

**MM-1                    MAYORAL MINUTE: FUTURE REPORT ON ESTABLISHMENT  
OF AN INDEPENDENT HEARING AND ASSESSMENT PANEL  
(IHAP)**

**Department        Executive Services**

**Author Initials: HMc**

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**REPORT**

Local Government elections will be held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2017, and although the issue of a possible future merger with Strathfield and Burwood Councils has not been resolved, we must plan for the continued operations of the City of Canada Bay Council for the foreseeable future.

I wish to call for a report to be presented to the next elected Council on the subject of establishment of an IHAP. A number of Councils in NSW have adopted the IHAP model for the purpose of establishing increased transparency and independence in decision making. IHAPs commonly comprise up to five members, with 3 expert members appointed by Council (eg experts in law, architecture, planning, environmental science, urban design) and two members selected from the Community following a call for expressions of interest.

The elected Councillors' prime function would then be to focus on strategic and policy issues including the Community Strategic Plan.

Whilst the details of an IHAP will be determined by the new Council, I would suggest that the following principles be considered:

- The Panel is to be created under the authority of the Local Government Act with delegated authority from Council
- The Panel to have the following functions:
  - Provide an open independent forum for any person or group to be heard and make submissions in regard to DA's which are being considered for determination;
  - Provide an independent and transparent assessment process for planning proposals;
  - Determine under delegated authority, development applications, S96 modifications, and S82A reviews referred to it for consideration.

Canada Bay Council has previously utilised Citizen Panels to assist the deliberations of Council on important policy matters. I believe that we can continue to demonstrate our commitment to openness, transparency and commitment to engagement with our community by going a step further and establishing an IHAP.

**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT That the General Manager submit a report dealing with the establishment of an IHAP to an early meeting of the new Council following the 2017 election.