

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 4 JULY 2019

7.00PM

COUNCIL CONFERENCE AND RECEPTION CENTRE
CITY HALL
LITTLE MALOP STREET, GEELONG

COUNCIL:

Cr B Harwood (Kardinia Ward)

Mayor

Cr S Asher (Bellarine Ward)

Cr J Mason (Bellarine Ward)

Cr T Sullivan (Bellarine Ward)

Cr E Kontelj (Brownbill Ward)

Cr S Mansfield (Brownbill Ward)

Cr P Murrhy (Brownbill Ward)

Cr R Nelson (Kardinia Ward)

Cr P Murnane (Kardinia Ward)

Cr A Aitken (Windermere Ward)

Cr K Grzybek (Windermere Ward)

SECTION A - PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Acknowledgement 1

Apologies 1

Declarations of Conflicts of Interest 1

Public Question and Submission Time 1-2

SECTION B – REPORT

1. All-Day On-Street Car Parking Fees in the Geelong CBD 3-6

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE GREATER GEELONG CITY COUNCIL
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CONFERENCE AND RECEPTION CENTRE
CITY HALL, LITTLE MALOP STREET, GEELONG
THURSDAY, 4 JULY 2019
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT: Cr B Harwood (Mayor), Crs A Aitken, S Asher, K Grzybek, E Kontelj, J Mason, P Murrhiy, R Nelson, T Sullivan

Also present: M Cutter (Chief Executive Officer), B Luxford (Director Economy, Investment and Attraction), G Smith (Director Planning and Development), G Wilson-Browne (Director City Services), M Dugina (Director Finance & Strategy), R Stevens (Director Community Life), K Phyland (Executive Manager People and Culture), R Leonard (Acting Director Governance, Strategy and Performance)

OPENING: The Mayor declared the meeting open at 7.00pm

REASON FOR HOLDING SPECIAL MEETING:

The matter is urgently required to consider the reversal of the significant increase in on-street all-day car parking fees imposed as of 1 July 2019.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Council acknowledged Wadawurrung Traditional Owners of this land and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

APOLOGIES: Crs S Mansfield and P Murnane

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: Nil

PUBLIC QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME:

Robert Menaul addressed the Council as follows:

A number of Councils are using paperless systems, but do not collect number plate data. This data is not necessary for basic parking, and misuse of this data is both likely and potentially dangerous?

Cr Harwood responded that as a Clever and Creative City of Design, and we are moving into the 21st century, this sort of technology is being used globally - but as eluded to there are downsides when misused.

Gareth Smith added local government collects information in various shapes or forms from rate notices and the like, but we are bound like all local, state and federal governments by privacy laws. The information Council collects can only be used for the purposes collected.

Yun Chen asked:

- 1) I've noticed that a majority of carparking fees around the CBD area have increased nearly double, I am wondering how is this price been set up?
- 2) To what extent do you think it is affordable for the future residents of Geelong, permanent and temporary?

Gareth Smith responded there are various prices around the CBD for parking and different options. Free parking is provided on the outer fringes of the CBD and Council also provides a park and ride service as does Deakin University. There are various structures offered from free to \$13 a day.

Craig Seite asked why the carparking increase? Where will the extended profit go? What is going to be done about Malop Street?

Gareth Smith responded in relation to the parking increase from \$5.80 to \$13 the key reason that actually came about was that the City also provides off street parking which increased from \$10.80 to \$13. Council's fees and charges policy actually looks at consistency on fees so if the City is providing off street parking at \$13 and have an on street at a different rate it is not consistent and that's how the increase has come about.

The reason we are here tonight, however, is about the process, lack of consultation and the communication of these increases.

1. ALL-DAY ON-STREET CAR PARKING FEES IN THE GEELONG CBD

Source: Chief Executive – Financial Services
Chief Executive Officer: Martin Cutter
Portfolio: Finance

Purpose

1. To provide Council with the opportunity to consider corrective action on increases to the budgeted 2019-20 fees for capped all-day on street parking and 3-hour and 4-hour capped parking in the Geelong CBD and request management undertake a review of all budgeted 2019-20 fees and charges to identify any significant increase in fees and charges that were not included in the budget consultation process for further consideration.

Background

2. On 1 July 2019 the City implemented new fees and charges for the financial year. This included an increase for on-street car parking hourly rates from \$2.90 to \$3.00.
3. Additionally, there were increases to off-street permit parking monthly fees, and off-street all-day car parking fees at the Haymarket and Corio Street car parks, with fees rising from \$10.80 to \$13.00 per day.
4. Consequently, on-street car parking fees across the Geelong CBD were recast for capped 3-hour, 4- hour and all-day on-street car parking. Approximately 290 car parks are impacted along parts of Western Beach Road, Eastern Beach Road, Ritchie Boulevard, Brougham Street, Bellarine Street and the Little Ryrie Street car park.
5. All-day on-street car parking fees were increased to align with the fees for off-street all-day car parking to provide consistency.

Key Matters

6. The City's 2019-20 budget process included exhibiting key changes to fees and charges. However, it became evident on 1 July that not all key changes to the City's fees and charges were exhibited. For parking fees, key changes that were made but unintentionally not exhibited include:
 - 6.1 Capped all-day on-street parking from - \$5.80 to \$13.00;
 - 6.2 3-hour parking capped from - \$5.80 to \$7.00;
 - 6.3 4-hour parking capped from - \$3.50 to \$8.00; and
 - 6.4 4-hour parking capped (high occupancy) from - \$5.80 to \$9.00.
7. The above fee increase was not communicated to the Council or community, and those members of our community who use on-street all-day car parking were not appropriately advised of the increase.
8. As consultation did not occur, it is appropriate that Council seek to implement actions that restore faith in the process.
9. In addition to any corrective action on the parking fees and charges, it is important that a comprehensive analysis be undertaken of all budgeted 2019-20 fees and charges to identify any significant increase in fees and charges that were not included in the budget consultation process for further consideration by Council.

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Murrhiy seconded -

10. That Council:

- 10.1 Revert the 2019/20 budgeted fees charged for capped on-street all-day, 3-hour and 4-hour parking in the Geelong CBD to the 2018/19 rate. Effective from 7am on Monday 8 July 2019; and**
- 10.2 Request the Chief Executive Officer to:**
- (a) Review all budgeted 2019/20 fees and charges to identify any significant increase in fees and charges that were not included in the budget consultation process for further consideration by Council;**
 - (b) Review and investigate the oversight of disclosing to Councillors the budget and the community parking fee charge increases for on street all day, 3 hour and 4 hour parking in Geelong CBD and report back to Councillors the outcome of the investigation by 31 August 2019;**
 - (c) Review the process for setting all fees and charges and report back to Council on measures required to ensure that future changes to budgeted fees and charges are subject to appropriate Council oversight and community consultation; and**
 - (d) Consider and develop an appropriate strategy for setting parking fees in the Geelong CBD to inform the next budget process.**

Carried.

Division Requested:

For: Crs Aitken, Grzybek, Harwood, Kontelj, Murrhiy, Mason, Asher, Sullivan, Nelson

Against: Nil

Attachment 1

Financial Implications

1. 2019-20 fee increases for capped on-street all day, 3-hour and 4-hour parking have potential budget impacts in the order of \$500,000 to \$600,000 per annum. The all-day parking makes up approximately \$480,000 of this income.
2. The process for resetting parking meter fees takes at least 48 hours.

Community Engagement

3. The 2019-20 budget consultation process included exhibiting key fees and charges increases. The process did not include all increases and only published approximately 260 of the 1800 fees and charges of the City. The process to exhibit only key fees and charges increased has been the practice at the City for some years. This process will be reviewed by the City in preparation of the 2020-21 budget.
4. Fees and charges are currently published on the City's website: <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/budget/documents/item/8d6fe115aa4f99a.aspx>.

Social Equity Considerations

5. It is important that the budget consultation process provided opportunities for all the community to participate and provide comment, including the City's fees and charges.

Policy/Legal/Statutory Implications

6. Fees are set by the City and are subject to annual adjustment in line with the Council's Fees and Charges Policy. The application of a more consistent all-day parking fee for on-street and off-street is in line with the City's policy.
7. Decisions about fees and charges is delegated by Council to the City's Chief Executive Officer.

Alignment to Council Plan

8. Fees and charges of the City provide revenue to support the delivery of services to the community, linking to the Council Plan initiative: *Innovative Finances and Technology*.

Conflict of Interest

9. No officers declared a conflict of interest on this matter.

Risk Assessment

10. A failure to provide adequate opportunities for public consultation on key budget initiatives may undermine public trust in the Council, the City and its processes.

Environmental Implications

11. There are no environmental implications relevant to this matter.

CLOSE OF MEETING

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 7.36pm. Thursday, 4 July 2019.

Signed: _____
Cr Bruce Harwood (Mayor)

Date of Confirmation: _____.