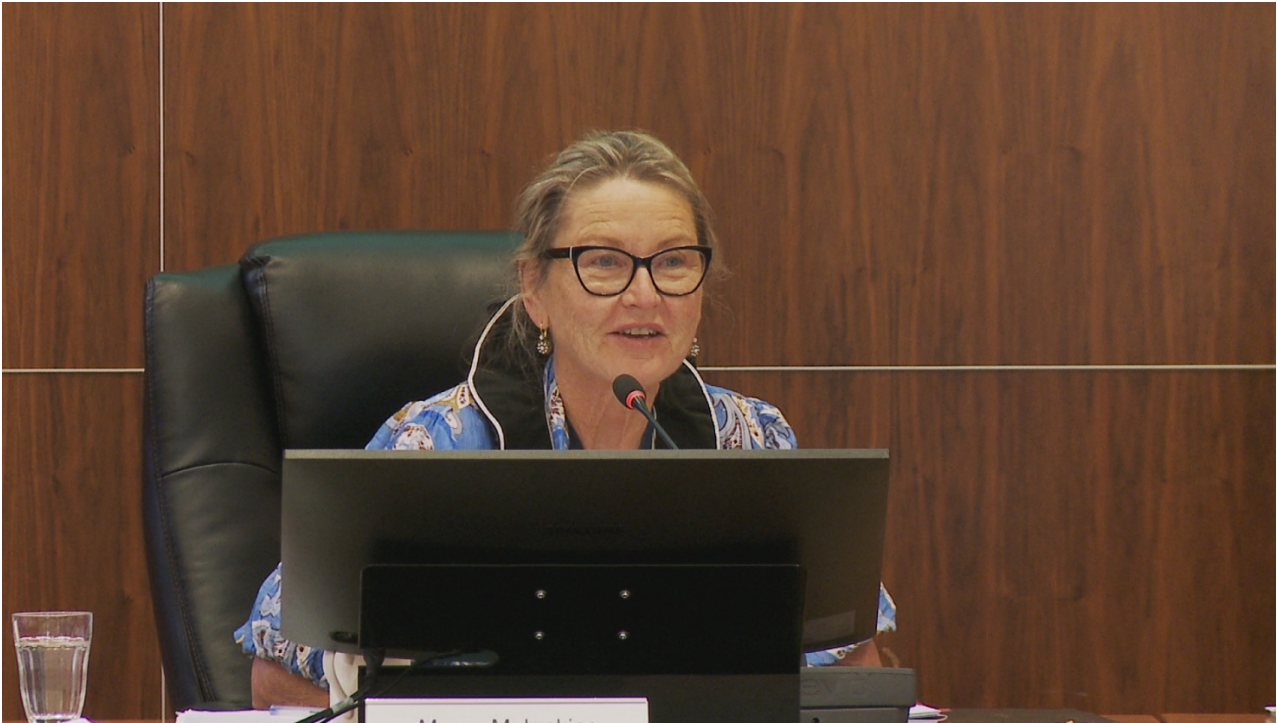


COUNCIL WATCH FLEURIEU INC.

Accountability with Integrity — The time for change is Now !

NEWSLETTER No. 061— APRIL 2026

MAYOR REFUSES COUNCIL WATCH EMAILS WHAT IS BEING SHUT OUT?



Serious questions emerge over access, accountability and treatment of community scrutiny

LEAD STORY

The Mayor of the City of Victor Harbor has declined to receive further emails from Council Watch, responding to the organisation's latest newsletter with the statement:

"I do not want to receive your unsolicited emails."

This response, issued through an official council email address, has triggered **serious concerns regarding openness, access to elected office, and the treatment of community scrutiny.**

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

Council Watch now asks:

Why is the Mayor refusing to accept Council Watch newsletters via email?

And further:

- **Is this refusal limited to newsletters, or does it extend to all Council Watch correspondence?**
- **Does this represent a broader position regarding engagement with critical community voices?**

A MATTER OF PUBLIC OFFICE — NOT PERSONAL PREFERENCE

The email address used by the Mayor is an **official council communication channel**, funded and maintained for public business.

The refusal therefore raises a fundamental issue:

Can an elected Mayor selectively decline communication from a community organisation engaged in legitimate public-interest oversight?

WHAT WAS SENT — AND WHY IT MATTERS

The correspondence in question:

- Contained a **Council Watch newsletter**
- Addressed matters of **governance, public policy and council decision-making**
- Included **political commentary**, including support for a potential mayoral candidate

Such content is:

A normal and lawful part of democratic participation

PERCEPTION OF A “CLOSED DOOR”

The Mayor’s response may give rise to a broader concern:

- That engagement is being **restricted where views are critical**
- That access to elected office may be **selectively limited**

Council Watch emphasises:

This is not about agreement — it is about willingness to engage.

A PATTERN THE COMMUNITY RECOGNISES

This development raises an additional question of public importance:

Could this be the first step toward classifying Council Watch as a “vexatious complainant”?

The community has previously seen similar situations, including:

- The experience of **Mr Ben Blatchford**, whose complaints—critical of Council—were subject to adverse characterisation

Council Watch makes no assertion that such action has occurred in this case.

However:

The current refusal raises legitimate concern about whether a similar pathway may be emerging.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The implications extend beyond a single email.

This issue goes to the heart of:

- **Equal access to elected representatives**
- **Transparency in local government**
- **The right of the community to raise concerns without exclusion**

WHAT HAS NOT BEEN CLARIFIED

At the time of publication:

- No formal explanation has been provided as to:
 - Whether this refusal applies to all Council Watch communications
 - Whether alternative communication pathways have been designated
 - How such correspondence will be handled within Council systems

COUNCIL WATCH POSITION

Council Watch considers that:

- Communication with elected representatives is a **fundamental democratic right**
- Expressing critical views or political preferences is **legitimate and expected**
- Declining to receive such correspondence:

Raises concerns about openness, accessibility and accountability

THE BROADER CONTEXT

This development follows:

- Recent controversy surrounding Council decision-making
- Ongoing community debate regarding governance standards
- Increased scrutiny of leadership and accountability

In that context:

The refusal to engage does not resolve concerns — it deepens them

QUESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR

Council Watch formally asks:

1. **Does the refusal to receive emails apply to all Council Watch correspondence, or only newsletters?**
2. **Will Council Watch communications continue to be received and recorded through official council systems?**
3. **What assurances can be provided that Council Watch will not be subject to any form of adverse classification or restriction?**
4. **How does this position align with the Mayor’s obligation to engage with all sections of the community?**

FINAL WORD

This issue is not about one email.

It is about a principle:

Whether an elected Mayor can close the door—intentionally or otherwise—on a section of the community engaged in legitimate public scrutiny.

For Council Watch, the expectation is clear:

- Open communication
- Equal access
- Accountability to all



Terry Andrews

Chair – Council Watch Fleurieu Inc.

Council Watch Fleurieu Inc.

Email: councilwatch44@gmail.com

Web: <https://councilwatchvictorharbor.com/>

“Accountability with Integrity”