

COUNCIL AGENDA ADDENDUM

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

26 February 2025

ADDENDUM ITEMS

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QWN 17	Question with Notice - Cllr Ristevski - Security Guards at Council Meetings
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Strategic Objective	Visionary, Leading, Responsible Place customer satisfaction, innovation and best practice at the centre of all operations
File Ref	057299.2025

QUESTION WITH NOTICE

Please address the following:

1. **Cost Inquiry:** What was the total cost incurred for the security guards present at the last council meeting, and how is this cost justified during this period of fiscal pressure?
2. **Decision-Making Process:** Who was responsible for the decision to increase the number of security guards from one to six for the last meeting? What criteria were used to make this decision? Was the Mayor involved in this decision-making?
3. **Communication:** Were any community members or stakeholders consulted regarding the increase in security presence? If so, what feedback was gathered?
4. **Purpose of Increased Security:** Can you clarify the reasoning behind the increase in security personnel? Was it based on specific threats or concerns? [REDACTED]
5. **Community Impact:** How does the council perceive the impact of having six security guards on community attendance and participation at council meetings? Was there any intention to create a more intimidating environment for attendees?
6. **Future Plans:** Will there be a review of security measures for future council meetings? What steps will be taken to ensure community members feel not intimidated and welcomed?
7. **Transparency:** Can the council commit to providing more transparency in decision-making regarding security at future meetings to ensure community trust?
8. A common guideline is to have one security guard for every 100 to 150 attendees. Based on the attendance of the last Council meeting they should have only been one security guard. How was it justified to be spending ratepayers' money frivolously

and engaging six security guards especially when Council is facing a deficit of more than \$11 million this financial year?

9. Did Council engage six security guards based on the precedent set in 2016 when the Council engaged six plain clothed security guards? [REDACTED]

Responses (provided by Community and Lifestyle)

- 1. Cost Inquiry:** The cost for security at the 5 February meeting was \$1050.00. This cost covered the engagement of four security guards for a total of 5 hours from 5.30pm – 11.30pm. These hours were required to ensure safe access, participation and egress from the Council Chambers by Councillors, staff and members of the public.
- 2. Decision-Making Process:** The management of the Council meetings and their safety is an operational matter and managed in line with the Code of Meeting Practice. The decision is governed by safety and security considerations. The decision on how many guards are engaged for each Council meeting is determined by the expected number of participants. This includes an assessment of the expected number of staff, members of the public and speakers or guests. Council has a responsibility to engage sufficient security personnel to ensure safety for all participants. This responsibility was the basis of the decision for the increased security presence on this occasion. Council always places the safety of the community, its Councillors and staff at the forefront of all decision making.
- 3. Communication:** As noted above, the presence of security guards at Council meetings is an operational matter, which is dealt with as part of the general logistical arrangements of Council meetings. Community consultation is not common practice on such matters.
- 4. Purpose of Increased Security:** Prior to the meeting on 5 February 2025, Council became aware that a higher-than-average number of community members had expressed an interest in attending the meeting through various social media platforms. In response, Council engaged four security guards to ensure sufficient ratios of security staff to community members were maintained. This is in addition to the regular security patrol stationed in the foyer of Civic Place, taking the total number of guards onsite that evening to five. This is an operational matter made by Councill Officers.

Although the expected number of participants was not reached, Council acted responsibly to ensure that sufficient security personnel were engaged to support public safety.

5. **Community Impact:** There was no intention to create an intimidating environment for community members in attendance nor was one created. The presence of security is designed to support the community to feel safe to access their Council meetings, particularly as these meetings occur at night.
6. **Future Plans:** Council will continue to engage security for Council meetings with community safety at the forefront. Council will consult with security personnel both when booking and prior to Council meetings to ensure their presence is adequate.
7. **Transparency:** There has been no complaints or observations of community concern in regard to security guards. Council will investigate measures to ensure the community are informed of an expected security presence at Council meetings. A notification can be placed on Council's website alongside the publication of the Council meeting dates and venue to promote community awareness.
8. As noted, the decision to engage additional security for this meeting was justified by the expectation of a higher-than-average attendance. This action was taken to ensure the safety of all participants.
9. As above.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

NOM 08

Cease Memberships to External Committees and Redirect Funds to Frontline Services

Strategic Objective	Visionary, Leading, Responsible Ensure Council is accountable and financially sustainable through the strategic management of assets and resources
File Ref	056855.2025
Author	Peter Ristevski - Councillor

BACKGROUND

Rationale: Liverpool City Council is currently facing some financial challenges, which necessitates a careful reassessment of our budget priorities. In these challenging times, it is imperative that we allocate our financial resources towards essential services that directly benefit our community.

The memberships to the aforementioned organisations, while potentially valuable, do not provide immediate or tangible benefits to our residents, particularly in the context of the current economic climate. The funds expended on these memberships could be more effectively utilised in enhancing our frontline services, especially in the critical area of city cleanliness.

Investing in directly employed council staff to maintain and enhance the cleanliness of our city will not only improve the quality of life for our residents but also foster a sense of pride in our community. Clean and well-maintained public spaces are essential for resident well-being and can also contribute to attracting visitors and businesses to our area.

NOTICE OF MOTION

That Council:

1. Ceases its membership to the following internal and external organisations:
 - i. Committee for Liverpool
 - ii. Business Western Sydney
 - iii. Liverpool Chamber of Commerce
 - iv. Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

2. Redirect the annual savings of \$163,392 from these memberships into frontline services by directly employing council staff, with a particular focus on maintaining and enhancing the cleanliness of our city.

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S COMMENT

Council recognises the importance of balancing fiscal responsibility with the need for strong advocacy to support the city's growth. The proposed motion to discontinue memberships with The Committee for Liverpool, Business Western Sydney, Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, and Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue would not result in any budget savings for 2024/2025.

Discontinuing memberships with Business Western Sydney, Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, and Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue would significantly impact Council's ability to engage in strategic advocacy, which is essential for securing investment, driving economic growth, and maintaining Liverpool's competitive position. These memberships play a critical role in ensuring Liverpool's voice is heard in regional, state, and national discussions, positioning the city for the attention and investment it deserves.

The benefits of these memberships are evident in infrastructure funding, collective advocacy, and regional influence—all of which are essential to sustaining Liverpool's growth, attracting investment, and expanding economic opportunities for residents and businesses alike.

Council's advocacy and government relations framework

At its 29 May 2024 meeting, Council undertook a comprehensive review of all its memberships and strategic alliances and endorsed an advocacy and government relations strategic framework for Council. As a result of the review, Council ceased its membership of The Committee for Sydney.

Proposed Memberships and Status

1. Committee for Liverpool (\$100,000) – This funding was reallocated to the development of Liverpool 2050. This budget was removed during internal budget reviews.
2. Business Western Sydney (\$16,795) – Advocates for regional development, recently pushing for planning reforms along the Georges River. Also established the South West Sydney Alliance. Assisted with Council's advocacy to upgrade Fifteenth Avenue.
3. Liverpool Chamber of Commerce (\$5,000) – Supports small and local businesses, ensuring Council remains engaged with local economic challenges and grassroots issues.
4. Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue (\$35,000) – Facilitates regional advocacy, with recent involvement in the Airport Summit to ensure Council had a seat in determining Western Sydney's infrastructure needs.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The membership fees for Business Western Sydney, Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue have been paid for the 2024-2025 financial year. As the membership renewals fall into the 2025/26 Financial Year, discontinuing them would not result in any budget savings for 2024/25.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

NOM 09	Community Campaign for "Clean Up Liverpool Day"
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Strategic Objective	Liveable, Sustainable, Resilient Deliver a beautiful, clean and inviting city for the community to enjoy
File Ref	058076.2025
Author	Peter Ristevski - Councillor

BACKGROUND

Inspired by initiatives such as "Clean Up Australia Day," this campaign would encourage community involvement in cleaning up public spaces, parks, and waterways across Liverpool. By fostering a sense of shared responsibility and community spirit, we can work together to address litter and environmental concerns while promoting pride in our local area.

Objectives:

- 1. Community Engagement:** Encourage residents to participate in cleaning efforts, fostering a sense of community and collaboration.
- 2. Environmental Awareness:** Raise awareness about the importance of keeping our environment clean and the impact of litter on local ecosystems.
- 3. Beautification of Public Spaces:** Improve the overall appearance of our parks, streets, and public areas, making Liverpool a more attractive place to live and visit.
- 4. Partnerships:** Collaborate with local schools, businesses, and community organisations to maximise participation and resources.

NOTICE OF MOTION

1. Organize a designated "Clean Up Liverpool Day" with a fixed date, promoting it through local media and community channels.
2. Provide necessary supplies such as garbage bags, gloves, and refreshments for volunteers.

3. Establish a registration process for volunteers and groups to help coordinate efforts and ensure safety.
4. Recognise and reward participation through certificates or small prizes to encourage ongoing involvement.

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S COMMENT

Should this motion be endorsed a further report will be provided to the April Council meeting with a proposed project plan, including activities and cost projections. This will include how the Operations, Community and Lifestyle and City Futures directorates would consult and collaborate for a successful delivery.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

NOM 10	Motion to Seek Advice from the Minister of Local Government Regarding the Mayor's Role as Spokesperson During Public Inquiry Period
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Strategic Objective	Visionary, Leading, Responsible Demonstrate a high standard of transparency and accountability through a comprehensive governance framework
File Ref	058078.2025
Author	Peter Ristevski - Councillor

BACKGROUND

As the Council navigates this critical Public Inquiry period, it is imperative that our communications are clear, effective, and reflective of the community's concerns. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

This ongoing negative sentiment poses potential challenges to the Council's ability to engage constructively with the public and could hinder the overall perception of the Council during this sensitive time.

Rationale:

[REDACTED]

Community Trust: It is crucial to maintain the community's trust and confidence in the Council's leadership. Given the current atmosphere, it may be prudent to assess whether a different spokesperson would better serve this purpose.

Strategic Communication: Seeking the Minister's advice will ensure that the Council is aligned with best practices in communication, especially during a period that requires transparency and accountability.

NOTICE OF MOTION

That Council seeks advice from the Minister of Local Government on whether the Mayor should continue to serve as the spokesperson for the Council during the current Public Inquiry period. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S COMMENT

The role of the mayor is stipulated under Section 226 of the Local Government Act 1993 as follows:

- (a) to be the leader of the council and a leader in the local community,
- (b) to advance community cohesion and promote civic awareness,
- (c) to be the principal member and spokesperson of the governing body, including representing the views of the council as to its local priorities,**
- (d) to exercise, in cases of necessity, the policy-making functions of the governing body of the council between meetings of the council,
- (e) to preside at meetings of the council,
- (f) to ensure that meetings of the council are conducted efficiently, effectively and in accordance with this Act,
- (g) to ensure the timely development and adoption of the strategic plans, programs and policies of the council,
- (h) to promote the effective and consistent implementation of the strategic plans, programs and policies of the council,
- (i) to promote partnerships between the council and key stakeholders,
- (j) to advise, consult with and provide strategic direction to the general manager in relation to the implementation of the strategic plans and policies of the council,
- (k) in conjunction with the general manager, to ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between the council and the local community,
- (l) to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office,
- (m) to represent the council on regional organisations and at inter-governmental forums at regional, State and Commonwealth level,
- (n) in consultation with the councillors, to lead performance appraisals of the general manager,
- (o) to exercise any other functions of the council that the council determines.

Moreover, Section 4 of Council's Media Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Mayor, Councillors and the CEO when making media statements. Section 4.1.1 of the policy states the Mayor is the official spokesperson of the governing body of the Council and the CEO is the spokesperson on Operational matters.

The Minister of Local Government has no authority to override the legislative powers conferred in this matter.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications relating to this recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil