

NZ User Forum – Friday 10 November 2023

Draft Minutes

Please email nicks@infosphere.com.au if you would like to correct or add anything to the minutes.

The Forum was conducted via Teams.

1. Welcome and Introductions

We took some time for attendees to introduce themselves. We hope the forum provides an opportunity for you to contact your fellow governance professionals. 10 of the 37 Infocouncil councils were in attendance.

Attendees:

Matt Boulton – Christchurch City Council
Sree Nair – Christchurch City Council
Grayson Rowse – Horowhenua District Council
Harriet Kennedy – Masterton District Council
Anna Eady – Napier City Council
April Bryce – Nelson City Council
Robyn Byrnes – Nelson City Council
Fiona Dunlop – Southland District Council
Karen Watts – Taupo District Council
Sarah Drummond – Tauranga City Council
Coral Hair – Tauranga City Council
Shaleen Narayan – Tauranga City Council
Vicki Burns – Tauranga City Council
Anahera Dinsdale – Tauranga City Council
Fiona Hindmarsh – Tauranga City Council
Sean Johnson – Wellington City Council
Demelza Ranginui – Whanganui District Council
Diane Paterson – Whanganui District Council
Nick Szentkuti – Infocouncil
Mark Walton - Infocouncil
Fiona Pagnozzi - Infocouncil
Joanne Iles - Infocouncil

2. Expectations for the User Forum

Fiona outlined meeting etiquette. We were very happy with the contributions and how effectively the agenda items were addressed. Thank you all!

3. Release of Public Excluded items

This was raised as a topic of interest by multiple attendees.

Matt Boulton – Christchurch City Council

Process has been in place for 3.5 years – works through Infocouncil – process to systematically review what can be released. Matt, do you keep track using Infocouncil Actions?

Christchurch have created a Meeting Type in Infocouncil called released public excluded – made the system work for us but not ideal. Released Public Excluded Items are included in this Paper Type and the paper is pushed to the agendas and minutes website, which utilises the Infocouncil publishing automation.

25 Jul 2023 Finance & Performance Committee	Released Public Excluded Documents Future Parks Maintenance Service Provision Options	Agenda PDF (311.5KB)	Minutes - PDF (95.7KB)
25 Jul 2023 9:30 am	Finance and Performance Committee Council Chambers, Civic Offices, 53 Hereford Street, Christchurch	Agenda HTML Agenda PDF (7.2MB)	Minutes HTML Minutes - PDF (159.1KB)
19 Jul 2023 9:30 am	Council Council Chambers, Civic Offices, 53 Hereford Street, Christchurch	Agenda HTML Agenda PDF (10.2MB)	Attachments HTML Attachments PDF (7.8MB)
		Minutes HTML Minutes - PDF (244.8KB)	MinutesAttachments HTML MinutesAttachments PDF (13.8MB)

Example of how this looks on the Christchurch website.

Coral Hair – Tauranga City Council

Interested to investigate a process as it is part of the Ombudsmen’s review to release public excluded information

Coral suggested all councils should be doing this, ideally all NZ councils should come to an agreement, and all Infocouncil councils contribute to an enhancement to the Infocouncil system to fully automate the process.

Publishing the public excluded is done manually at Tauranga.

Asked if it was a priority for other councils?

Robyn Byrne – Nelson City Council

Tracking release from confidential by using actions – would like this to automatically happen via Infocouncil.

Nick Szentkuti - Infocouncil

Suggestion: Using the current Infocouncil Actions functionality is a good way to keep track of release dates and release events for Public Excluded items.

We recommend configuring an **Actions Subtype** called Public Excluded or PE Release (or what you like). The deadline for the action can be set for the release date, or the date for the item to be reviewed. A filtered Actions report can then be created to easily keep track of the PE items in the system.

ACTION: Please contact Nick Szentkuti if you would like to configure Actions Subtypes for this purpose.

Grayson Rowse – Horowhenua District Council

Same as the others, publishing direct via Infocouncil is what is required. Challenge to what is released, report, minutes, actions, attachments.

Vicki Byrnes – Tauranga City Council

Not just the publishing to the web, approvals process, when a document comes up for review this must go through an approval process for the release.

Nick Szentkuti - Infocouncil

Infocouncil suggestion: to cater for Vicki’s requirement that the release process requires review, potential redaction of content and approval, we suggest creating an Infocouncil Report Type, called what you like, Released Public Excluded Items.

When an item come up for release, the content could be pasted into the report template, or the template could be a cover page report, with the original report, attachment, or any part of the original PE item included as an attachment.

This new report could be saved to an existing agenda section, or we could create a new agenda section called Release of Public Excluded items. If an agenda section was created, it would be possible to clone an original PE report straight to that section. It could then move through the approval process.

Publishing PE released items in the current meeting agenda would be a good way of ensuring the public are made aware of the PE items. This would meet the Ombudsman request that PE release be managed with maximum transparency.

ACTION: We would be happy to work with a Forum member council to develop this idea further. Please get in touch with Nick Szentkuti if you would like to partner with us to meet PE release requirements using your existing Infocouncil functionality.

Mark Walton - Infocouncil

Presentation of PE released content on the web is something that is being considered as part of the website rewrite, in our development roadmap. It falls under the broader requirement to publish multiple document and file types to a meeting date. This is potentially a development which could be expedited with contributions from our council clients.

We will revisit this with you in 2024.

4. Runsheets and Minutes Variants

Matt Boulton – Christchurch City Council

We would like to automate as much as possible, have runsheets in place, current issue is variance of the committees, so manual preparation is required.

Sarah Drummond – Tauranga City Council

More automation please – would definitely like the function

Fiona Dunlop – Southland District Council

Worked with Infocouncil to automate these several months ago – happy for other councils to tag along on their changes

Robyn Byrne – Nelson City Council

Working with Bob Watson to have the appropriate information from the report pulled into the runsheet – it was a simple process to work out what was required. Some tweaking required, not much to adjust what has already been done.

Coral Hair – Tauranga City Council

We have a ticket created with Nick at the moment, some way of getting the benefits of all users process to enhance the product. Can we advise all NZ councils and collectively advise what the prioritisation for product enhancements.

Nick Szentkuti - Infocouncil

Adding runsheets and Minute variant documents is straightforward enhancement we can provide as a Professional Service. Update, we are working with Tauranga at present to create runsheets for 9 meetings.

To Coral's point that a generic solution be provided. This would require a basic compilation to pull in the report title and perhaps a text field where the specific guidance text could be entered. The challenge is, if there is bespoke text for each committee there is no shortcut for Infocouncil to identify that content and set it up in the insert document.

What we could do is provide the generic structure for each committee and train you admins in how to add the specific text in the insert document yourself.

ACTION: Contact Nick to discuss your run sheet requirements

5. Linking Video to Agenda Items

Grayson Rowse – Horowhenua District Council

Currently live stream and record meetings – linked to another part of the website, would like an option to publish to where the papers are published.

Coral Hair – Tauranga City Council

Great idea

Matt Boulton – Christchurch City Council

Like to be able publish the hyperlinks, would also like to publish text - edit how the content is presented on the Infocouncil webpage.

This comes back to Ombudsmen's requirement for accessibility – all councils must work hard making all documents accessible. This is a priority.

Sarah Drummond – Tauranga City Council

Asked Matt about editing the text – messages against a meeting date, customise particular meeting information.

Great idea to link it all together.

Coral Hair – Tauranga City Council

Renaming of the documents, is a great idea.

Ease of use will affect the security requirements of the website, must be accessible for all members of the community, video – close capturing etc.

Nick Szentkuti - Infocouncil

Note: this discussion pertains to the Infocouncil agendas and minutes webpage, which not all NZ councils are using.

This is something we are working on and seeking input to capture requirements. Discuss how it is being managed at the moment. I like the Western Bay of Plenty page, which has the video link next to the Infocouncil iFrame.

Mark Walton - Infocouncil

Publish recordings and other extraneous documents – this is part of the specification to reengineer the website to publish other information and how it is presented.

Horizontal table – reformatting to small portrait view – mechanics under the covers don't support at the moment.

Plan to reengineer the website – commence working on this project in second half of 2024. We will be reaching out to clients for other features to be added to this project.

Accessibility – report writers need to prepare the report correctly and ensure attachments are accessible. Infocouncil can provide guidance on how to achieve this.

Accessibility of papers – there will be work that IC can do, in conjunction with training for report writers.

6. Tabled for next User Forum - Cloud Platform

We look forward to updating you on the progress of the cloud platform at our next forum.

7. Other business

Coral raised question that limited number of councils attended this inaugural Forum and could we extend invitation further.

ACTION: yes, we will extend invitation to our 37 council NZ clients to join the Forum, though we enjoyed the interactions that were possible with the smaller numbers this time 😊

Fiona Pagnozzi - Infocouncil

Wrap up – thanks and work in progress.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Friday 9 February at 3pm NZ time.

Please submit your suggestions for agenda items.