

Catering and Civic Support Policy

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1. Purpose

This policy provides guidance on the provision of meals, finger food and beverages for staff meetings or community gatherings/consultations held during, or after, normal work hours.

The policy also provides guidance on the level of Civic Attendant support required to assist the host officer at community gatherings or consultations held at either the Springvale or Dandenong Council offices either during, or after, normal work hours.

2. Background

The Mayor, Council and staff often provide catering for meetings, events and receptions. Variations in standards and expectations arise when there are no clear guidelines on the appropriate level of catering established for staff to follow. The guidelines need to ensure that events are suitably catered and that consideration is given to providing appropriate food over meal times. There are further concerns with the responsible handling of alcohol and the need to establish the types of events where it is appropriate for alcohol to be served. It is important that event organisers are mindful of these issues.

Event organisers often hold meetings or functions with large numbers of guests. Many of these events are held outside of normal business hours. It is not always practical or desirable for event organisers to undertake all the support activities of leading guests to the right area, attending to security requirements and serving food and drinks, while they are managing the content of an event. These activities need to be handled professionally so the whole event can run smoothly and Council is presented in a positive manner. Guidelines are required to ensure that after hours meeting or events involving external guests need to be adequately resourced.

3. Scope

Council officers will apply these guidelines when organising:

- Council briefings, Ordinary and Special Meetings or Councillor workshops
- Meetings, consultations or workshops with community members
- Staff meetings over lunch time or after hours.
- Staff recognition events.
- Internal or external advisory committees
- Advisory and/or Audit Committee Meetings
- Receptions and Formal Dinners

4. References

- Councillor Support & Reimbursement Policy– adopted at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 28 June 2010.
- Staff Service Recognition Policy and Code of Practice – endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer in April 2011.

5. Definitions

N/A

6. Council Policy

This policy provides an adequate and consistent approach to the provision of food and beverages at all meetings and community events organised by Council officers. The *Catering at Meetings* component sets out the categories of catering to be provided and the *Meeting Type* sets out the range of meetings the various categories apply to.

The *Civic Attendant Support* component outlines a consistent approach to ensure Council officers hosting a meeting or event have attendants to assist them in guiding guests to the right location, presenting and clearing away food and crockery and the responsible serving of alcohol.

It is the responsibility of the Council officer hosting a meeting or community event to ensure these guidelines are followed.

Catering at Meetings

There are six categories of catering that can be provided at meetings. Outlined below are the six categories, followed by guidelines matching the categories to each meeting type. A 'closest fit' approach would apply where a specific meeting may vary from those listed.

Categories of Catering

- Category 1 – Fruit/cheese/savoury platter
- Category 2 – Sandwiches
- Category 3 – Finger Food (a combination of sandwiches and hot and cold selections)
- Category 4 – Buffet meal (Alcohol optional – Director approval required)
- Category 5 – Premium Finger Food including alcohol
- Category 6 – Formal meal including alcohol

Meeting Types

- All meetings – tea/coffee/cold water will be available and biscuits upon request
- Staff meetings held between 12noon and 1.30pm – category 1 and 2
- Staff meetings held between 6.00pm and 7.30pm – categories 1 and 3
- Staff recognition events – categories 1 and 3
- Advisory committees involving external people – category 3
- Internal committees scheduled for 2.5 hours or longer – category 1 and 2
- Advisory committees, internal committees or informal meetings of Councillors expected to extend beyond 7pm – Category 4
- Community consultation/workshops scheduled for 1.5 hours or less – category 1 and 2
- Community consultation/workshops scheduled longer than 1.5 hours – category 1 and 3
- Community consultation/workshops scheduled between 6.00pm and 7.30pm – upgrade to category 1 and 3
- Council dinners during/prior to scheduled Briefings and Council Meetings – category 4 or 5
- Receptions held on behalf of the Mayor and Councillors – category 4 or 5
- Formal Mayoral Dinner/Reception – category 6

A Council officer organising an event that does not specifically meet the criteria listed above should apply a 'closest fit' approach to determine the catering and beverage level for their event or contact the Governance Unit for advice.

The Council officer organising the event is responsible for the catering provided. Council maintains a contract of approved caterers. Advice on the choice of approved caterer and feedback on a caterer's performance is handled through the Governance Unit.

Council will not be liable for any risk management issues if a Business Unit supplies their own catering or uses an unapproved caterer. It is the Business Unit's responsibility to ensure safe food handling practices are followed at all times. The Business Unit will be responsible if risk management issues arise from failing to provide safe food practices.

Civic Attendance Support

To ensure adequate food handling practices are followed and that Council organised community events held in the Springvale or Dandenong Council offices are adequately supported, the following guidelines for organising a Civic Attendant to be present apply:

- All meetings held during normal working hours where food is provided – one Civic Attendant required to clean the area.
- All after hours community meetings, receptions or dinners with 30 people or less – one Civic Attendant required
- All after hours community meetings, receptions or dinners with 31 to 80 people – two Civic Attendants required
- All other advisory, internal committees or larger events are subject to the host officer determining if a Civic Attendant is required and if so, how many are needed.

A Council officer organising a meeting or dinner at any other venue is responsible for ensuring the event is adequately supported by staff from within the Business Unit or by the venue providers.

7. Related Documents

- Councillor Support & Reimbursement Code of Practice – June 2010
- Staff Service Recognition Policy and Code of Practice – April 2011
- Civic Events Guide 1st Edition - December 2010