

19 April 2016

Notice of Motion, Cr Mayne: Participation in Western Australian forum on local government transparency reform

Motion

That the Future Melbourne Committee approves the proposed participation by Councillor Stephen Mayne in the transparency reform in local government forum to be staged by the City of Vincent, Western Australia on 22 April 2016 at no cost to Council.

Background

Since late 2015, there has been significant debate in the Western Australian (WA) local government sector about reform required to improve transparency and process surrounding the conduct of councillors.

The experience of the City of Perth (Perth) on issues around disclosure and process in respect of travel, expenses and gifts is an example of how community confidence in their elected leaders can be eroded. Failure in process and disclosure led to a damning report through the WA Corruption and Crime Commission on the activities of Perth's Lord Mayor ([Commission report link here](#)).

In response to a need for reform and restoration of community confidence in the sector, the City of Vincent (Vincent) in WA has embarked on a program and campaign for broader sector reform in local government.

Vincent has observed closely the transparency program led by the City of Melbourne (Melbourne) and has introduced a range of reporting and disclosure measures. The approach taken by Melbourne has been recognised by Vincent and the WA Minister for Local Government ([media statement link here](#)) as demonstrating leadership in transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

To advance the program of reform in WA, Vincent is hosting a transparency reform in local government forum 22 April 2016. Upon learning that I was going to be in Perth on 21 April for Woodside's Annual General Meeting, the Mayor of Vincent invited me to address the forum on the Melbourne experience. Vincent has offered to contribute \$600 towards the cost of travel. There will be no cost to Council.

Participation in the forum will provide for a further insight into Melbourne's transparency program and on-going calls for broader reform in local government. The importance and value of sharing this with the WA local government community is significant as it has been a sector which is only slowly developing an appetite for change.

Melbourne has led the campaign for greater transparency, disclosure and accountability in local government in Victoria and across Australia. Melbourne has, for a number of years now, been advancing this issue through state and national forums. Setting standards, encouraging other councils and offering practical examples on how greater transparency can be achieved has been a feature of Melbourne motions lodged for discussion the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council and Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly. Melbourne is again advancing this issue at the 2016 ALGA National General Assembly (19 to 22 June) by lodging a motion ([see item 6.5 in link here](#)) calling on council's across Australia to adopt measures for greater disclosure and transparency on expense claims and travel undertaken by councillors.

Moved: Cr Mayne