

14.1: ALTERNATE MOTION BY COUNCILLOR STOCKS

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THAT the motion regarding deregulated trading be held over until extensive community consultation is completed.

Councillor's Reason:

My reasons for proposing this alternate motion include:

1. Allowing the many stakeholders, both for and against this proposal, to make detailed submissions to Council for consideration to enable informed decision making.
2. Allowing individual stakeholders not represented by Association/Industry groups to present their business impact views to Council.
3. Allowing Council time to gather data on the impact on small business in other regions where this policy has been adopted, and to evaluate the pros and cons.
4. Allowing the Council to investigate any alternative deregulated trading models. i.e. one that allows business to trade on any 6 of the 7 days, with the choice on day of closure entirely up to the business owner. (I am sure there are other models about)

The Albany Chamber of Commerce and Industry's changed stance on deregulated trading requires some consideration, but should not be the driving force behind the City of Albany adopting a position on the matter.

The Chamber of Commerce is one industry group. The last survey conducted by the ACCI in 2010 had a 20% response. Relevant questions 13 and 14 probed thoughts on deregulated trading, with the rest of survey questions more broadly business based. The survey was not headlined as a poll on deregulated trading. Perhaps the response would have been higher on a single issue survey only questioning thoughts on deregulated trading. Only 60% of that 20% responded in the affirmative on the deregulated trading, suggesting that about 11% of the entire ACCI membership has indicated a preference for deregulation of trading.

Councillor Holden's motion asserts that a majority of retailers have indicated a preference for deregulated trading hours. The numbers, provided in a conversation with me by the CEO of the ACCI, suggest differently.

There are many small business owners whose voice has not been heard. Council MUST provide an opportunity for these people to make submissions before contemplation on such a polarising policy.

I have concerns for the impact on small business in the region and have a view that even if Council adopted the proposed motion on deregulation, no more Cafes, restaurants and small business will open.

The argument that "Albany is closed on weekends" is heavily influenced by the penalty rates small business owners must pay whilst trying to provide sustainable services to the community.

I believe it is premature to consider the issue of deregulated trading hours, prior to extensive and open community consultation from all groups.

Officer's Comment (Acting Executive Director Community Services)

The City neither supports nor opposes this motion.

Where significant variations to existing hours are proposed, it is important that the local community be provided with an opportunity to comment on the extended trading proposal.

Before any application to the Department of Commerce for any proposed permanent or long term variations can be progressed by the City of Albany, such consultation with local retailers and the community must be shown with the application.

Undertaking community consultation will have resource implications. At present City staff do not have the capacity to undertake such consultation and engagement of a consultant would be required. No budget allocation has been made for such consultation.