

USAGE OF THE NEW COUNCIL CHAMBER

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| Item A-RC (01-2007) CM 26/04/2007 | DETERMINATION OF POLICY: USAGE OF THE NEW COUNCIL CHAMBER FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN FORMAL COUNCIL MEETINGS |
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RESOLVED:

1. **That** the contents of the report: Determination of Policy: Usage of the new Council Chamber for purposes other than formal Council meetings (private and public), **BE NOTED**.
2. **That** the Council **ONLY UTILISES** the new Council Chamber for Council meetings and such other usage as permitted in terms of Clause Q1.2 of Council's By-Laws regarding the usage of Council-owned halls as approved by the City Manager, and on the basis of the principles contained in **Annexure "A"** attached to the report.
3. **That** the City Manager or nominee **ENSURES COMPLIANCE** with all relevant legislation to give effect to the above and that he/she **BE AUTHORISED** to do or cause to be done whatever is requisite to implement and give effect to the above.
4. **That** the City Manager **INVESTIGATE** the possibility of Global connectivity in respect of the technology available in the new Council Chamber.

(For clarity in this regard, the report that served is listed in Annexure B)

ANNEXURE A

NEW COUNCIL CHAMBER (GERMISTON) MANAGEMENT POLICY

- ♦ This policy replaces all existing policies/procedures/practices as the policy for the management and usage of the new Council Chamber in Germiston;
- ♦ The Council only utilizes the new Council Chamber for Council meetings and such other usage as permitted in terms of Clause Q 1.2 of Council's By-laws regarding the usage of Council-owned halls as approved by the City Manager.
- ♦ The Council and Mayoral Committee meetings (inclusive of special/urgent meetings) will take precedence over all other meetings/workshops in using the new Council Chamber.
- ♦ Facilities available within/around the premises:
 - A security service will be provided by Council at no cost to the host Department of the EMM (Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality).
 - Parking will be on the basis of 'at own risk':
 - * There are 89 parking bays available in front of the venue.
 - * There shall be no cars parked on the 1st floor in front of the venue.
 - * Illegally parked vehicles will be impounded: R150, 00 fine to release vehicle.
 - A lift is available from the ground floor to the 1st and 2nd floors for people with disabilities.
 - The facility caters for people on wheelchairs through ramps.
 - There are ablution facilities for both men and women with disabilities.
 - There is a designated sitting area available within the Chamber for people on wheelchairs.
 - Although there is access to the gallery for people with disabilities, there is no adequate sitting space for people with disabilities.
 - There is a banquet hall and a fully equipped kitchen facility available on the premises operated on a self-catering basis: caterers bring their own operational equipment.
 - Caterers are required to pay a deposit of R2 500, 00 being security for damage to equipment resulting directly or indirectly within the kitchen/banquet hall.
 - Presentations can be made in MS office packages.
 - Back up in the form of CD or a memory stick may be brought for presentations.

- The Control room will only be available for Council meetings:
 - * For other structures of Council, at least 72 hours prior notice must be given for presentations, and provided staff is available to attend to same.
 - * External organisations may only make use of voice facilities.
 - * The Control room shall be manned ONLY by EMM nominated ICT staff and/or dedicated Corporate & Legal Services staff.
 - * All other data and voice feeds to be done via the remote points outside the Control Room.
 - * The control room shall be staffed by a qualified internal employee member to ensure that the equipment is used appropriately without risk of damage.

- ◆ The actual cost of the staff required to assist is to be calculated on the basis of the rate of his/her/their remuneration, whether for ordinary or overtime, whichever may be applicable. For internal Departments, this will be an internal costing effected by the Department of Finance against the budget of the relevant Department. Breakages will likewise be recovered through departmental costing for internal usage.
- ◆ The media may be accommodated in the gallery.
- ◆ The Council and Mayoral Committee meetings (inclusive of special/urgent meetings) will take precedence over all other meetings/workshops in using the new Council Chamber.
- ◆ The venue is available during office hours 08:00 - 16:30 and, after hours (16:30 et. sec) and on weekends based on 72 hours prior written booking.
- ◆ The facility shall be managed from the office of the Manager: Support Services (Legal and Administration Services) tel. (011) 820 - 4044, room 104, 1st floor, former EGSC building / hansiec@ekurhuleni.com .
- ◆ The facility may be used for workshops and meetings in terms of the said By-laws with a maximum of 200 people (there are no break-away rooms).
- ◆ The EMM will not take responsibility for loss or damaged equipment or displays in the Chamber, foyer or entertainment areas brought onto the premises by the person/party/body making use of the facility, neither for vehicles parked on or outside the premises.

ANNEXURE “B”

(For clarity in this regard, the report as listed hereafter is linked to the Policy for the usage of the new Council Chamber)

DETERMINATION OF POLICY: USAGE OF THE NEW COUNCIL CHAMBER FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN FORMAL COUNCIL MEETINGS**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the report is to seek approval that the new Council Chamber only be made available in terms of Council's existing by-laws. If, however, it is decided to make the facility more widely available, only then should a policy be determined for the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality regarding the usage of the new Council Chamber facility in Germiston for purposes falling outside of formal meetings of the Council.

BACKGROUND

A new Council Chamber has been constructed within the Germiston Civic Centre mainly for purposes of hosting formal Council meetings. This facility has equipment that is of a highly technical nature within its premises. From time to time Departments of the EMM and other external organizations: political parties, church groups etc. request permission to use the facility for events such as the mayoral partnership programmes with various organisations, functions/workshops and private meetings and at times meetings that are relevant for Council business.

The current situation is that the use of Council facilities is reserved for the Council's own purposes e.g. caucuses of Councillors and Ward Committees and other similar meetings. External organizations requiring the use of these facilities have to obtain prior written permission of the City Manager. This practice has, however, proven not to be cost effective for the Council in that the equipment installed in the Chamber is highly technical and breakages occur from time to time for which the Council pays. A large budget was expended in the construction and equipping of the facility.

On virtually every occasion that an external organization has used the facility, breakages or damages have occurred. Council has had to bear the substantial costs relevant to these consequences. It should be noted that there are several halls, auditoria and other venues available for the community/other organisations in terms of Council by-laws.

Clause Q 1.2 of Council's *by-laws* provides as follows regarding the usage of Council-owned halls:

“Free usage will only be granted for official functions, meetings or activities of the Council, Provincial and National Government, subject to the availability of facilities.”

TYPES OF FUNCTIONS TO BE CATERED FOR

Enquiries at National and Provincial levels indicate that the facilities at Parliament and the Provincial Legislature are reserved for government purposes only.

It is thus primarily recommended that Council adopts a similar approach and only utilizes the new Council Chamber strictly in accordance with the existing by-laws quoted above.

The Council Chamber is the seat of government for the EMM. The current By-laws restrict the usage of such facility to government purposes. The possible deviation from or amendment of the By-laws in this particular instance does not appear to be advisable.

There is also a definite need to maintain the status and dignity of the seat of the EMM government.

To ensure that the appropriate decorum and dress code is upheld in the new Council Chamber, it is further suggested that the security staff of the Community Safety Department be trained and deployed to deal with such matters.

The City Manager has the authority and discretion to permit certain uses as envisaged in the By-laws.

The alternative provision of facilities in a wider sense can be the subject of a separate investigation.

If, however, it is decided to make the facility more freely available, the by-laws will have to be amended and the policy reflected in **Annexure "A"** will have to be adopted, with or without changes.

COMMENTS FROM RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS:

FINANCE DEPARTMENT:

"The content of the report has been noted and the recommendations are supported."

SRAC DEPARTMENT:

"The concerns raised by SRAC regarding the lack of clarity on how bookings will be managed and the arrangements and the supervision of the facility and staff, have been addressed.

1. *An adequate deposit is critical.*
2. *Any free use should be given ONLY during office hours to eliminate overtime.*
3. *Recommendation 2. to be applicable to THIS SPECIFIC FACILITY ONLY so as not to adversely affect management and service delivery to communities by SRAC.*
4. *Recommendation 5 to be applicable to THIS SPECIFIC FACILITY ONLY for the above reason. "*

The Rules Committee considered the report on 14 March 2007 and recommended as follows: