

Council Policy (WCC.001)

Electronic Recordings of Council Meetings

Responsible Officer:

General Manager

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1 Purpose

Under the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015*, the Council is required to ensure that Council meeting proceedings are documented to reflect a true and accurate record of Council meetings.

Electronic recording (audio and/or video recording) is used to capture accurate information of the matters discussed and the decisions made. This information is used to produce the meeting minutes document.

Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015

33. Audio Recording of meetings

- (1) *A council may determine that an audio recording is to be made of any meeting or part of a meeting*
- (2) *If the council so determines, the audio recording of a meeting or part of a meeting that is not closed to the public is to be –*
 - a) *Retained by the council for at least 6 months; and*
 - b) *Made available free of charge for listening on written request by any person.*
- (3) *If after the minutes of a meeting have been confirmed as a true record a discrepancy between the minutes and an audio recording of the meeting or part of that meeting is noticed, the council, at the next appropriate meeting, is to review the audio recording and either confirm that the minutes are a true record or amend the minutes to reflect the audio recording and then confirm the minutes as amended to be a true record.*
- (4) *A council may determine any other procedures relating to the audio recording of meetings it considers appropriate.*

2 Scope

This policy applies to all Ordinary Meetings and Special Meetings of Council and also includes meetings of Council committees where an audio recording is made. It applies to Council staff, Councillors and members of the general public.

3 Policy

3.1 Ordinary Meetings & Special Meetings of Council

3.1.1 Open Meetings of Council

All ordinary meetings and special meetings of Council that are open to the public shall be electronically recorded as provided for by Regulation 33 of the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015*.

Council will live stream the open session of Council meetings with the public able to access the open meeting via the link provided on the West Coast Council website.

Other than the official Council recording for the purpose of minute taking, electronic recordings of Council meetings proceedings, shall not be permitted without specific approval by resolution of the Meeting.'

3.1.2 Closed meetings of Council

The Chairman is to ensure that no electronic recording is made of the proceedings of a meeting, or part of a meeting that is closed to the public in accordance with Regulation 15 (2), except where the Council has specifically resolved to electronically record the proceedings of that meeting or part thereof.

Council may by resolution, determine to electronically record the proceedings of a meeting or part thereof, that is closed to the public.

Approval of this policy determines that Council will electronically record Closed meetings of Council, for the sole use of accurately recording the meeting procedures and outcomes, this will be advised at the start of each meeting.

The audio files of Closed meeting proceedings will only be made available to Councillors or staff entitled to be present during the proceedings in question or via written request, or where disclosure is required by law.

Closed meeting audio files will not be available to the public.

3.1.3 Committee of Council

Meetings held by Committees of Council (*section 23 Local Government Act 1993*) may be electronically recorded for the purpose of accurately recording meeting procedures and outcomes. Recording of the meeting is at the discretion of the meeting chair or secretary.

Recording of a Committee of Council meeting will be disclosed in accordance with item 3.2.

3.1.4 Special Committees

Meetings held by Special Committees (*section 24 Local Government Act 1993*) may be recorded at the discretion of the committee chair or secretary.

3.1.5 Standing Orders Suspended

In the event that the standing orders of a meeting are suspended, the electronic recording relating to that section of discussion will be void, and not reflected in the minutes of that meeting.

The Chair may insist that the electronic recording be turned off during discussions that are undertaken during a period of Standing Orders Suspended.

3.2 Disclosure of Audio Recording

Notification that the Council meetings and Council Committees will be electronically recorded, is to be disclosed in the meeting agenda to inform the meetings participants and guests (including the public) that the proceedings are recorded.

A notice is to be displayed at the entrance to the room in which the meeting proceedings are to be held to advise the meeting proceeding are to be recorded.

At the time of declaring the meeting open, the Chairman is to inform all Councillors, staff any participants or public present, that the meeting is being recorded.

3.3 Storage of Audio Meeting Minutes

In accordance with *Regulation 33 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015* the General Manager will retain the audio files of Council meeting recordings for at least 6 months.

The electronic files of Council Meetings and Special Meetings of Council and Council Committees will be saved and kept in a controlled access folder with the related meeting documents (Council Meeting Minutes).

The recordings of Committees of Council meetings will be stored with the related meeting documents (Committee Meeting Minutes).

3.4 Access to Audio Meeting Minutes

In accordance with *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015*, section 33(2)(b) states that if a council so determines, the audio recording of a meeting or part of a meeting that is not closed to the public, will be made available free of charge for listening on written request by any person.

Where the Council has resolved to record a meeting closed to the public, the audio files of meeting proceedings will only be available to Councillors entitled to be present during the proceedings in question, via written request.

The audio files will not be copied or removed from the Council office.

4 Legislation and Related Documents

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015

West Coast Community Plan 2025 & Supplement