



COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEMBERS ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set a consistent and transparent approach to the management of Council and Committee Member attendance at ~~m~~Meetings by electronic means.

Definitions

The **Act** means the *Local Government Act 1995*.

CEO means Chief Executive Officer.

Council Member means a person who is currently serving a term of office as an elected ~~member~~ official of the Council in accordance with the Act.

Committee Member means a person who is either a Council Member ~~who has been appointed by Council to a Committee of Council,~~ or an independent person appointed by Council to ~~the Audit and Organisational Risk a~~ Committee of Council.

Meeting means –

- (a) ~~A~~an ordinary meeting of the council; or
- (b) ~~A~~a special meeting of the council; or
- ~~(c) — A meeting of the Audit and Organisational Risk Committee of council; or~~
- ~~(d)(c) _____~~ Any a meeting of a committee of the council.

Member means a Council Member and/or Committee Member.

The **Regulations** means the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

Policy Statement

~~The Regulations allow Occasionally Council Members and Committee Members may need to attend a m~~Meetings by electronic means electronically, supporting continuity in governance and decision-making.

~~Flexibility may be be a necessity where travel, family responsibilities, and other personal events affect a Member's ability to attend a meeting in person.~~

~~The City of Karratha also benefits by ensuring continuity of good governance and decision making.~~

1. Request for electronic attendance by a Member

A Member ~~may~~can only attend a meeting electronically if they have been authorised to do so by the Mayor, ~~Presiding Member,~~ or Council.

A request for electronic attendance should be made in writing (via email or Microsoft Teams) to the Mayor ~~or Presiding Member~~ at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, with a copy provided to the CEO.

The Mayor ~~or Presiding Member~~ may approve a shorter notice period after consulting the CEO.

~~The CEO or Council minute secretary will provide the Member with a meeting invitation that includes instructions for attending the meeting remotely.~~

2. 50% Cap for Members

~~The Mayor or Council cannot authorise a person Member may only to attend a meeting remotely by electronic means, where it would result in the Member provided they have not attended more than half of all council meetings in the previous 12 months by this method. The 50% attendance cap ensures that elected members and committee members attend at least half of all meetings conducted over a 12-month period, in person.~~

~~Each meeting type is considered separately when calculating the 50% cap, i.e. electronic attendance at Ordinary Council Meetings does not count towards the 50% cap of electronic attendance at Special Council Meetings or committee meetings.~~

~~The minutes of the meeting will note if a Member has attended the meeting by electronic means, and the CEO will ensure appropriate records are kept for the purpose of monitoring the 50% cap.~~

2.3. Approval to conduct an electronic meeting

~~Council may choose to hold a meeting electronically after consulting the CEO.~~

~~Outside of an emergency, only Council may can authorise an electronic meeting following consultation with the CEO. Council cannot authorise an electronic Meeting where it would result in more than half of the Meetings in the previous 12 months being held by this method.~~

~~Each meeting type is considered separately when calculating the 50% cap of electronic Meetings.~~

~~Where a Meeting is conducted by electronic means, the City must, and will ensure:~~

- ~~(a) sufficient provide public notice that an electronic Meeting is being held is provided; and~~
- ~~(a)(b) live-stream the Meeting; and~~
- ~~(b)(c) allow public questions to be submitted prior to the Meeting public participation in the meeting is facilitated.~~

3.4. Location

A Member attending ~~remotely by electronic means~~ must do so from a physical location that is quiet and private, so they can effectively engage in deliberations and communications during the meeting ~~and~~ protect the confidentiality of discussions and content.

4.5. Technology and equipment

The City's primary form ~~of~~ electronic communication for meetings is Microsoft Teams. The ~~Chief Executive Officer~~ CEO may vary the electronic communication method as circumstances require.

~~It is also preferred that the Member will use a video camera. Members will use a video camera~~ so that they can be seen by the Mayor ~~or Presiding Member~~ and other ~~Council m~~Members. They will seek the Mayor's permission before turning off the camera.

Where a video camera is unavailable, the Member may seek permission from the Mayor or Presiding Member to attend the ~~m~~Meeting using audio only.

In all cases, the Mayor ~~or Presiding Member~~, or Council, will consult with the CEO prior to approving electronic attendance at ~~m~~Meetings to ensure logistics and equipment are available and operational.

~~5.6.~~ Meeting conduct

During the ~~m~~Meeting, the Member attending ~~remotely by electronic means~~ will:

- (a) advise the Mayor or Presiding Member if they intend to leave the ~~m~~Meeting or if they return to the ~~m~~Meeting.
- (b) during ~~in-camera~~confidential sessions, confirm to the Mayor or Presiding Member that they are alone, and no unauthorised person is in attendance.
- (c) provide a clear verbal or visual response (such as raising a hand) to confirm their vote for or against a resolution.
- (d) when leaving the room due to a conflict of interest, turn off the camera and speaker, and await a phone call or digital message (eg text or MS Teams message) from the CEO or the CEO's delegate, who will advise when to rejoin the ~~m~~Meeting.

~~6. 50% Cap~~

~~A person may only attend a meeting remotely by electronic means, provided they have not attended more than half of all council meetings in the previous 12 months by this method. The 50% attendance cap ensures that elected members and committee members attend at least half of all meetings conducted over a 12-month period, in person.~~

~~The minutes of the meeting will note if a Member has attended the meeting by electronic means, and the CEO will ensure appropriate records are kept for the purpose of monitoring the 50% cap.~~

Related Documents

Legislation & Local Laws	<i>Local Government Act 1995, s.5.25(1)(ba)</i> <i>Local Government <u>(Administration)</u> Regulations 1996, r.egulations 14C, 14CA, and 14D</i> <i><u>City of Karratha</u> Standing Orders Local Law 2018</i>
Relevant Delegations	<u>Nil</u>
Strategies & Plans	<u>Nil</u>
Related Council Policies	<u>Nil</u>
Procedures, Documents & Forms	<u>Nil</u>

Policy Owner

Directorate <u>Department</u>	Corporate & Commercial <u>Services</u> <u>Governance</u>
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Review Management

Next review due:	July 2026 <u>2031</u>
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Version Management

Version	Date	Council Resolution Number	Description
1.0	July 2024	OCM240729-13	Original Policy Adopted