

Subject **SCC reply: SCRC arrangements for notifying Councilors of current/pending DA's**

From Warren Bunker <warren.bunker@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au>

Sender Sue Sheahan <sue.sheahan@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au>

To president@oscar.org.au <president@oscar.org.au>

Date 03-09-2020 12:21



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- Mayor Booking Form - Declaration.pdf(~286 KB)
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Dear Ms Hobson

Thank you for your email of 24 August 2020, seeking clarification of arrangements for the notification of Councillors of current development applications.

There are a number of arrangements in place to provide information to the Mayor and Councillors on development applications received by Council. These arrangements include:

1. A daily email is sent to the Mayor and all Councillors from Council's Development Services Branch, advising of new development applications received in the previous 24-48 hours. The daily email would generally only not be sent on occasions such as public holidays or in the very limited instances where Council may not have received any new development applications in the preceding 24-48 hour period.
2. The Mayor and Councillors may at any time, request information from the Development Services Branch in relation to the current status of development applications. Likewise, all information and documents associated with a development application are publicly accessible on Council's Development-i application, which can also be accessed by Councillors and their office support staff.

In relation to the circumstances you have outlined – namely, the Mayor and Councillors receiving invitations and attending events or meetings associated with a current development application - I can confirm that this matter has been covered at some length with the Councillors during briefings since the new Council commenced in April this year, with an emphasis on the local government principles in the Local Government Act 2009 (the Act); Councillors' obligations under the Act; conduct matters prescribed in the Act; behaviours and actions that may potentially give rise to a conduct complaint; and considerations that need to be taken into account when Councillors receive invitations to attend events or requests to participate in a meeting.

This is part of a continuous learning approach with further training scheduled for Councillors in the next month with officers from the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs, where I anticipate a number of matters relating to Councillors' obligations, personal interests and conduct matters will also be covered.

From an administrative perspective, I can also advise that in relation to requests to attend meetings and/or events, the Office of the Mayor revised its procedures late last year and in doing so, has strengthened requirements in relation to all requests received for the Mayor to attend an event or participate in a meeting. Under the revised arrangements, any person or organisation who seeks a meeting with the Mayor or seeks to invite the Mayor to attend an event must complete the attached Meeting Request Form prior to the request being considered. All completed Request forms are then followed up with the relevant areas of Council for validation. Following receipt of the completed form and validation by relevant areas of Council, a decision is made by the Office of the Mayor on whether the meeting or event request can or will be granted.

While each Councillor may establish their own administrative arrangements for managing such matters through their office, the Meeting Request Form and associated process has been provided by the Office of the Mayor to all Councillors for their consideration as a potential support tool in their management of such matters.

I hope this information addresses your concerns and thank you again for your enquiry in relation to this matter.

Regards, Warren

Warren Bunker | A/Chief Executive Officer
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From: OSCAR President [<mailto:president@oscar.org.au>]

Sent: Monday, 24 August 2020 12:19 PM

To: Warren Bunker <warren.bunker@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au>

Subject: SCRC arrangements for notifying Councilors of current/pending DA's

Good afternoon Warren.

At a recent OSCAR meeting, the issue was raised as to how Councillors are alerted to development applications current or pending in Council .

Our concern relates to the matter where the Mayor in 2019 was at a launch of a major development on the Sunshine Coast, before any approval had been issued for the said development.

Further, what advice is given to Councillors including the Mayor in regard to their attendance at any function relating to any proposed development before approval of any such development?

If there are procedures in place, will Council give the community assurance that there is a mechanism for appropriate officers who manage individual Councillor appointments and the Mayor's diary to raise an alert and advise any councillor (incl the Mayor) of a DA not yet approved and that attending an event related to that DA may give rise to a complaint to the OIA?

We also seek assurance that any such advice is documented in order to ensure transparency and protection of officers who are responsible for these tasks.

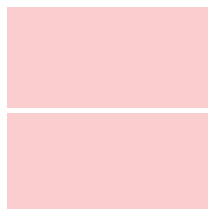
We thank you in anticipation of your response.

Regards,

Melva Hobson

President

Organisation Sunshine Coast Association of Residents (OSCAR)



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