



## Interim Council Policy

### 18.13 - LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

#### PURPOSE

The Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy provides direction for live streaming of Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings via a link from Council's website.

This policy aims to improve accessibility and community participation in relation to decision making processes. It is envisaged that live streaming of Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings via a link from Council's website will provide greater flexibility and convenient access for the community, as it will allow the public to watch the meeting in real time via the internet without the need to attend in person.

Live streaming of Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings, also eliminates geographic and time barriers which may prevent the public from attending meetings in person; thereby resulting in greater community confidence in the integrity and accountability of the decision making process.

#### SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all public Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings conducted by the Colac Otway Shire Council to be live streamed;
- Councillors and officers of Colac Otway Shire Council;
- Members of the public who attend Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings; and
- Members of the public who access the live streaming of Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings via a link from the Colac Otway Shire Council website.

The policy does not extend to any meetings closed to the public in accordance with Section 89(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, or in accordance with Section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* once it has commenced.

#### DEFINITIONS

**Council** – Colac Otway Shire Council

**Chair** – person presiding over the meeting

**Confidential meetings** - a Meeting of Council which has been closed to members of the public under Section 89(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, or under Section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* once it has commenced.

**Exceptional Circumstances** – a circumstance where there is:

- A risk or threat to public health and safety;
- a threat of violence or aggression by one or more people attending the Council Meeting against others;
- unlawful conduct by an attendee of the Council Meeting;
- significant disruption of the Council Meeting by the conduct of an attendee; and/or
- a reputational risk to the Council.

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CM reference	D20/72949	Date of adoption	22 April 2020
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**Inappropriate Information** – information which amounts to, or could be perceived to amount to:

- Defamation;
- infringement of copyright;
- breach of privacy;
- offensive behaviour including discrimination;
- vilification or inciting hatred;
- confidential or privileged; or
- misleading.

**Live streaming** – a live transmission of an event over the internet.

**Ordinary Meeting** – an Ordinary Meeting of Council, as defined in Section 83(a) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, or as defined in Section 61(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* once it has commenced.

**Planning Committee Meeting** – a Planning Committee Meeting, as constituted by Council under Section 86(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

**Special Meeting** – a Special Meeting of Council, as defined in Section 83(b) of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

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## REFERENCES

*Local Government Act 1989*

*Local Government Act 2020* (once commenced)

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## STATEMENT OF POLICY

Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings may be streamed live via a link from the Colac Otway Shire website following the principles set out below:

### **Live Streaming**

Colac Otway Shire Council commits to live streaming of all Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings where it is practicably possible to do so, and the meeting location has the required equipment and internet capability and connections.

Confidential sections of Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings will not be live streamed.

Council will make every reasonable effort to make available via a link from Council’s website the live stream of Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings. Where technical difficulties beyond Council’s control prevent or interrupt the video of an Ordinary, Special or Planning Committee meeting, the live stream may not be available. Technical issues may include, but are not limited to, the availability of the internet, network or device failure or malfunction, or power outages.

**Uncontrolled when printed**

CM reference	D20/72949	Date of adoption	22 April 2020
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### **Members of the public**

The live stream equipment will be configured to capture all of the Ordinary, Special or Planning Committee meeting, while minimising images and audio of the public gallery.

People in the public gallery of an Ordinary, Special or Planning Committee meeting which will be live streamed will be given appropriate notice of the possibility of their image being included in the live stream.

Where a member of the public participates in an Ordinary, Special or Planning Committee meetings in any form, those members of the public are, in doing so, agreeing to be live streamed.

Viewing live video over the internet can consume larger than usual amounts of data. Council is not responsible or liable for any costs incurred by the viewer.

### **Termination of live streaming**

The Chairperson and /or the Chief Executive has the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of live streaming of an Ordinary, Special or Planning Committee meetings where:

- There are Exceptional Circumstances; or
- The content of the Ordinary, Special or Planning Committee meeting is considered by the Chair/Chief Executive to contain Inappropriate Information.

### **Liability**

The opinions or statements made during the course of an Ordinary, Special or Planning Committee meeting are those of the particular individuals, and not necessarily the opinions or statements of the Colac Otway Shire Council. The Council does not necessarily endorse or support the views, opinions, standards or information contained in the live streaming of Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings.

Council does not accept responsibility or liability for any loss, damage, cost, or expense incurred by any individual or entity as a result of the viewing, use or reliance on information or statements provided in the live streaming of Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings.

The meeting minutes, once confirmed by Council, provide the definitive record of Council's resolution and the Council's position on a particular matter.

### **Use of Live Streams**

Access to live streams and recordings of Ordinary, Special and Planning Committee meetings are provided for personal and non-commercial use.

Video images and audio contained in a live stream must not be altered, reproduced or republished without the permission of Council. Failure to comply could lead to prosecution.

### **Review**

As this is an interim policy, this policy will be reviewed within 12 months of adoption.

**Uncontrolled when printed**

CM reference	D20/72949	Date of adoption	22 April 2020
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#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

Governance Local Law 4

Councillor Code of Conduct

Staff Code of Conduct

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#### DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy owner	Manager, Governance & Communications	Division	Executive
Adopted by council	22 April 2020	Policy Number	18.13
File Number	D20/72949	Review date	22 April 2021

**Uncontrolled when printed**

CM reference	D20/72949	Date of adoption	22 April 2020
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