's new Customer Service Centre, 55 Spring Street Bondi Junction.

Dealing with issues raised at a Precinct meeting

During the course of a precinct meeting many issues may arise. There are different ways these can be handled. Some issues can be resolved simply by contacting Council's Customer Service Centre either by phone (9369 8000) OR email. Call centre staff can help you with matters such as footpath and road repairs, tree pruning, abandoned cars, illegal rubbish dumping, blocked drains and illegally parked cars.

Other issues discussed at the meeting may need additional clarification. For example, a resident may mention that the grass in the park across the road from their place has not been mowed for a period of time. This could be handled in two ways, either by calling Council and reporting this or inquiring if the park is included in Council's mowing schedule and asking for information about the frequency of grass cutting at the park. Call centre staff



can help either by logging a request for the grass to be cut into Service Desk or by advising you on whom to speak to about the frequency of grass cutting.

Other issues may be resolved by asking the convenor or another precinct executive to write a letter. For example objections to development applications would be detailed in a letter and forwarded to Waverley Council.

For more contentious issues and where there has been a lot of discussion, the group may decide to develop a motion. Motions are discussed further below.

General Requests

The most effective way to have a general request (such as tree pruning, road works etc) attended to is for residents (including precinct members) to contact Council's Call Centre by phone OR email and report the required work so it can be entered into Service Desk.

Please provide as much information about your request as possible (that is, the exact nature of the problem, exact location etc). If calling to report an abandoned car please provide the following: location, colour, make, model, registration and expiry date. You can follow up with Council directly to keep track of the request.

Precinct Executives can call Council on 9369 8000 to be transferred to the appropriate staff to obtain information on issues that arise at the precinct meetings. This information can then be circulated to precinct members.

Letters by Precinct Executives

The precinct executives may write letters with the approval of the precinct committee. A number of issues tabled at a meeting may require a response from a government department other than Council. For example, the complaint may be that empty buses are not using streets designated by Waverley Bus Depot. In this case a letter would be forwarded to Waverley Bus Depot.

Letters addressing matters that Council does handle are forwarded to the Records Department for registration and are passed on to the relevant department and Council Officer.

Council has limited resources and its response to residents requests are guided by strategic and operational priorities. For Council officers to consider a response it is necessary to provide clear, factual information which helps to define the problem.

Other Ways Precincts Can Engage with Council

In addition to the general right of the public to address full Council and Council Committees, the precincts have a right to address the relevant Council Committee upon any aspect of their recommendations.

The Standing Committees are:

- Finance, Ethics & Strategic Planning
- Community, Housing, Environmental Services & Public Works
- Development Control Committee

There are also advisory community committees and these include:

- Bondi Forum
- Bondi Junction Forum



- Community Safety Advisory Committee
- Multicultural Advisory Committee
- Sustainability Committee
- Waverley Surf Life Saving Club Committee
- Waverley Housing Strategies Committee
- Waverley Public Art Committee
- Waverley Transport and Traffic Consultative Committee
- Waverley Access Committee

These committees may change from time to time so if you wish to address any of these committees, call Council's Call Centre to check they are still active and to register your attendance.

If matters raised at a precinct meeting can not be resolved in this way then a motion may be put to the meeting.

In addition we will have a section on Council's homepage called 'Have A Say' by July 2007. Go to 'Have A Say' to look at the different ways to be involved in Council consultation.

How to frame a Motion

A motion is a formal way of placing a request for action to a meeting. Motions are worded to clearly state the recommended or suggested methods of resolving the matter. The subject matter contained within a motion also needs to be carefully considered, as there may be a simpler way to deal with the matter. The issue may be dealt with in other ways as explained throughout this brochure.

A motion should start with the word "That", for example. "I move that Penkivil precinct Request angle parking in X street between A and B street on the eastern side only".

Motions are usually written in a positive sense so that a "yes" vote indicates support for action and a "no" vote indicates that no action should be taken. A motion needs to be as detailed and succinct as possible so that its intention is clear and it can be acted upon. Numbered paragraphs should be used to make the motion easier to understand.

Procedures during Meetings – developing a motion

- Someone needs to move the motion ("I move that...")
- The motion needs to be seconded by another member of the meeting for further discussion to occur
- If no one seconds the motion it will lapse and no further discussion on the motion needs to occur
- The person who moved the motion is always allowed to speak first
- Each member may speak once to the motion (usually alternating between one for the motion and one against) or the meeting may move directly to vote on the motion
- All comments and debate must be directed to the Chairperson
- It is the Chairpersons responsibility to keep each speaker to a time limit
- The person who moved the motion has a Right of Reply after all other speakers have finished but may not introduce any new matter
- This ends the debate unless an amendment is moved
- Amendments must be moved and seconded and the discussion confined to the section of the original motion that it proposes to alter (ie the whole motion can no longer be discussed)



- A vote is taken on the amendment only. If the amendment is carried it becomes a part of the original (substantive) motion
- The Chair reads out the full amended motion
- The substantive motion is now open for discussion
- When discussion is complete a vote is taken on the motion as a whole
- The Chair announces the results (Carried or Lost)

If the motion is carried (that is if more people vote in support of the motion than not) it then goes through a certain procedure (or is “Actioned”).

How do motions get to Council?

- Via Council’s Community Liaison Coordinator
- By letter
- Through minutes

Once the Community Liaison Coordinator receives a motion from a precinct meeting it is forwarded to the relevant department or staff member for response. Council’s Executive Team may also consider motions from the precincts

In addition, a summary of motions are listed on Council business papers, such as the Information Bulletin, which is distributed to all Council staff and Councillors.

All motions passed at precinct meetings will be considered but for a number of reasons, may not necessarily be acted upon in their original form. Motions from the precincts are one of many inputs which get considered on any given issue.

How motions should be dealt with by Precincts – Examples of motions

The examples below refer to motions that have been passed at precinct meetings. We have added suggestions on how the requests may have otherwise been handled or written more effectively to achieve the desired outcome.

Motion: “That the precinct enquires as to the current policy and practices of the Council regarding the mowing of verges and urge that further resources be employed in the precinct to tidy the streets.”

This motion covers two different issues. The first issue (mowing of verges) is a request for information that should be dealt with by calling Waverley Council’s Call Centre staff on 9369 8000.

The second part (that further resources be employed to tidy the streets) requires the meeting participants to clarify the issue further before putting the motion. This may include specific examples, such as the type/nature of the rubbish dumped or other details about what makes the precinct streets untidy. Precinct members may then decide that the simplest way to resolve the matter is to ask Council for detailed information about the resources expended to clean/tidy the streets; frequency of street cleaning; frequency and methods for rubbish removal.

Motion: “The precinct suggests an overhead street light be installed on the western corner of Paul St adjacent to the Council Chambers on the corner of Paul St and Bondi Rd. “

This is a Council matter and the precinct would simply need to make a request to Council Call Centre staff.



Motion: "That Council give consideration to provision for pedestrians who wish to cross O'Brien Street in safety"

It is important to give as much information as possible to describe and define the nature of the problem experienced by pedestrians attempting to cross O'Brien Street.

It is helpful to pinpoint the exact location where the problem occurs and what changes would need to happen to improve pedestrian safety. For example "That Council improves the line-markings on the pedestrian crossing at O'Brien Street near Wellington Street."

Motion: "Council is asked to review as a matter of urgency the continuing safety problem, particularly for young children and the elderly, who need to use the pedestrian crossing in Blair St outside Galilee School."

Again, a more detailed description of the kind of safety problems and why they occur in that location would be useful.

If the meeting participants had already sought some technical advice on the matter, the motion may want to be more specific, for example:

That Council urgently

1. install "No Standing" signs on both sides of the pedestrian crossing in Blair St outside Galilee School to improve the site line for oncoming traffic and those wishing to use the crossing
2. prune the trees on both sides of the crossing to improve pedestrians visibility

Alternatively, if the precinct is not sure about what kinds of improvements need to occur, they may ask for further information from a relevant council officer.

Motion "XX Precinct alerts council to the hazardous condition of the footpath out side 44 Bondi Road and requests immediate action is taken to repair the area"

This matter can more effectively be dealt with by calling the Council Call Centre staff on 9369 8000.

Development Applications (DAs)

Objections to development applications may need to be forwarded to Council before the precinct has had a meeting. In this situation, the executives should discuss the development application and the Development Application Representative could then write a letter to Council outlining their objections. If the development application is a major one with great community concern, these concerns should be discussed at the precinct meeting and a motion may be formed.

As an individual you can object to a DA. As a precinct member you can ask the Precinct to support your objection.

If you make a submission objecting to the proposed development then the reasons for your objection **must** be included in your submission. Your reasons for objecting to the proposal must be based on planning considerations relating to the proposal's impact on your amenity and not on irrelevant matters. Some of the issues that may arise in regard to the DA, that may have the potential to impact on your property, include the following:



- Height and bulk of the proposal
- Overshadowing and loss of sunlight
- Visual and acoustic privacy
- Streetscape and finishes
- Landscaping and open space

All submissions received within the specified period in the letter of notification will be fully considered by Council prior to the determination of the DA. Submissions are kept on file and may be accessed by other members of the public and in particular the applicant, under the Local Government Act and in accordance with Council's Open File Policy.

Files that are currently open for comment can be accessed by going to the Planning Counter at Council's Customer Service Centre 55 Spring Street Bondi Junction. Alternatively call the Duty Officer on 9369 8008 with any questions.

To view a DA which is past the comment period contact the Call Centre on 9369 8000.

Please have either the development application number or the correct address where the proposed work/s are to be undertaken.

Where amendments are made to a DA you **may** (depending on the extent of the amendments) be notified of the amended proposal and be given the opportunity to revise your submission. If you are not notified of amendments your earlier submission will still be considered in the assessment of the application.

To lodge your written submission on a DA, you may either: -

- Mail it to the Divisional Manager - Development Assessments, Waverley Council, PO Box 9, Bondi Junction 1355;
- Hand deliver to the Customer Service Centre at the address below;
- E-mail to waver@waverley.nsw.gov.au.

Please note, Council does not write to acknowledge the receipt of any submission.

Ways to contact Waverley Council

- Waverley Council Call Centre 9369 8000 24 hours with after hours message provided
- Visit Council's Customer Service Centre at 55 Spring Street Bondi Junction
- Postal Address PO Box 9 Bondi Junction NSW 1355
- Hand Deliver mail to Council Chambers Bondi Road corner Paul Street Bondi
- E-mail: waver@waverley.nsw.gov.au
- Website www.waverley.nsw.gov.au (& 'Email Us')

Council's Customer Service Centre at 55 Spring Street: - You can pay your rates, enquire about Council services, lodge development applications, browse through exhibitions or register your pets. After the 25 June you can no longer go to the Council Chambers on Bondi Road to pay your rates or lodge a development application.



References

1. Waverley Council's Code of Meeting Practice November 2006
2. Waverley Council's Structures and Responsibilities of Council Committees and Council's Inspection Meeting January 2007
3. www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/council/precinct
4. www.dsr.wa.gov.au/clubs/meetings.asp
5. www.robertsrules.org/rulesintro.htm
6. http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/leadership_training/2006/2006-MeetingManagement.pdf#search=%22running%20meetings%22
7. www.csufresno.edu/comm/cagle-p3.htm
8. <http://www.forumcommunicators.asn.au/hints1.html>

