

3 Presentation of officer reports

3.3 Consideration of Public Submissions - Proposed Amended Governance Rules

Abstract

Section 60(3) of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) permits Council to amend its Governance Rules at any time. Council must, however, ensure that a process of community engagement is followed in amending its Governance Rules.

On 24 May 2021, Council resolved that the proposed amended Governance Rules be endorsed for public consultation. The public consultation period commenced on 27 May 2021 and closed at 5:15 pm on 25 June 2021.

Officers received one hundred and ninety-five (195) written submissions in relation to the proposed amendment to the Governance Rules. Twelve (12) submitters have requested to be heard in support of their written submission.

A final report will be presented to Council on 26 July 2021 for a decision.

Confidential information is contained in **Attachment 1**, as circulated in the confidential section of the agenda attachments, in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) and the definitions of 'confidential information' in Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020. The information relates to personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

The item has been included in the public agenda to facilitate transparency and accountability in Council's decision making.

Officers' recommendation

That the Services Delegated Committee resolve to:

1. Receive and note the verbal and written submissions received in relation to the proposed Governance Rules.
2. Thank the submitters for their verbal and written submissions.
3. Refer the proposed amended Governance Rules to Council for determination at the Council Meeting on 26 July 2021.

Responsible officer: Phillip Storer, Chief Executive Officer

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is for councillors to consider the written submissions received during the public consultation on the proposed amended Governance Rules and to hear from those submitters who stated they wanted to be heard in support of their written submission.

2. Policy implications and relevance to community plan and council plan

This report is consistent with the Council Plan 2017-21, in particular strategy 7.2, which states “Ensure transparent decision making through open governance processes”.

It also supports Strategic Objective 7 of the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27, to “Ensure that ethical, financial and socially responsible decision making reflect community needs and are based on principles of accountability, transparency, responsiveness and consultation”.

3. Background

Section 60 of the Act required Council to adopt Governance Rules on or before 1 September 2020, with respect to:

- the conduct of Council meetings;
- the conduct of meetings of delegated committees;
- the form and availability of meeting records;
- the election of the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor;
- the appointment of an Acting Mayor;
- an election period policy in accordance with section 69;
- the procedures for the disclosure of a conflict of interest by a Councillor or a member of a delegated committee under sec 130
- The procedures for the disclosure of a conflict of interest by a Councillor under section 131;
- The procedure for the disclosure of a conflict of interest by a member of Council staff; and
- any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

The Governance Rules also had to provide for Council to:

- consider and make decisions on any matter being considered by Council fairly and on the merits; and
- institute decision making processes to ensure that any person whose rights will be directly affected by a decision of the Council is entitled to communicate their views and have their interests considered.

The mandatory statutory obligations placed upon Council were fulfilled when Council adopted the Governance Rules on 24 August 2020 which came into operation on 1 September 2020.

Section 60(3) of the Act permits Council to amend its Governance Rules at any time. Council must, however, ensure that a process of community engagement is followed in amending its Governance Rules.

4. Outline of key issues/options

Officers received one hundred and ninety-five (195) written submissions in relation to the proposed amendment to the Governance Rules. Twelve (12) have requested to be heard in support of their written submission. A copy of the written submissions is at **Confidential Attachment 1**.

In the interest of effective and inclusive engagement practices officers have taken a broad interpretation of the term “submissions” and included all correspondence received which relates to the Council prayer, public question time and/or any other Rule included in the Governance Rules. Officers believe this enhances transparency and good governance.

The proposed amended Governance Rules only altered the rules relating to the facilitation of public question time at Council meetings. All other rules and sub-rules contained in the document remained unchanged.

However, as the proposed amended Governance Rules went out in their entirety for public consultation, individuals could make a submission on any of the rules or sub-rules contained within the document. The submissions received primarily relate to:

- Chapter 2 - Rule 18A - Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country
- Chapter 2 - Part C - Meeting Procedure, Division 8 - Public Question Time

A summary of the written submissions and the officer’s response to the matters raised in the submissions is at **Attachment 2**.

5. Consultation/communication

On 24 May 2021, Council resolved to endorse the proposed amended Governance Rules for public consultation. The public consultation process commenced on 27 May 2021 and closed at 5:15 pm on 25 June 2021.

The proposed amended Governance Rules were advertised through:

- Public notice on Council’s website;
- Public Notice in the Age newspaper; and
- The ‘Have your Say’ section on Council’s website.

Following the hearing of submissions, officers will finalise the proposed amended Governance Rules and present them to Council for consideration at the Council meeting on 26 July 2021.

If adopted, the Governance Rules will be made available on Council’s website and intranet, for inspection at the Council officers and a copy provided to each councillor.

6. Financial and resource implications

The cost to amend the Governance Rules can be met within the current Governance and Legal budget and includes the cost of community engagement via the Council communication channels.

7. Governance issues

No member of Council staff involved in advising or in preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (the Charter). The proposed amendments to the Governance Rules are not considered to infringe unreasonably upon any prescribed human rights, freedoms or responsibilities contained in the Charter.

8. Social and environmental issues

The community engagement process and subsequent adoption of the Governance Rules will reinforce public confidence in the integrity of Council's decision making processes and in the Council's ability to ensure good corporate governance within the municipality.

Manager: Adele Thyer, Acting Manager Governance and Legal

Report officer: Kirstin Ritchie, Coordinator Governance

Governance Rules		
Submitter	Summary of Issue(s)	Response
Pauline McKinnon	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer and the Acknowledgement of Country as a valuable practice.</p>	<p>As it stands Rule 18A of the Governance Rules states that a Council meeting may commence with the Council Prayer and the Acknowledgement of Country.</p> <p>Council officers are not proposing to remove or alter Rule 18A of the Governance Rules.</p>
John D Sweet	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer and states it suits many people of many faith traditions as there is no mention of Christ.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
Pauline Lui	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer and states it is a good traditional that should be maintained.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
Leona and Graham Scott	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters support the retention of the Council Prayer and the Acknowledgement of Country as they are traditions which encourage us all to be better and to set an example to those around us.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Rob Baillieu</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is concerned about the inclusion of the Council Prayer at Council meetings as the person is opposed to the principle of secular government.</p> <p>The submitter acknowledges that the prayer is generally non-specific however states that the practice is uncomfortable for residents who are non-religious, of diverse faiths and those that have been victims of religious institutions.</p> <p>The submitter concludes by stating that the practice is divisive, disrespectful, outdated, unpopular and probably illegal.</p>	<p>It is common practice for governments in Australia to commence proceedings with a prayer. The Lord's Prayer is recited in Federal Parliament and it also features in every State and Territory Parliament; except the ACT where the day begins with a period of silent reflection.</p> <p>Further, in September 2018 the Victorian Legislative Council Procedure Committee considered removing the reading of the prayer at the opening of Parliament but decided there was no 'momentum for change'.</p> <p>The practice of commencing proceedings with a Council Prayer is one that is not unique to Boroondara City Council; with many other Councils throughout Victoria utilising this practice.</p> <p>The reciting of the Council Prayer is discretionary and it is up to the particular individual whether they wish to participate in the practice or not.</p> <p>At present, the courts have made no determinations on whether the commencement of a Council meeting is illegal. It is however, important to note that the practice does not invalidate the business transacted during the Council meeting.</p>
<p>Humanists Victoria</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters are opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules and believe the practice should instead be a period of silent reflection or a more inclusive statement.</p>	<p>It is a matter for Councillors to determine whether Rule 18A includes a period of silent reflection, an inclusive statement, the Council Prayer or all of the above.</p>

	<p>The submitter states that the religious profile of Australia has changed considerably in the past 50 years with Australia becoming more secular. The submitter also questions whether the practice could be considered a human rights issue.</p>	<p>The practice of reciting the Prayer was not designed to be representative of the entire Boroondara Community as it only concerns the sitting councillors.</p> <p>This is because the intent of Rule 18A is to provide councillors with an opportunity of inward reflection on how they, as a collective, seek to ground themselves before any Council deliberations.</p> <p>Council officers do not believe that the inclusion of Rule 18A is a human rights issue as participation is discretionary. An equal argument exists that by removing reference to the Council Prayer from Rule 18A breaches the very same legislation as it is preventing freedom of religion and freedom of speech for those who believe in the Council Prayer.</p>
<p>Bob Stewart</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter opposes the inclusion of the Council Prayer and recommends that all reference to the Council prayer is removed from Rule 18A.</p> <p>The submitter states that a large proportion of the population no longer subscribes to any religious belief systems and that religion should have no direct presence in an organisation that is driven by a non-religious purpose.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the response above.</p> <p>It is possible to retain Rule 18A and remove all references to the Council Prayer. In practice this will result in Rule 18A solely enabling Council proceedings to commence with the Acknowledgement of Country.</p> <p>It is a matter for councillors as to whether Rule 18A maintains a reference to the Council Prayer, the Acknowledgement of Country or both.</p>

	<p>The submitter fully supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country as a way of reflecting on the nation’s history.</p>	
<p>Belinda Burke</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the used of the Lords Prayer as Boroondara City Council as it is not inclusive for many in the municipality who are not Christian or have no religious beliefs.</p> <p>The Councillors are elected representative for the people of the municipality and not a Christian Church.</p> <p>The submitter states that the practice is outdated with current work practices.</p>	<p>The wording of the Council Prayer is not included in the Governance Rules and therefore is not within the scope of this review. Officers do not recommend including the current wording of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>Councillors are elected by their community and are familiar with their roles and responsibilities. However, there is nothing that prevents the individual councillors holding a particular faith.</p> <p>As stated above the Council Prayer only pertains to Councillors and guides them on how they will treat each other and approach decision making. The Council Prayer is not said on behalf of the community and is not promoting Boroondara City Council as a religious organisation.</p>
<p>Sandie de Wolf AM</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is in support of the Acknowledgement of Country and states it must become normal practice at all formal Boroondara Events.</p> <p>The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer as it is inappropriate in a multi-cultural society where there is a diversity of</p>	<p>The purpose of the Governance Rules is to detail how Council will conduct Council and Delegated Committee meetings and make decisions. The Rules do not cover the entirety of Council events. This request is therefore outside of the scope of this review.</p> <p>The remainder of this submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	beliefs. The Church should not intrude into the business of Council.	
Meg Boyle	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the practice of starting Council meetings with the Council Prayer. The practice is inappropriate for a diverse, multi-faith and no faith community.</p> <p>Further, saying a prayer excludes and divides people who do not believe in a Christian God.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Brooke P	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter states that that practice of beginning the Council meeting with a Council Prayer is inappropriate considering the municipality is one of the least religious areas in Australia. The use of the prayer excludes many people who do not follow this doctrine.</p> <p>The submitter fully supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Avril Hannah-Jones Minister North Balwyn Uniting Church	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is concerned that the Council Prayer is the only option in a secular organisation which includes people of many faiths and of no faith.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the response above.</p> <p>As stated above, the purpose of the Council Prayer is to ground and support the councillors who recite it. Feedback from the councillors who recite the prayer indicates that the Council prayer fulfils this purpose and is of strong importance to them.</p>

	<p>The submitter is further concerned that the saying of the Council Prayer becomes a pro forma activity without theological content which reduces its meaning.</p> <p>The submitter suggests Councillors wishing to ask for the blessing of God on their deliberations being invited to do so according to the rites of their own faith and rotating from meeting to meeting.</p> <p>The submitter fully supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>The Governance Rules simply state that the Council meeting may commence with the Council Prayer. The wording of the Council Prayer is not prescribed within the Rules. The exact wording of the Council Prayer is a matter for councillors.</p> <p>If Councillors are sympathetic to having multiple prayers that are read on a “rotating” basis officers recommend amending Rule 18A as follows:</p> <p><i>Council meetings may commence with the a Council prayer and the Acknowledgement of Country. It will be at the discretion of the Chairperson at Council meetings to read the a Council prayer and the Acknowledgement of Country, or to invite another councillor or a Council officer to read the Council prayer and/or the Acknowledgement of Country.</i></p>
<p>Linton Lethlean</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules; especially when the format is derived from Christianity.</p> <p>The submitter states that the principle of separation of Religion and State means that the prayer is not needed.</p> <p>However, if a prayer is supported the submitter states it should recognise the multicultural and multi faith nature of the municipality.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Philip Mallis</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter proposes to amend Rule 18A to remove the provision for religious prayer as part of a Council meeting.</p> <p>Reading the Council Prayer works for those Councillors who are religious however it also compels those who are not to participate in a Christian ceremony.</p> <p>Commencing an official proceeding with a religious ceremony could exclude members of the public who are not of that religion.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the response above.</p> <p>The current wording of Rule 18A uses the word ‘may’ this provides the Mayor with discretion as to whether the Council Prayer is read. Current practice is for the Chairperson to invite a Councillor to read the Council Prayer. If a councillor has made the Chairperson aware that they do not wish to read the Council Prayer then they will not be called upon to do so.</p> <p>Further, the current wording of the Governance Rules do not require each and every councillor to recite the prayer. It is up to the individual councillor to determine whether they will join in saying the prayer or even be in the room for the reading of the prayer. It is understood that in state parliament some members choose to remain out of the chamber while the prayer is being read.</p>
<p>Bruce Dunlop</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>Australia is a secular country where religion is a personal choice - a private choice and should not be inserted into the political system.</p> <p>The prayer should not be part of conducting a professional political administration.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Julia Blunden</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>Australia is supposed to be a secular society with complete separation of church and state. The submitter states there is no place for prayers in any public institution.</p> <p>The submitter would be supportive of some other form of words appropriate for the purpose.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the response above.</p> <p>It is a matter for councillors to determine whether they wish to replace the Council Prayer with other forms of words such as an Affirmation.</p>
<p>Brent Masters</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is an outdated practice for a secular society.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Aude Plontz</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>Councils should be conducted on the basis of evidence-based policy, not on prayer, as well as uphold democratic principles. Democratic principles are not compatible with praying as part of decision-making.</p>	<p>The Council Prayer is recited at the commencement of the Council meeting as a way of reminding the councillors of the importance of their role and emphasising that all decisions should be to the benefit of the people of Boroondara.</p> <p>Decisions made by Council are founded by evidence-based officer reports, policy and legislative obligations. The matter is then openly debated by councillors with a motion only carried if the majority are in favour. Council is therefore upholding democratic principles in their decision making.</p>

<p>Kathryn O'Brien</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is not appropriate in a secular council setting.</p> <p>The submitter fully supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Jen Martin</p>	<p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 -56)</u> The submitter is concerned that the time limit allocated to public question time will limit public question time as it is short.</p> <p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is uncomfortable with a religious council and states the requirement for the prayer should be removed entirely or that multiple prayers should be said to cover all religious ideologies.</p>	<p>There is no obligation for Council to include PQT on its agenda. The inclusion of PQT in Council meetings is part of providing an open and accountable governance structure.</p> <p>It is however, not the sole purpose of Council meetings. Council meetings exist to enable councillors to conduct the business of Council. It is a matter for councillors to determine how they wish to prioritise the use of their time in those meetings and to resolve the balance they wish to strike in allowing community participation in such meeting processes.</p> <p>Further, the community can contact councillors outside of Council meetings regarding any matter they believe appropriate.</p> <p>The remainder of this submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Lara McBurnie</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u></p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	The submitter is in support of the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as Christian values do not discriminate.	
Jenny Hodzman	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is concerned with the commencement of Council meetings with the Council prayer as Boroondara is a multicultural city. The submitter feels this practice is out of place and quite insulting to other groups.</p> <p>The submitter does not understand the relevance the Council Prayer plays in the roles of Council.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Marianne Hellyer	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is discriminatory and divisive.</p> <p>Praying is not what the residents and ratepayers elected Councillors to do.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the response above.</p> <p>Once elected a Councillor must do everything reasonably necessary to ensure they perform their role effectively and reasonably. This role is defined in the Local Government Act 2020 and is contained within the Councillor Code of Conduct. There is nothing contained in either the legislation or the Code of Conduct that prevents a Councillor from reciting a prayer.</p>
Niki Giokas and Asherah Connor	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters are opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is inappropriate for Council to impose a particular religion at a formal Council meeting.</p>	This submission has largely been addressed in the response above.

	<p>The submitter states that the payer is unquestionably Christian and this excludes people of other faiths or no faith. Council has an obligation to fairly and equally represent all residents in Boroondara which the wording of the current prayer does not.</p> <p>The submitters propose a move to a pledge similar to the wording used by Mornington Peninsular Shire.</p>	<p>The wording of the Council Prayer is not contained in the Governance Rules and therefore not within the scope of this review. The exact wording of the Council Prayer is a matter for councillors.</p> <p>It is a matter for councillors as to whether they wish to replace the Prayer with a Pledge or to include provision for both.</p>
Bert Furmston	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is disappointed in Council's use of a Christian Prayer and would prefer to see Council use a more secular opening.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
Nicole Lukins	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it goes against the principle of inclusivity.</p> <p>The submitter does not think it is appropriate to seek the blessings of a God nor to seek that God to direct the deliberations of an elected council.</p> <p>The submitter has no issue with the inclusion of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
Madonna Rigoni	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u></p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	The submitter is in support to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules and does not see the practice as divisive.	
Helen Nichol	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is in support to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter states the prayer lifts our attention to the best and thus the practice is for the good of all.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
David Freeman	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as there is no place for any religious connotations within Council business.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Stef	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is inappropriate for a diverse community.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Kate Andrews	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is a workplace that should be inclusive to all.</p> <p>The submitter also states that most councils have already stopped having a prayer.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

<p>Janice Graham</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is highly discriminatory and can be perceived as restricting the membership of Council to Christians.</p> <p>The submitter fully supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Naomi Byrnes</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as she states the practice is exclusionary, potentially harmful to mental health and contrary to safe workplace and community practices.</p> <p>The submitter does not believe a prayer or any other religious activities be included in civic matters.</p>	<p>Council provides a safe workplace for Councillors, members of Council officers and visitors to Council premises in accordance with the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.</p> <p>Further, Rule 18A is not mandatory and is at the discretion of the Chairperson. A councillor, council officer or member of the gallery present at the meeting are not obligated to recite the prayer if they do not want to.</p>
<p>Hewitt Colebatch</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is divisive.</p> <p>The submitter states that the separation of church and state must be absolute. Councillors are able to believe and practice a religion but a particular religion should not be forced on any councillor as part of their working responsibility.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Philip Anderson</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as we live in a secular society and religion has no place in governance.</p> <p>The submitter also questions whether a Acknowledgement of Country is necessary for good governance. Further, the submitter states this practice to be generally tokenistic.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in responses above.</p> <p>Council officers have formed the view the Acknowledgement of Country should be included in the Governance Rules as these Rules describe how Council will conduct its council meetings. The wording of the Acknowledgement of Country is not included in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>It is anticipated that future practice will be dictated by Council's Reconciliation Strategy once adopted.</p>
<p>Sandra Cooper</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as we live in a secular, multicultural and inclusive society.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Hazel Scott</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as Councillors are elected to represent every person; not just the Christians.</p> <p>The submitter suggested that those Councillors who believe in the benefit of the prayer practice this before the Council meeting commences.</p> <p>The submitter fully the inclusion of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Lyn Pope</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is concerned with the commencement of council meetings with the Council Prayer and states that, if this practice is to continue, prayers from all religions and cultures should be included to truly represent the municipality.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Leonie Croatto</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as they reinforce a unified effort to make good decisions.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Alice Anderson</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the practice is unnecessary and non-inclusive of the residents and constituents.</p> <p>The submitter suggested a change to a practice that is more inclusive and represents the municipality as a whole.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Keiron Long</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter states that Councillors are not forced to recite the prayer and that those not of a Faith may abstain.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	Further, the Federal Parliament says a prayer to the almighty God and the Australia Constitution also references almighty god.	
Ken Derrick	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is concerned that a Council meeting commences with a Christian religious prayer.</p> <p>The submitter would prefer the Christian prayer be changed to something more inclusive of all Boroondara residents.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Paul Bender	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter states that the prayer is worded to include people of all faiths, and similar prayers are used in a variety of other non-religious settings; such as the army.</p> <p>Further, the Council Prayer is an appropriate expression of faith and gratitude offered on behalf of those present.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Andres Kabel	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as they are out of synch with the modern mores of the Council's inhabitants.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	<p>The submitter states that the Council prayer is exclusively and explicitly a Christian prayer and is thus exclusive for those of other faiths or no faith.</p> <p>Further, mandating a Christian prayer forces Councillors to adhere to a religious rituals with which they do not agree.</p> <p>The submitters propose a move to a pledge similar to the wording used by Mornington Peninsular Shire.</p>	
<p>Jeremy Lawrence</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as government in Australia should be separated from the Church. Council’s should be conducted on the basis of evidence based policy and not prayer.</p> <p>The submitter questioned whether Council had conducted benchmarking to help determine whether the Governance Rules should include a prayer.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in responses above.</p> <p>Council officers did conduct benchmarking as part of the review of the Governance Rules and established that practices vary among the 79 local councils in the State. Some commence proceedings with a Council Prayer, others with an Affirmation and others only say an Acknowledgement of Country. This illustrates that there is not a singular way to commence proceedings and that it should be a matter for the sitting Council.</p>
<p>Kate McCarthy</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is disappointed that Christian Prayers are being held at the beginning of Council meetings as it does not represent the diversity of the community.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	The submitter states this is not an inclusive practice and the requirement removed from the Governance Rules immediately.	
Gina Morris	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is an outdated practice in secular Australia.</p> <p>If the practice is to continue it should rotate the prayer each meeting to include all religions to be truly inclusive.</p> <p>The submitter fully supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
John Albert	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the practice is exclusionary.</p> <p>The submitter fully supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Prof Carmel McNaught	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is a Christian prayer and thus does not support multiculturalism or allow diverse views on spiritual and religious matters.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	<p>The submitter encourages Council to develop a form of words that is an alternative to the Christian prayer.</p>	
<p>David Taft</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the practice is objectionable on two grounds.</p> <p>First is that the Christian Prayer disenfranchises those of other faiths and those without religion. Secondly it contravenes section 116 of the Australian Constitution.</p> <p>The submitter supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the response above.</p> <p>Section 116 of the Australian Constitution prevents the Commonwealth from making any law for establishing any religion or for imposing any religious observance or preventing the free exercise of any religion. Rule 18A does not contravene any of the above as it is not mandatory and individuals can choose if they recite the prayer or remain in the room when the prayer is read.</p>
<p>Margaret Lanyon and Geoff O'Meara</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters are opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as Australia is a multi-faith nation and it is the role of Councillors to represent all members of the community.</p> <p>Further, it is not the part of the role of a Councillor to advance the glory of god.</p> <p>The submitters support the inclusion of the inclusion of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Ronald Harper</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is concerned about the wording of the prayer and states it might be best if a less Christian version was used.</p> <p>The submitter is also worried that the practice of commencing Council meetings with a prayer may offend those who are not religious.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Philip Healey</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule18A)</u> The submitter is in full support of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules and states no change should be made to the wording of the Council Prayer.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Father Nicholas Georgiou Parish Priest Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule18A)</u> The submitter is in support of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter does not agree that the current Council Prayer is divisive or exclusionary in nature. The submitter feels comforted by the prayer as it is one of peace and good will to others.</p> <p>The submitter also noted that the reading of the prayer is optional and there is no imposition or judgement made on any councillor to read the prayer if they do not want to.</p> <p>From a theological perspective, there is no reference to a particular God in the prayer and</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	<p>as such it allows the reader to or listener to identify whichever God they believe in.</p> <p>Lastly, the use of prayer allows the Councillors time to pause and reflect on why they are there in the Chamber; for the welfare of Boroondara. Removing the Council prayer will remove this opportunity for reflection.</p>	
Graeme Boyles	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule18A)</u> The submitter does not believe Rule 18A of the Governance Rules needs to change as it is already discretionary.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Lauren Pant	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is discriminatory and divisive.</p> <p>The submitter states that religion should not form part of the business of Council.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Claire Miles	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the practice is not appropriate for a workplace.</p> <p>The submitter states the practice would be problematic for future Councillors of non-Christian beliefs and that the practice is distracting Councillors from their important responsibilities such as collecting rubbish,</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the response above.</p> <p>The intent of the Council Prayer is to focus Councillors on their important tasks and the decisions they will be making during the meeting.</p> <p>As per the requirements of the Governance Rules, the agenda of the meeting is set by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, at least 48</p>

	running community events and maintaining council assets.	before the commencement of the meeting thus ensuring that all matters of importance are resolved.
Jane Sewell	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the Christian prayer is inconsistent with the religious views of many residents.</p> <p>The submitter states that religion should not form part of the business of Council.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Louis Schmidt	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule18A)</u> The submitter is in support of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter notes that the practice of commencing proceedings with a prayer is not unique to Boroondara. And that the purpose of the prayer is to provide a moment to reflect on something greater than ourselves. The submitter states the prayer is a respectful and dignified acknowledgement of good and that it represents a wide range of beliefs and traditions.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Jane Hargreaves	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule18A)</u> The submitter is in support of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter notes that the wording of the Australian Constitution makes reference to “the</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	<p> blessings of almighty God” and that the Federal Parliament commences with a prayer to Almighty God.</p>	
<p>Edwin V C Adamson</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter suggests that the prayer be replaced by an affirmation of intention as the current wording of the prayer is redundant.</p> <p>Further, the acknowledgement of country could be integrated into the affirmation. The submitter noted that this would only be the beginning and that Council should also have a treaty.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the responses above.</p> <p>Rule 18A is simply the mechanism which enables the Council meeting to commence with the reading of the Council Prayer and the Acknowledgement of Country. It does not contain the actual wording of either statement. Council officers do not propose to include the wording into the Governance Rules as the exact wording of the Council Prayer is a matter for Councillors.</p>
<p>Tom Lumley</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter states that the current wording of the Acknowledgement of Country is unfit for purpose as it fails to show respect for the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Boroondara.</p> <p>The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the separation of church and state is a fundamental principle of democracy in the country. Further, the practice fails to show respect to those beliefs that have nothing to do with Christianity.</p>	<p>The matters in this submission relating to the Council Prayer have been addressed in the responses above.</p> <p>The ability to ask one (1) question per meeting are intended to strike a balance between enabling the community to engage with Councillors and running an efficient and effecting meeting.</p> <p>Public Question Time is not, and should not, be the primary way of raising matters with Council. The community can contact councillors or the organisation outside of Council meetings regarding any matter they believe appropriate and then received a detailed written response.</p>

	<p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 -56)</u> The submitter is opposed to the restriction of questions to a single question a meeting as it is a regressive step and undemocratic. The submitter also states that a prologue should be permitted for questions even if it is not read out at the meeting.</p>	<p>The inclusion of Public Question Time is part of providing an open and accountable governance structure it is not however it is not the only way to ensure transparent and accountable decisions.</p> <p>Public Question Time is not an opportunity for members of the community to seek to impose their views upon Council through preambles, which are designed to express an opinion rather than to acquire information.</p>
<p>Neil McPhie</p>	<p>The submitter questioned the level of community engagement and Councils communication with the community</p> <p>The submitter states that Division 8 and 9 of the Rules are restrictive and have the potential to limit the ability of residents to deal with Council.</p> <p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it recital is inappropriate for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not allow individual councillors to opt out of the practice; • Australian census data shows support for religions is waning; • Major religions have broken their social contract; • A Christian prayer is not inclusive; • Churches who do not pay rates should not be prioritised above rate payers; 	<p>As per the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy the review of the Governance Act was widely advertised.</p> <p>A public report was presented at the 24 May 2021 Council meeting detailing the proposed changes to the Rules. Advertisements were also place on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Public Notice page on Council's website • The Have you Say section on Councils website; and • A Public Notice was placed in the Age. <p>Division 8 and 9 of the Governance Rules relate to Public Question Time and Petitions and Joint Letters. The submitter has not detailed what aspects of these Divisions be re-drafted.</p> <p>The matters in this submission relating to the Council Prayer have been addressed in the responses above.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents Council as a Christian organisation; • Potential for perceived conflict of interest; and • Councillor's role is to represent their constituents. 	
<p>Penny and Robert Trebilcock</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters are opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as Boroondara is home to people of many different faiths and to people who hold no religious belief.</p> <p>The submitters believe that persisting with the practice shows a lack of respect for ratepayers. The submitter suggests changing to a secular pledge or a period of reflection.</p> <p>The submitters are supportive of the inclusion of the Acknowledgement of Country as it is inclusive.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Craig Morgan</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as there should be a clear separation of the church from secular matters.</p> <p>The submitter also states it is an affront to non-Christian council members and the public.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Marnie Rawlinson</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters are opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and religion should be separated • The majority demographic of the municipality does not identify as Christian. <p>The submitter states an affirmation would be more appropriate.</p> <p>The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Acknowledgement of Country as it is a reminder to all citizens that the Indigenous owners were displaced when the early settlers appropriated their land.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Jackson</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules the practice has no place in any government meeting.</p> <p>The submitter states that the practice is archaic, unfair and that the separation of church and state is very important to a healthy democracy.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Dr Bryony Cosgrove</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as local</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	<p>councils are not religious bodies and are elected to deal with matters pertaining to the business of their local community.</p> <p>The submitter states that the practice discriminates against those who are not of the Christian faith and offends those who have no religion.</p> <p>The submitter states that Council is out of step not only with the community but with society at large.</p>	
<p>Chris Lloyd</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u></p> <p>The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as we live in a secular society where there should be a clear distinction between affairs of state and of religion of any form.</p> <p>The submitter states the practice is both legally problematic and also offensive. Councillors who wish to say the prayer should do so outside of the Chamber.</p> <p>The submitter is supportive for the inclusion of the Acknowledgement of Country and states that this is a more appropriate what to begin Council meetings.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Graham Hubbard</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is out of touch with modern organisational practice and discriminatory.</p> <p>The submitter is supportive for the inclusion of the Acknowledgement of Country in the Governance Rules.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Roy Mahase</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as religion should be kept out of government.</p> <p>The submitter states it is a Christian prayer and is therefore not relatable to the majority of people in the municipality. The submitter states that a secular affirmation could also centre the Councillors on their duty.</p> <p>Simply being a tradition is not justification enough to continue the practice of the prayer.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Tanya Smith</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter objects to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it excludes the councillors and residents who are not Christian.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	<p>The submitter acknowledges that the practice is traditional but notes that many traditions change over time when they no longer fit the mindset of the community.</p> <p>The submitter states that to privilege any particular religious view is divisive in a community that comprises people with many varieties of faith and those of no religious faith.</p>	
<p>Jamie Kay</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it does not represent the municipality.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Miron Mizrahi</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter states that the Council is a secular institution that is governed by laws and elected by residents. By including a Christian prayer in Council meetings is turning the council into a Christian institution.</p> <p>The submitter states that Faith is a personal matter and that, because council meetings are a public forum, they should not favour one personal matter over anything one.</p> <p>The submitter concludes by stating that council can become an open and inclusive organisation</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	where everyone is equal by removing the practice of saying the prayer.	
Jo Sommerville	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter objects to the inclusion of the Council prayer in the Governance Rules as it is specifically a Christian Prayer and therefore directly excludes the councillors and residents of Boroondara who are not Christian.</p> <p>The submitter acknowledges the practice is a tradition but states it is no longer relevant or reflective of the whole community.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Kate and Andrew Prest	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters are opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is inappropriate in a diverse multicultural community and forcing the Christian faith on others.</p> <p>The submitters suggest starting the proceedings with a values moment or a safety moment or even just pausing for a minutes to reflect on what is to come in the meeting.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Suzzane Beck	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules and states that 18A should be kept in its entirety.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	The submitter is not offended by the wording and states that the prayer is inclusive as numerous religions reference "God".	
Dora Designs	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules and states that the little tradition and faith left in the community should be maintained.</p> <p>The submitter states that council should not "fix something that isn't broken".</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Alexis Clarke	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the practice makes them deeply uncomfortable and not welcome at meetings.</p> <p>The submitter states that many Australians are of faiths other than Christian or none and that there is a legislated separation of church and State. Further, the role of council is to represent residents not themselves.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Brendan Liveris	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules for the two following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The practice of the prayer on the other hand is overtly exclusionary to those who are not Christian. 	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor’s role is to represent the views of the community and it is dangerous to mix church and state. 	
Graeme Lindenmayer	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as religious rights and freedoms should give all religions, including agnosticism equal status.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
EJ Wise	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is outdated and does not reflect modern Australian values.</p> <p>The submitter states that the current practice deliberately excludes members of the community who are not Christian.</p> <p>The submitter states that all reference to the prayer should be removed from Rule 18A so that it only requires the Welcome to Country to commence proceedings. Further, the wording “may” should be replaced with “will” so it is no longer discretionary to say the Welcome to Country.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Lindsay Gordon	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	<p>not acceptable for people of differing religions or no religion. Therefore the reading of a prayer can be a division practice.</p> <p>The submitter states that if a person wishes to commence the meeting with a prayer they can do so silently or outside of the Chamber.</p> <p>The submitter is supportive of the practice to include an Acknowledgement of Country in the Governance Rules.</p>	
<p>Sam Lewis</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as there should not be a religious element to a business environment. The submitter states that the Rule 18A should be amended so that it is no longer discretionary to commence the proceedings with an Acknowledgement of Country.</p> <p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 -56)</u> The submitter is opposed to the wording of sub-Rule 54.1 which permits Council to resolve to forgo public question time.</p> <p>The submitter is concerned with sub-Rule 55.1.13 as it may be misused by Council to prevent contentious questions from being debated.</p>	<p>The matters in this submission relating to the Council Prayer have been addressed in the responses above.</p> <p>There is no obligation for Council to include Public Question Time on its agenda. Sub-rule 54.1 creates the obligation to include a Public Question Time at each Council meeting.</p> <p>Council meetings exist to enable councillors to conduct the business of Council. It is a matter for councillors to determine how they wish to prioritise the use of their time in those meetings and to resolve the balance they wish to strike in allowing community participation in such meeting processes.</p> <p>The intent of sub-rule 55.1.3 is to protect Councillors, council officers and members of the community from defamatory and abusive comments. It is not enough for a question to be contentious for this sub-rule to apply.</p>

<p>Tony Krins</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is potentially divisive and recommends it be replaced with a municipal pledge.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Keith Grove</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is concerned with the wording of the Council Prayer and states it should be a denomination-neutral and acknowledges our first peoples. The submitter strongly encourages Council to develop a secular and inclusive statement to open Council meetings.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Anthony Dalton</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules religious ceremonies should not be part of Council business.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Daniel Kabel</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is exclusively and explicitly a Christian prayer and therefore excludes people of other faith or no faith. The submitter states that the practice is endorsing a Christian view and may prevent</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	<p>people of other faiths or no faith from wishing to become a Councillor which is discriminatory.</p> <p>The submitter states that the practice would not be able to occur in private business as it is forcing employees to recite a prayer.</p> <p>The submitter suggests the use of a pledge instead.</p>	
<p>Anthony Sorenson</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is inappropriate.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Julian Smith</p>	<p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 -56)</u> The submitter is concerned with the 15 minute limitation on public question time.</p> <p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as religious practices should not be included in the formal order of business or as part of a Council meeting.</p> <p>The submitter states that practice excludes a large portion of the community and suggests that Councillors can pray either prior or following the meeting.</p>	<p>The practice of limiting the duration of public question time is one that is not unique to Boroondara City Council; with many other Councils throughout Victoria utilising this practice.</p> <p>Further, the time allocation may be extended by Council resolution if they deem it required.</p> <p>The matters in this submission relating to the Council Prayer have been addressed in the responses above.</p>

	The submitter supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country in the Governance Rules.	
Pieter	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it imposes religious beliefs on people and excludes those that do not believe the same faith.</p> <p>The submitter suggests an introduction which includes people or other beliefs and non-believers.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Kurt Liffman	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter has concerns relating to the inclusion of a Council prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter provided a graph which shows that the less religious a country is the more prosperous it is. The submitter then stated that religion as part of tolerant democracy is not appropriate.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Tammy Eisler	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as religion has no place in Council business.</p> <p>The submitter states that if a councillor wishes to pray they could do so privately.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

<p>Andrew Price</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is an important part of our culture and history.</p> <p>The submitter further states that the recognition of prayer in our national and state Parliaments and in times of community need has long been an Australian tradition.</p> <p>The submitter states that those councillors who do not personally believe in God can use the time for reflection.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>David and Brenda Skelton</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters state that the discretion afforded to the Chairperson with the current wording is not good enough and that the Rule should be removed.</p> <p><u>Casting Vote (Rule 69)</u> The submitters do not support the use of a casting vote and state the Rule should be amended to rely on a simple majority.</p> <p><u>Meetings Conducted Remotely (Rule 85)</u> The submitters state that all meetings should be undertaken electronically in addition to physical attendance when permitted.</p>	<p>The matters in this submission relating to the Council Prayer have been addressed in the responses above.</p> <p>The casting vote is a legislative requirement of the Local Government Act 2020. Section 61(5)(e) states that if the number of votes in favour of the question is half the number of Councillors present at the meeting at the time the vote is taken, the chairperson has a second vote. This aligns with Governance Rule 69.</p> <p>When permitted by State Government Covid-19 restrictions all Council meetings are conducted physically in the Council Chamber. They are also live streamed on Council's website.</p>

<p>Glennys Jones</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is inappropriate to incorporate a prayer into every meeting.</p> <p>The submitter states that by insisting all councillors and council officers participate and stand whilst it is read borders on bullying and harassment. Further, the practice is potentially discriminating against those who have a different or no faith.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Jessica Downing</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is concerned that council meetings may be commenced with a prayer at the discretion of the chairperson and believes that this practice should stop.</p> <p>The submitter states that the separation of church and state are vital to our democracy.</p> <p>The submitter is disappointed that the Acknowledgement of Country is discretionary and states it should not be optional.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Lynn Frakes</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter states that Council should abandon the Council Prayer and replace it with</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	<p>an affirmation which reminds councillors of their responsibility to act in the interests of residents.</p> <p>The submitter states that the community has diverse religious and non-religious beliefs and the Council prayer does not reflect this. Further, the separation of Church and State is blurred by the practice.</p>	
<p>Joy Mettam</p>	<p><u>Governance Framework (Chapter 1)</u> The submitter states that the framework represents the minimum necessary to be compliant with the requirements of the LGA 2020 and an expanded statement would provide a strong foundation of good governance.</p> <p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 - 56)</u> The submitter states that the proposed changes appear to be driven by a desire to control the process and make it more manageable rather than an attempt to facilitate scrutiny and increase accountability.</p> <p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the practice of standing for the prayer as it does not reflect her personal beliefs.</p> <p>The submitter suggests opening the proceedings with either an affirmation, a meditation or a moment of silence.</p>	<p>Good governance is a core concept in the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act). The Act sets a framework which is underpinned by the overarching governance principles and a set of supporting governance principles. These principles include among other things Council must act lawfully, give priority to the best outcomes for the municipal community, engage the municipal community in strategic planning, ensure ongoing financial viability of the Council and ensure the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information.</p> <p>These governance principles and supporting governance principles have been included in Chapter 1 of the Governance Rules. As noted in the Chapter the Governance Framework also consists of policies, rules and strategic plans which are required to be adopted under the Act.</p> <p>The matters in this submission relating to the Public Question Time have been addressed in the responses above.</p>

	The submitter is supportive of the Acknowledgement of Country.	The requirement for Councillors, council officers and members of the public to stand for the Council Prayer is not included in the Governance Rules and is instead current practice. The practice of standing for the Council Prayer is a matter for Councillors to determine.
Russell Gray	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it expresses deep hope and confidence in public life for the common good.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Michael O'Brien	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is inappropriate.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Athena Katopodis	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as there needs to be a clear division between religion and State at every level of government. Residents should not feel excluded at Council meetings.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
James Saunders	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is concerned about an enforced Christian prayer at Council meetings as the community is diverse and made up of different faiths.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	The submitter states that one religion over all others is a very divisive practice and would not make them feel welcome at a meeting.	
Davina Lippmann	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as actions should be grounded, visible and in the best interests of Boroondara whether they trust in a god or not.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Paul Tonson	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter states that the Governance Rules should be changed to permit an affirmation which is meaningful to both secular and religious people.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Lighter Footprints	<u>Timing and Distribution of Agenda Papers</u> The submitters are supportive of Council's current policy of distributing agenda papers 10 days before the day of the meeting. <u>Passing Motions in Bulk (Rule 43 - Procedural motion 15)</u> The submitters state that the passing of motions in bulk at Council meetings should be the exception rather than the rule. <u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 -56)</u> The submitters are opposed to the current Rules relating to Public Question time as they are poor practice.	The use of en bloc motions is a matter for Council to determine on a case by case basis at each meeting. En bloc motions are used to facilitate the transaction of business at a meeting. An en bloc motion must be carried by the majority of councillors present at the meeting and items cannot be moved en bloc unless this occurs. The current practice is that en bloc motions are not used where an individual councillor has a question regarding a specific item or a desire to discuss it. Where 11 councillors are satisfied the matter does not require any discussion is it inefficient use of councillor time to be discussing an item for the sake of window dressing.

	<p>The submitters state that public question time aids in accountability, enhances transparency and is an essential facilitator of community engagement.</p> <p><u>Governance Framework (Chapter 1)</u> The submitters would appreciate a more comprehensive discussion of relevant values and principles.</p>	<p>The Governance Rules specify an en bloc motion is prohibited if items relate to planning matters or involve statutory third party rights.</p> <p>The remainder of the submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
Conor Robinson	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as there should be separation of church and state.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
Dr Jennifer Williams	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter strongly supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice of saying the prayer is part of our heritage and the Federal Parliament retains its opening prayer • The prayer is broad, respectful and not exclusive • Allows those present time to reflect on a higher power and/or common good of the community 	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
Nicole Boey	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the separation of church and state are vital to</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	<p>democracy and the seeping of personal religious expression into public governance should not be allowed.</p> <p>The submitter is concerned that the Acknowledgement of Country is discretionary and believes it should not be optional.</p>	
Muriel Porter	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supportive of the use of the word “may in Rule 18A of the Governance Rules as it provides flexibility and discretion.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above
Rationalist Society of Australia	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be freedom to practice one’s faith or belief; • There should be equality between religious and non-religious worldviews; • Separation between institutions of religion and the institutions of the state; • Council supposed to represent and serve all members of the community which is diverse. 	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
David Eames-Mayer	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as there are many who no longer have a religion and many who follow faiths other than Christianity.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

<p>Dr Ann L Bull</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the Lords Prayer represents only one group of believers in the community.</p> <p>The submitter states that there should be a separation of Church and State and praying at a Council meeting is outdated and not inclusive.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Fabian</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as Australia has a secular government and thus decisions should not be based on religious beliefs.</p> <p>The submitter states that Council should instead say a humanist affirmation of service.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Regina Hoepfner</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is a useless practise.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Helen Theodore</p>	<p><u>Governance Rules (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is a community friendly prayer spoken in truth and hope for a better future.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above</p>

<p>Michael Layland</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supportive of the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules and does not want the practice to stop.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above</p>
<p>Vicki Hatfield</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it no longer represents the diverse community.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Guy Morton</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is important to keep religion our of government.</p> <p>The submitter states that it is a Christian prayer and therefore does not represent the majority of the community, Further an affirmation could serve the same purpose as a prayer.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Greg Ball</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is seen as irrelevant, exclusionary, or worse to some members of society.</p> <p>The submitter states that alternatives such as a moment of silence, an affirmation or a statement of integrity should be considered.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	The submitter states that the Acknowledgement of Country should be specific and that Council's is too general.	
Colin Jevons	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it not a modern practice.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Catherine Layland	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter strongly supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.	This submission has been addressed in responses above
Catherine Diggins	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter strongly supports the protection and retention of the Council Prayer. The submitter deeply believes that the overwhelming majority of residents would and do support a spiritual acknowledgment.	This submission has been addressed in responses above
Graham Ross	<u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter states that Council meetings should commence with an Acknowledgement of Country as it is a reminder for the whole community of the history of the land. The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as Boroondraa City Council is a secular institution governed by laws and elected by residents.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	The submitter states that a prayer is not conducted at any other workplace and certainly not in the private sector.	
Daniel Aylward	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.	This submission has been addressed in responses above
Marcus Shirrefs	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as there should be a separation of religion and local government. The submitter suggests commencing with a pledge or promise instead.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Hania Trzaskowski	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules and states that a more inclusive approach be adopted. The submitter states that religion does not belong in politics and governance and that there are other ways Councillors can centre themselves. The submitter states that Council admits that the legality of the prayer is questionable.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

<p>Boroondara Reconciliation Network</p>	<p><u>Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters state that the current wording is not fit for purpose and should be improved as a result of further stakeholder consultation.</p> <p>The submitters have requested that the Acknowledgement of Country be read before the prayer and that all present are asked to stand.</p>	<p>The wording of the Acknowledgement of Country is not included in the Governance Rules and is as such not part of the community consultation. It is not recommended to include the wording of the Acknowledgement of Country into the Governance Rules.</p> <p>Officers believe that this matter is best dealt with in Council’s Reconciliation Strategy and will ensure that Council practices will align with this strategy once adopted.</p> <p>The order in which the Council Prayer and the Acknowledgement of Country is read is not included in the Governance Rules and is at the discretion of the Chairperson. So too is the practice of standing and/ or sitting when the Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country is being read. It is not recommended to prescribe such practices in the Governance Rules so they can easily adapt to the views of the Council and Chairperson for whom these rules exist.</p>
<p>Victor Hudon</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter rejects any move to cease using the Council Prayer as it reflects the values we hold dear which have kept us strong over many years.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Kate Shirrefs</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the government should not include religious prayer.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Judy Heathcote</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic practice and Federal Parliament still retains the practice • The prayer is broad, respectful, dignified and not exclusive • Allows reflection n a higher power or the common good of our community • Many turn to prayer at a time of crisis and currently in a time of crisis. 	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Heather Turner</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter strongly supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Virginia Brookes</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules. The submitter states that the community is one of many denominations and that prayer encompasses them all.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Lindsay Jacombs</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is advantageous and appropriate in troubled times.</p> <p>The submitter states that those who do not wish to pray do not have to.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

Kay Horgan	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules due to the importance of prayer and the significance of the ritual.</p> <p>The submitter states that it is a help ground and remind councillors of their purpose and to act in the best interests of Boroondara residents.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Chris and Sandra Alexander	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters support the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it offers a positive message for the community and as a non-denominational prayer it does not discriminate.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Jennifer Diggins	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
William Diggins	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Colin Pettigrew	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter objects to the attempt to scrap the Council Prayer without majority consensus.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Jason Asselin	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	<p>does not align with a council who values inclusion and diversity.</p> <p>The submitter states that the inclusion of a prayer that is specific to a particular faith seems inappropriate and the practice is legally questionable.</p>	
Keith Beamish	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is a hypocritical process.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
ACF Community Boroondara	<p><u>Timing and Distribution of Agenda Papers</u> The submitters are supportive of Council's current policy of distributing agenda papers 10 days before the day of the meeting.</p> <p><u>Passing Motions in Bulk</u> The submitters state that the passing of motions in bulk at Council meetings should be the exception rather than the rule.</p> <p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 -56)</u> The submitters are opposed to the current Rules relating to Public Question time as they are poor practice.</p> <p>The submitters state that public question time aids in accountability, enhances transparency and is an essential facilitator of community engagement.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the responses above.</p> <p>Sub-Rule 76.2 simply states that the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the minutes of a Council meeting are published on Council's website. No minimum time has been included in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>Current practice is for the past 2 years to be available on the website.</p> <p>It is a matter for Councillors to determine if a minimum period of time for retention of recordings should be included in the Governance Rules.</p>

	<p><u>Archiving of Council Meeting Minutes and Agenda Papers</u> The submitter states that agendas and minutes of Council meetings should be accessible on the website for longer than 2 years.</p> <p><u>Governance Framework (Chapter 1)</u> The submitters would appreciate a more comprehensive discussion of relevant values and principles.</p>	
Gwen Stephen	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Nigel Trinca	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Rosemary Hudson	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Diarmid Davine	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is sufficiently general to be acceptable to many and expresses a very worthy sentiment.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Peter Campbell	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u></p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	<p>The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as separation between church and government is important. Further, the current prayer is for a monotheistic god which is not inclusive of several other religions.</p> <p>The submitter is supportive of the Acknowledgement of Country to show respect for the Aboriginal Traditional Owners of the land where the meetings are held.</p>	
Anna Malmgren	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as all three levels of government are meant to be secular. Further, any prayer, whether non-denominational or not, imposes a religious aspect on the gathering of councillors and constituents.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Rob Turner	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Liz Burton	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the principles of fairness, equity and concern for the common good are informed by Christian values.</p>	<p>This submission has largely been addressed in the responses above.</p> <p>The intent of the “10 working days before” is to align the requirements of public question time with Boroondara’s Customer Service Charter. The Charter states that a</p>

	<p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 -56)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the 15 minutes time limit for public question time as public question time is an essential component of engagement with the community on matters of concern.</p> <p>The submitter also opposes the limit of one (1) question by an individual at a Council meeting.</p> <p>The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the words “10 working days before” as some revised agendas are circulated after this time.</p> <p><u>Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest (Chapter 5)</u> The submitter states that these provisions are weak and that provisions need to be included relating to disclosure of discussions and/or incentives being provided.</p>	<p>response should be provided to a written question no later than 10 working days after it is received.</p> <p>The proposed change to the Governance Rules means that if the organisation fails to provide a response within the 10 working days the question may still be asked at the Council meeting. The current wording does not allow this as it states a response must have been received before the question may be asked.</p> <p>Previously, for a question to have been allowed it had to either be relating to a matter of the agenda OR have previously been put in writing to a Councillor or Council officer and received a response.</p> <p>The contents of Chapter 5 complies with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.</p>
<p>Greg Price</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as religion is unrelated to council business and it is inappropriate for it to be part of council practice or procedures.</p> <p>The submitter states that the provisions are unintentionally divisive but also discriminatory because they force the religious beliefs of some onto others, and essentially coerces people to participate.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	The submitter states that the inclusion of the current prayer sets a tone that council decision making could be guided or influenced by religious beliefs.	
Joanna Elliot	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as Boroondara is largely a Christian Community and the Governance Rules should reflect the majority of residents.</p> <p>The submitter states that the there was discussion about dropping the prayer at the recent council elections.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
M MM	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it means well to everyone in these has and difficult times.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Anne and Ken Hanlon	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Paul F Dipnall	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is a positive message for the community.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

<p>John McRae</p>	<p><u>Governance Rules (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter states that the prayer is no longer needed prior to each council meeting.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Laura Adamson</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules. The submitter is supportive of the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Joanna Young</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as religion has no place in government and is unnecessary and inappropriate.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Charlotte Sinfield</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is important and we are a Christian Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Brendan Black</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter opposes the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the demographics of Boroondara are changing and becoming less religious. The submitter states that the imposition of a religious prayer during a council meeting is</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	<p>divisive and unnecessary. It is also a blatant attempt to bring religion into public life.</p> <p>Further, maintaining tradition is not a sufficient justification to continue with a practice.</p>	
<p>Ian Hundley</p>	<p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 - 56)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of a time limit on public question time and states it should be abandoned as public question time rarely exceeds this duration currently.</p> <p>The submitter proposes that when a public question does not receive a response in the chamber and instead is responded to in writing that these responses should be included on the public record.</p> <p>The submitter is opposed to the limit of one (1) question per person at a Council meeting as it is an unreasonable impost.</p> <p>The submitter is supportive of the increase in word limit to 100 words but would prefer 150 and states questions should be able to contain a preamble.</p> <p>The submitter states that the range of matters upon which a question may be disallowed is too great and should be reviewed.</p>	<p>The majority of submission relating to public question time has been addressed in responses above.</p> <p>No reason is seen to treat a response to a question asked in a Council meeting as having any more importance or requiring a different process and level of exposure to any question asked of a councillor or Council staff member through the other communication channels used by the vast majority of community members.</p> <p>The submitter has not included any detail on which aspect of Rule 55 they believe could be removed. The intent of Rule 55 is to disallow questions which may harm or defame as well as protect personal and confidential information held by Council.</p> <p>The current custom and practice is agenda papers are available on the Council website ten days in advance of the meeting. Of course, this is not always possible and supplementary items may be added to the agenda. Where this occurs, a revised agenda (comprising a revised order of business and the additional officer report) are circulated and posted to the Council website typically with three days' notice. Therefore, current practice is for the agendas of a meeting to be uploaded</p>

	<p>The submitter is opposed to the limitations placed on public question time under sub-Rule 55.2 and that this sub-Rule should be removed from the Governance Rules.</p> <p><u>Notice of Meetings and Delivery of Agendas (Division 1)</u> The submitter states that agendas should be lodged on the Council website no later than they are received by Councillors.</p> <p><u>Petitions and Joint Letters (Rule 57)</u> The submitter states that a contact person for the petition or joint letter be included in minutes to assist wider community contact with petitioners on matters of mutual concern or interest.</p> <p><u>Minutes (Rule 76)</u> The submitter states that the minutes should record the votes of all participating councillors, including those who abstain from voting.</p> <p><u>Recording of Proceedings (Rule 77)</u> The submitter states that all recordings of Council proceedings should be mandated in the Governance Rules and they should be on the Council website for no less than 10 years.</p>	<p>onto the website the same day that Councillors receive their copies.</p> <p>Council officers do not support the recommendation that a contact person be included in the official minutes of a meeting. Firstly, the petitions and joint letter are addressed to Council or Councillors. This is because the signatories wish to bring a particular matter to the attention of Council. Secondly, Council is bound by the requirements of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and need to ensure disclosure of personal information complies with all Information Privacy Principles. Lastly, it is not the role of Council to facilitate a community connections in this instance.</p> <p>The Governance Rules already contain the mechanism for recording the votes of all participating Councillors. Rule 71 permits a Councillor to call for a division after the question is put to a meeting and before the next item of business has commenced. If a Division has been requested the Chairperson must state, and the CEO or any authorised officer must then record in the minutes, the names of Councillors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting in the affirmative; • Voting in the negative; and if required • Abstaining from voting. <p>Rule 77 enables the proceedings of a Council meeting to be recorded. It is then Council’s Public Transparency Policy that includes provisions requiring for the live streaming and recording of Council and Delegated Committee meetings.</p>
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<p>Leigh Naughton</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter states that the Acknowledgement of Country should be read first and that people should be asked to sit for both or remain seated for both.</p> <p>The submitter states that the wording of the Acknowledgement of Country is inadequate and should be improved.</p> <p>The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is important to keep religion out of Government. The submitter states that the intent of the Council Prayer could be achieved through a secular ceremony.</p> <p>Further it is a Christian Prayer which does not represent the majority of people in Boroondara</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	<p>and not inclusive of the community. And tradition is not in itself a good argument for continuing a practice.</p> <p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 - 56)</u> The submitter is opposed to the proposed changes to public question time as in practice it will require an individual to attend more meetings to ask the total of 11 questions as it prevents the asking of two (2) questions per meeting.</p> <p>The submitter states that public question time is an important means of public accountability because the answers provided are in the public domain rather than answers to individuals.</p> <p>The submitter is opposed to the 15 minutes time limit placed on public question time as the practice rarely exceeds this currently.</p> <p>The submitter also states that a preamble and contextual information should be permitted on the form but does not need to be read out or included in the minutes.</p> <p><u>Recording of Proceedings (Rule 77)</u> The live streaming or recording of proceedings should continue even after COVID-19 and should be incorporated into the Governance Rules.</p>	
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<p>Anonymous</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it excludes anyone who is not religious and is this contrary to the principles of diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>The submitter states that the practice of saying a prayer is inconsistent with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities as it endorses a particular belief.</p> <p>The submitter states that reciting a prayer is something that should be done in someone’s own private time.</p> <p>The submitter is supportive of the Acknowledgement of Country as the geographical location is fundamental common ground that everyone in Boroondara shares and it is important to recognise the traditional owners.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Patrick James Croix-Kuah</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter states that the removal of the Council Prayer at Council meetings isn’t progress and does not do anything to benefit the people of Boroondara.</p> <p>The submitter states that the prayer should not cause offence to non-Christians as the clear intent and wording of the prayer is to guide the</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	<p>focus of councillors in serving the public interest and wellbeing of the people of Boroondara.</p>	
<p>Benjamin Chesler</p>	<p><u>Recording of Proceedings (Rule 77)</u> The submitter welcomes the adoption of live-streaming, recording and uploading Council and Committee Meetings as it has made meetings more accessible and provided insight into Council’s decision making process. The submitter would like Rule 77 of the Governance Rules to be amended to mandate that all public meetings are live-streamed and recorded and uploaded onto the Council website.</p> <p><u>Form and Availability of Minutes (Rule 76)</u> The submitter holds concerns about the archiving of council minutes and recordings and notes that there is currently no minimum period included in the Governance Rules. The submitter recommends minutes and recordings remaining on the website for a period of 10 years.</p> <p><u>Public Question Time (Rule 54 - 56)</u> The submitter states that the current limitations on public question time are too restrictive and recommends the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in number of questions per person per meeting; • No changes to 54.3.4 	<p>The aspects of the submission relating to the recording or proceedings and form and availability of minutes have been addressed in responses above.</p> <p>The number of questions permitted to be asked per person has been responded to above.</p> <p>Officers note that the proposed changes to Sub-Rule 54.3.4 are not removing any “rights of the citizens” and that the intent of the Rule has not changed. The proposed changes are designed to simplify the Sub-Rule by using plain English instead of legalistic phrases. In practice if a submitter requires assistance with submitting a question Council officers will assist them.</p> <p>Public Question Time is not included on the agenda of Delegated Committee meetings as all individuals already have the right to make a submission about an agenda item at these meetings. This provides the public with an opportunity to directly engage with their elected representatives prior to a decision being made.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions to be permitted at an Urban Planning and Services Delegated Committee meeting. 	
Harry Sinfield	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is important.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
David McDonald	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the residents have been supportive of the practice which has existed for many generation.</p> <p>The submitter states that as a community they expect to and practice cooperation with many diverse residents to create a working community. They acknowledge that people have personal opinions but a community should live with the general consensus.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Kevin Bain	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the practice is divisive and anachronistic.</p> <p>The submitter states that If a ceremonial replacement is considered necessary, a thoughtful preamble which recognises the solemnity and import of Council meetings.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

<p>Jessica Enders</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter is opposed to the inclusion of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • denies the existence of a significant proportion of residents; • sends the message that Council does not care about the beliefs and practices of a significant proportion of residents; and • means our Council is falling behind the majority of other Victorian councils. <p>The submitter is supportive of the inclusion of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>David & Ruth Vernon</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is broad, respectful, dignified and not exclusive. Further, it allows a much needed pause for reflection.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Rev Graeme Prentice</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter strongly supports the retention of the prayer at Council meetings as it is broad, respectful, dignified and not exclusive. The prayer also allows a pause for reflection and sets the tone for important and often emotionally fraught discussion that follows.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

<p>Anna C</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Paul Dean</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it seeks guidance and hope for us all.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Mary Drost</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is a long standing custom at the municipality and Australia is still a Christian Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Liz and James Chen</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer and Acknowledgement of Country (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as there is a strong Christian tradition in the Boroondara community.</p> <p>The submitter states that the duration of the prayer is short and the words are effectively generic in nature.</p> <p>The submitter supports the retention of the Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Michael Brown</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter strongly supports the retention of the prayer at Council meetings as it is broad,</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

	respectful, dignified and not exclusive. The prayer also allows a pause for reflection.	
Colin and Rhonda Newberry	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter strongly supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Jenny Kemp	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter strongly supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules. The submitter noted that the old City of Camberwell provided many opportunities to grow and nurture her faith.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Peter Tierney	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter does not understand a proposed decision to remove the spiritual prayer from Council meetings. The submitter states that in these difficult times we need all the help we can get from whatever source.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Franklin Rosenfeldt	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter was disappointed to see the push to remove the prayer from Council meetings and states that we must be a tolerant society.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

<p style="text-align: center;">The following submissions were received after close of Community Engagement on 25 June 2021</p>		
<p>Marie Walsh</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter states that if Council were to eliminate or replace the Council Prayer that a consensus of opinion must be sought from every rate payer first.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Christopher Morgan</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules.</p> <p>The submitter states that taking the time to acknowledge the existence of a greater power can modify arrogance and selfishness and also provide an altruistic direction.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>
<p>Rhiannon Jeffcott and Gaurav Datt</p>	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitters state that the Council Prayer appeals an “almighty god” and the “glory” of god and is therefore a Christian Prayer.</p> <p>Further, the Council Chamber is not a place of religious worship and that an alternate could be formulated that focuses on working for the greater good instead.</p>	<p>This submission has been addressed in responses above.</p>

Ash Sinfield	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is important.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Julia Chamberlin	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as a prayer in unison has the power to unite members working together for the benefit of residents.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Timothy Ginnane	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as the practice is contestant with the procedure of the Australian Parliament and reflects the majority of residents of Boroondara.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Esther Yenson	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter would prefer if the Council Prayer could remain in practice.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Dr Sr Kathleen Williams	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is a tradition that is worth keeping. Further, prayer can do no harm and it just might do some good.	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Joan Burnside	<u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	<p>prayer is important not only for believes but for the whole of society to stop and reflect.</p> <p>The submitter states that this is particular important prior to meetings whereby decisions to be made will impact on the whole of society.</p>	
Cheryl Burnside	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter expresses their grave disappointment at the proposal to remove the opening prayer at Council meetings.</p> <p>The submitter states that prayer in any faith serves a positive influence allowing all people to reflect and gather thoughts and perhaps even assist us in remembering what we should be grateful for in our wonderful world.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Annamaria Davine	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter supports the retention of the Council Prayer in the Governance Rules as it is sufficiently general to be acceptable to many.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Gabe Lui	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter begs Council not to delete or change the wordings of the Council opening prayer and states they have never been offended by it.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.
Fr. John Madden P.P	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter believes that the prayer has always been an important aspect and tradition of</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.

	<p>the Council and states it would be disappointing if prayer were removed as most people in the area are people of faith.</p> <p>The submitter states that prayer represents our traditions, values, morals and beliefs and is an influence of good.</p>	
Barbara van Ernst	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule 18A)</u> The submitter stated that if the Council were to consider itself a Board of Directors then the prayer would seem inappropriate and that major corporations would not include a prayer for guidance.</p> <p>The submitter urges the Council to move away from the emotional argument and ask themselves why there is a need for a prayer.</p>	The Council is not a Board of Directors and would be more akin to State and Federal Parliament. As stated above both State and Federal Parliament commence proceedings with a prayer.
Edwin Adamson (2 nd submission)	<p><u>Council Prayer (Rule18A)</u> The submitter states that the current prayer is a Christian beseeching prayer which is weak and out of date. Further, it lacks a statement of commitment by Councillors and lacking in inclusiveness.</p> <p>The submitter again states that an affirmation would be more suitable and inclusive.</p>	This submission has been addressed in responses above.