

**12.8 RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION 590 (CR DE SANTIS) - LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**

**Author: Christine Denyer - Manager Legal and Governance**  
**Presenter: Christine Denyer - Manager Legal and Governance**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To respond to Notice of Motion 590 in relation to live streaming of Council Meetings.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council:

1. Develops (and in due course approves) a live streaming policy
2. Engage Interstream to provide equipment and live streaming services at Melton Civic Centre and Burnside Community Centre
3. Conducts a review of the live streaming (including usage) after 18 months and brings back a report to Council.

**Motion**

Crs De Santis/Carli.

That the recommendation be adopted.

LOST

Cr Majdlik called for a division thereby setting aside the vote.

**For:**

Crs Carli, De Santis, Kesic and Majdlik

**Against:**

Crs Hardy, Mendes, Ramsey and Turner

The Mayor declared the Motion LOST on the casting vote of the Mayor

**Motion**

Crs Majdlik/Carli.

That Council:

1. Conduct community consultation regarding the live streaming of Council meetings.
2. Receive a report on the outcome of that community consultation in due course.

CARRIED

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## REPORT

### 1. Executive Summary

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 12 November 2018 Council resolved to '*support the live streaming of future Council meetings via internet and the installation of the appropriate visual and audio equipment required to successfully run this streaming*'.

There are three main methods by which live streaming can be achieved:

**Option 1** – engage Interstream to equip Council and provide live streaming services (ie use that entity's platform) including editing (if necessary), bookmarking and posting to Council's archive/website.

**Option 2** – procure the required equipment and software and use a dedicated YouTube Channel via Council's own IT systems (with no ability to edit unless a new staff resource were procured).

**Option 3** – engage (via normal procurement) a contractor to film and stream each meeting including editing (if necessary), bookmarking and posting to Council's archive/website.

Options 1 and 3 have the lowest risk of defamation (by way of publication of the post-meeting content) because of the ability to edit the content before posting to the website.

Option 1 is being used by 40 Councils in Australia with good feedback to the author of this report from a number of Councils. To the extent that is widely used by those Councils that live stream it is a 'proven' method and the product can be viewed and is 'known'.

The end product for Option 3 is somewhat 'unknown' but it has the advantage of being able to be tailored to suit Council.

In addition to the inability to edit the post meeting content for Option 2, that option also comes with 'advertisement' type links on the side of the screen that are out of Council's control and may contain objectionable material.

### 2. Background/Issues

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 12 November 2018 Council resolved to '*support the live streaming of future Council meetings via internet and the installation of the appropriate visual and audio equipment required to successfully run this streaming*'.

Now that the decision has been taken to support live streaming, the question then becomes which method should be used.

This report provides information as to different live streaming options available and the approximate costs of each, together with other considerations which should be decided upon before the live streaming commences.

The question of whether Council should live stream its meetings has been before Council previously on two occasions (when the motion put was ultimately lost). A detailed report was presented to the Council at the Ordinary Meeting on 29 May 2017. That report outlined three main methods of live streaming.

This report provides updated information and costs on those three methods as follows:

**Option 1 – Self-Managed Solution externally hosted**

Provided by an Australian company with an expertise in Local Government webcasting solutions. It requires initial set up costs for hardware, software and other equipment and ongoing costs for live streaming services, streaming set up and archive storage.

Council is aware of two service providers, Interstream and Apstream.

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Interstream's pricing model is a set cost per month, which includes the creation of an indexed/bookmarked archive (regardless of the number of meetings streamed and the number of archives retained). The pricing model of Apstream is structured on a 'per meeting basis' and doesn't include creation of an indexed/bookmarked archive.

Interstream seems to be the main provider to Local Councils. Accordingly, this report sets out only Interstream's features and costs.

**Main Features**

- used by 40 Councils across Australia
- short set up time – 1-2 weeks to select and purchase equipment
- broadcast quality HD cameras
- approximate set up costs – hardware (three HD cameras, streaming box and control tablets) \$17,060\* per venue
- ongoing cost of approximately \$1,260 per month\* regardless of the number of meetings held per month, which also provides the opportunity to stream other meetings, should Council be so inclined, or any other public forum held in the Council Chamber eg. declaration of the poll after an election, section 223 meetings etc
- full control over data content, which is hosted on contractor's server
- potential to display 'live minutes' or 'powerpoint' in a 4-way split screen
- provision for viewers to email a questions/comments during the meeting
- archive available within 48hrs, with data storage residing within Australia
- provision for indexing/bookmarking of archived meetings to provide ease of navigation for viewers of agenda items considered during meetings
- free editing of archive after meetings if necessary, in the event of objectionable language or acts of an individual, which may have been recorded. This goes some way to protecting Council against defamation
- hosted by the provider on its website so that heavy usage will not 'clog' Council's own website (average use is 100 users per live stream but can peak with a controversial meeting).

A number of Councils use Interstream. Councils that have recently adopted Interstream's solution include Hobsons Bay, Geelong and Whitehorse.

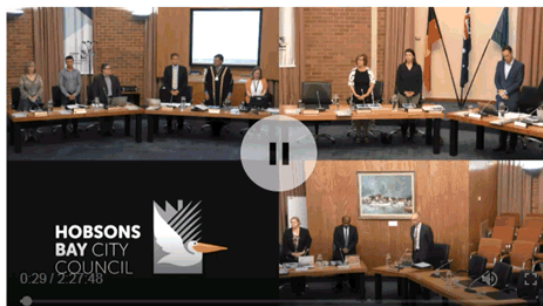
Links to these Councils' websites as are follows:

- Hobsons Bay <http://webcast.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/video.php>

The snipped screen shot below of a previous meeting shows a 4 way screen. This is how the live stream would be viewed.

The screen shot also shows bookmarked items. After the live streamed meeting the relevant bookmarks can be added for ease of reference.

Ordinary Council Meeting Date: 13 November 2018, 7pm, [Download Meeting](#) Filesize: 373mb



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#### Order of Business

- [1 Council Welcome and Acknowledgement](#)
  - [2 Apologies](#)
  - [3 Disclosure of Interests](#)
  - [4 Minutes Confirmation](#)
  - [5 Councillors' Questions](#)
  - [6 Public Question Time](#)
  - [7 Petitions/Joint Letters](#)
  - [8 Business](#)
    - [8.1 Office of the Chief Executive](#)
      - [8.1.1 Chief Executive Officer - Report on Operations](#)
      - [8.2 Corporate Services](#)
        - [8.2.1 Quarterly Financial Report - Period Ended 30 September 2018](#)
        - [8.2.2 Audit Committee - Membership, Fee Structure and Charter](#)
        - [8.3 Strategic Development](#)
          - [8.3.1 Draft Newport Structure Plan - Consideration of Submissions](#)
          - [8.3.2 Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy Statement](#)
- Geelong City Council: <https://webcast.geelongaustralia.com.au/video.php>

Likewise, the snipped screen shot below of a previous meeting shows a 4 way screen. This is how the live stream would be viewed.

Also and likewise, the screen shot shows bookmarked items. After the live streamed meeting the relevant bookmarks can be added for ease of reference.

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Ordinary Council Meeting - 23 October 2018

Filesize: 514mb, [Download](#)



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**Agenda**

- [SECTION A – PROCEDURAL MATTERS](#)
- [1. Acknowledgement](#)
- [2. Apologies](#)
- [3. Leave of Absence](#)
- [4. Confirmation of Minutes](#)

- City of Whitehorse: <https://webcast.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/video.php>

This is Interstream's most recent installation.

The feedback provided to Melton from the Governance Officer at Whitehorse was glowing.

*\* Indicative costs (ex GST) provided by 'Interstream'.*

**Option 2 – Self-Managed 'in-house' Solution, using either:**

- a dedicated YouTube channel as streaming platform, or
- a dedicated YouTube channel, via Facebook Live, as streaming platform.

YouTube is a free live streaming service very familiar to many users of the internet. It is capable of streaming to all mobile and hand held devices.

**Main Features**

- cost effective software and archives free
- easy to use for the viewer and accessible on mobile and hand held devices
- estimated set up costs – hardware \$20,295 for Burnside Community Centre and \$31,269 for Melton Council Chamber
- data content is in a public domain over which Council has no control
- no provision for indexing/bookmarking of archived meetings, thereby making it more difficult for viewers to navigate agenda items considered at meetings during playback after the meeting
- any editing of archive after meetings (if necessary) in the event of objectionable language or acts of an individual inadvertently recorded, must be undertaken by Council employees. Currently no employees could undertake this.

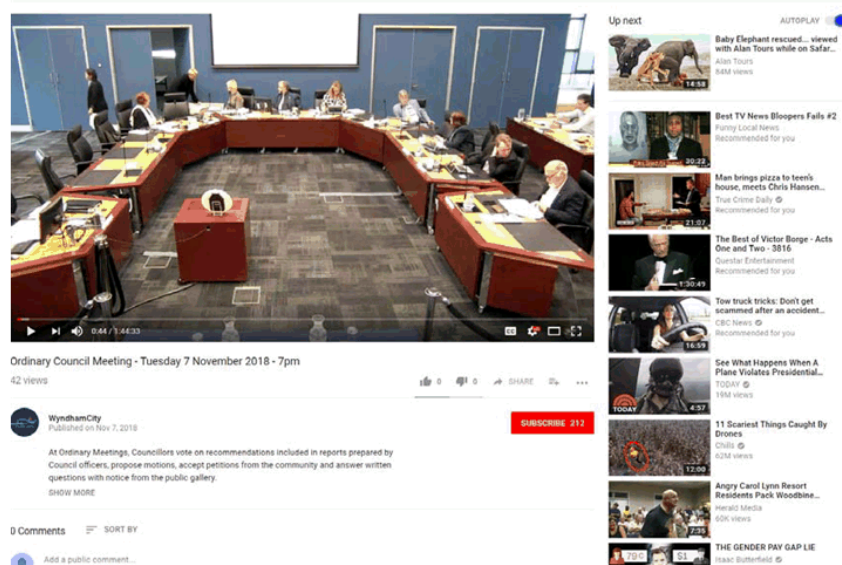
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- YouTube site has advertisements along the side, which are out of Council's control and may contain objectionable content
- would need to ensure that current Council IT internet and systems at Council can cope with this – fundamentally this should be possible
- may require reconfiguration of the chamber at Melton for a good, one camera view (see example of Wyndham below).

A number of Councils use this solution including Wyndham City Council, which can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pykRxNGn5ZE>

A snipped screen shot of Wyndham is below.



**Option 3 – Fully Outsourced Solution**  
Professional providers of 'ad-hoc' services.

This solution based on a cost per meeting is estimated at \$1,100 ex GST per meeting.

**Main Features**

- no set-up cost and immediate start
- using Australian designed software
- fully operated and staffed by a contracted service provider
- professional looking end product (eg ability to zoom in etc)
- post production editing and posting to website \$500
- solution is portable such that provider could also live stream other events such as carols by candlelight, citizenship ceremonies, festivals etc
- solution is able to be tailored to the requirements of Council (within technical limits).

**3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference**

The Melton City Council 2017-2021 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

5. A high performing organisation demonstrating leadership and advocacy: An organisation operating with innovation, transparency, accountability and sustainability

*5.2 A flexible, innovative and creative organisation that responds to rapidly changing community and operating environments.*

**4. Financial Considerations**

The options below are not accounted for in the current budget.

**Option 1**

Initial costs \$17,060 per venue

Ongoing costs \$1,260 per month

**Option 2**

Initial costs \$ 20,295.00 Burnside and \$31,269 Melton

Ongoing costs – minimal (software licence fee)

**Option 3**

No initial costs.

Ongoing costs - \$1,600 per meeting including publishing to website.

**5. Consultation/Public Submissions**

There has been no public consultation.

**6. Risk Analysis**

This report will not canvass the relevant risks of live streaming per se given that pursuant to the resolution which brought about this report Council has already decided to support live streaming. That said it is noted that a policy (and possibly procedure) would need to be developed to address the risks of live streaming itself.

The risks insofar as the different options are concerned are as follows:

**Option 1**

Less risk of defamation in the post-meeting webcast as it can be edited by Interstream.

Less risk of technical problems as Council would be assisted by Interstream.

**Option 2**

More risk of defamation post-meeting as any editing would need to be performed by Council in circumstances where we currently do not have this resource.

More risk of technical problems as Council would be running its own Youtube site.

**Option 3**

Less risk of defamation in the post-meeting webcast as it can be edited by the provider.

Depending upon the size of the provider, a risk of provider failure, noting that another provider could probably relatively easily be found – but perhaps not at short notice.

**7. Options**

1. Adopt the recommendation as set out at the beginning of this report. (**Option 1** above)
2. Develops (and in due course approves) a live streaming policy  
Sources equipment and software and live streaming services via a YouTube (**Option 2** above)  
Conducts a review of the live streaming (including usage) after 18 months and brings back a report to Council.
3. Develops (and in due course approves) a live streaming policy  
Engages a contractor pursuant to normal procurement processes to live stream Council meetings and place the recorded meeting on its website (**Option 3** above)  
Conducts a review of the live streaming (including usage) after 18 months and brings back a report to Council.

**LIST OF APPENDICES**

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