

Why webcast? The gallery is empty

29 Jun 09 @ 03:40pm by Jenny Ling

Source: Leader Community Newspapers, Caulfield Glen Eira Leader

This story was found at: <http://leader-news.whereilive.com.au/news/story/why-webcast-the-gallery-is-empty/>

GLEN Eira Council has dismissed an idea to have local politics webcast live into residents' homes.

The Victorian Local Governance Association has asked for feedback on the proposal to film council meetings so residents can watch them on the internet.

Mayor Helen Whiteside said the idea had advantages but would be "more appropriate" for rural councils whose residents had to travel further to attend meetings.

"We have open council meetings for the community and they are not very well attended," Cr Whiteside said.

"I'd like to see the gallery full of residents interested in what goes on."

Cr Whiteside said Glen Eira had not been directly asked for feedback and the move would have to be discussed among councillors.

Association president Cr Rose Iser said the request was an informal one via a weekly blog in response to the Ombudsman's "explosive" reports on Brimbank Council.

"Most of the feedback has been 'yes' in principle support for making meetings more accessible and accountable, particularly in rural councils," Cr Iser said.

But she admitted the webcasts could face a number of hurdles including privacy and defamation issues.

Local Government Minister Richard Wynne said he supported the move.

In the same way the media could film federal and state parliament, the democratic process should be open and transparent to ensure maximum accountability, he said.

Greater Dandenong Council broadcasts its meetings and archived meetings can be viewed online at any time.

This story was found at: <http://leader-news.whereilive.com.au/news/story/why-webcast-the-gallery-is-empty/>

Backing for webcasts of Boroondara Council meetings

30 Jun 09 @ 05:01am by Jon Ryan

Source: Progress Leader

This story was found at: <http://progress-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/backing-for-webcasts/>

THEY often last so long they make Fidel Castro's four-hour monologues seem pithy.

But diligent residents who want to follow Boroondara Council meetings might soon be able to do so from the comfort of their own living-room.

The Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) has asked all councils for feedback on a proposal to broadcast meetings over the internet to increase transparency and accessibility.

Boroondara Mayor Jack Wegman was open to the concept. "We keep touch with our community to look for new ways to better connect, and this idea has merit. In fact, some councillors have already suggested webcasting our meetings and we are currently looking at this with a view to a report being presented to council later in the year," Cr Wegman said. VLGA president Cr Rose Iser, a Moonee Valley councillor, said the webcasts had received widespread support but faced several hurdles.

Cr Iser said most concerns centred on privacy and legal issues.

"Some residents may not want to be filmed so there are some privacy issues and there needs to be a mechanism for them to say, 'Look I don't want to be filmed', and for that to be respected," she said. A lack of protection from defamation laws also concerned some councils. "Unlike state and federal parliament where they are protected by parliamentary privilege, councils may be open to defamation cases where there's comment made that's defamatory," Cr Iser said. Local Government Minister Dick Wynne supported the move.

This story was found at: <http://progress-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/backing-for-webcasts/>

No-show vote for Knox Council webcast

02 Jul 09 @ 11:44pm by Hamish Heard and Michael Gleeson
Source: Leader Community Newspapers, Knox Leader

This story was found at: <http://leader-news.whereilive.com.au/news/story/no-show-vote-for-knox-council-webcast/>

KNOX Council has rejected a call to broadcast its public meetings on the internet.

The Victorian Local Governance Association has asked councillors, council administrators and community groups for feedback on a proposal to film meetings and allow people to view them online.

“We asked them the question: should council meetings be recorded in the interests of transparency, accountability and access to the community?” VLGA president Councillor Rose Iser said.

Cr Iser, from Moonee Valley Council, said the webcasts had received widespread support but faced a number of hurdles, including privacy and legal issues.

Knox Council first considered the idea of a webcast that would be shown on about a half-minute delay in 2007.

But the proposal was knocked back because of the associated costs and the lack of a “demonstrable need” for the service. Council chief executive Graeme Emonson said that the situation hadn’t changed in the last two years. He said until Knox community members voiced a strong desire to view council meetings in the comfort of their lounge room, the idea would not be adopted.

Local Government Minister Dick Wynne said the webcasting of council meetings was a matter for individual councils, but added that he personally supported the move.

“We believe that just as the media can film federal and state parliament, so the democratic process at the community level should be open and transparent to ensure maximum community accountability,” Mr Wynne said.

Cr Iser said a lack of protection from defamation laws had concerned some councils.

“Unlike State and Federal parliament where they are protected by parliamentary privilege, councils may be open to defamation cases,” Cr Iser said.

Should all council meetings be on the internet? Email us at knox@leadernewspapers.com.au

This story was found at: <http://leader-news.whereilive.com.au/news/story/no-show-vote-for-knox-council-webcast/>