

[REDACTED]

From: Moira Deeming
Sent: Friday, 20 May 2022 10:01 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Interesting

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks- that's very helpful. As I've alluded to before, unfortunately I found that it was counterproductive to even try to bring any issues up with the previous CEO and also that when I asked officers instead, I was simply ignored (but that was probably due to the CEO, not the officers). So in the end, there were some areas where I didn't know when I had or had not overstepped a boundary or if so, even how or in what way.

Any MCC issue that I tried to deal with quietly was ignored or misrepresented and I had nobody to advise me that I felt would give me a fair hearing once my reputation had been tarnished within the organisation.

My instinct is to always query everything with the executive team first. I would like to have a clear picture of the ideal process from your perspective, as possibly contrary to rumour, I am actually focused on good and fair outcomes.

When I asked to see the raw data Monday night and was told I would see it once I'd endorsed and could look it up on the website, I was so surprised. I think it's unfair to expect me to endorse something that I haven't actually seen with my own eyes, I think residents would expect this of me since there will be policy implications from it and yet I found that the presenting staff member seemed very terse with me for asking. Other Councillors noticed it too, but assured me I had done nothing wrong.

And since we are on this difficult topic of dealing with things wisely, I've had yet another Muslim resident (not a staff member) complain to me about the rainbow pins and signature blocks our staff wear and attach to their email signatures. I asked them to explain a little further and they said they find it passive aggressive and condemning and don't know why it's on the uniform- she said 'where is the flag showing support to Muslims and our beliefs' and 'why would we ask these people for help when they look down on us?'

And I've had a staff member tell me that they've kept on receiving invitations to political events in their work emails even though they're supposed to be on a calendar now? I didn't have time to ask which event.

I just really don't think this issue is going away and I never did receive an answer from [REDACTED] about why he allows one flag that is not the official Australian set of flags, but no others. I can list several highly controversial flags that would fit under the list of 'vulnerable minority groups' in legislation that I am sure we don't want on our staff lanyards or staff email signatures.

Just so you have some context as for why people would even bring this up with me about MCC, I have contact with the Muslim and LGB community through my other work, especially my work involved in restoring sex based rights in law. All of these groups are working- not to oppress trans identified people- but so that trans people can be catered to as a unique and valuable cohort worthy of protection and support, in addition to biological women and girls (and men and boys) being catered to as unique and valuable sex-based cohorts. Through that work I have also formed partnerships with many ethnic minorities, the LGB community and even some trans identifying people who, like me, are only looking for some safety and inclusion- not the eradication of sex based rights or forced pronoun use etc.

In terms of MCC, it is truly on my heart that we eschew all these issues by trying to be as neutral as possible in service delivery across the board (and when we provide specifically LGBTQI+ services, that of course would be perfectly reasonable to put those flags up, just like at Christmas we have Christmas trees and signs all over the place).

So I guess I'm asking you about a way forward there, because even though you know of one staff member that has contacted me, there are others who also feel that our organisation has a culture of relentless 'Labor and Greens' politicisation (and actually, they are all Labor members- they were at pains to tell me). I have been unsuccessful in getting them to bring it up with you and don't know exactly which incidents they are referring to. I told them I couldn't do much without evidence and neither could you.

For better or worse, it seems that I have become the person to go to with these complaints due to my bringing it up with [REDACTED] last time and the furore that erupted then, plus my other work in the community.

I have always been so careful as a teacher never to let my students know which way I vote, or to wear any religious items or to push my Christian beliefs in class (I only ever answered direct questions). I took pride in the fact that until I ran for the Libs, they were never sure who I voted for. That was how I thought I could honour the diversity of the families and children represented in my classrooms. That's my perspective and where I'm coming from.

What do you advise? Do you agree with me that it is important that our staff be politically neutral and that our internal and external services are politically neutral? And if so, what truly is a sensitive way to put pursue that political neutrality at MCC? I don't know what to do, but I do feel for people who feel they are being passive aggressively condemned about issues that are not core to our business in that context.

Kindest regards,

Cr Moira Deeming

Watts Ward Councillor | **Melton City Council**

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E: moira.deeming@melton.vic.gov.au | **W:** melton.vic.gov.au

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 20 May 2022 8:59 AM
To: Moira Deeming <MoiraD@melton.vic.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Interesting

Dear Cr Deeming

There is nothing that prevents you from putting it straight into Council Chamber as a NoM. This is the way some councillors formally seek support from their fellow councillors via Council decision for officers to for example investigate feasibility/suitability of such a facility. When Council as a whole makes decisions for officers to do things such as this it is committing officer time, and subject to the motion, also budget. The ideal is everything aligns with Council and Wellbeing Plan and within our annual budget and our 10 year financial plan.

Informally councillors can engage officers in conversation, (like you are have below), and we can provide information on whether anything like this has been previously investigated, is currently being investigated etc. Some councillors take this initial path and then decide to pursue/not. This path helps us create the connections back to Council and Wellbeing Plan and provide advice on budget etc. Some councillors take this engagement path. Some do not. Some that take this engagement path do not like what councillors advise and decide to put it in to Council Chamber.

For me if we can get the balance right on how councillors and officers work together, respecting each other's roles, rights/responsibilities that is when we get the best outcomes for our community.

I am not sure if all this extra explanation is helpful for you Moira. If you don't want/need it – please just let me know.

I'll make some internal enquiries with officers re any work previous/current re below in our municipality, sector wide etc.

Regards

From: Moira Deeming <MoiraD@melton.vic.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 19 May 2022 4:17 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Interesting

Hi [REDACTED]

I thought this was interesting. Is it appropriate to ask that our Council look into the possibility of one of these types of recycling facilities in our municipality in the future? Is that something I can ask during a NOM, or do I just ask you? I'm not sure.

[Turning plastic trash into clean hydrogen fuel - Inside Local Government](#)

Kindest regards,

Cr Moira Deeming

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