

COUNCILLOR PORTFOLIO POLICY

COUNCILLOR POLICY



1 Scope

This policy applies to portfolio activities undertaken by Councillors and employees of Rockhampton Regional Council.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a governance framework and associated protocols related to the appointment of Councillors to portfolios that facilitate Council's engagement with the community and productive, professional and appropriate relationships within the organisation to advance the delivery of Council's strategic priorities and services.

3 Related Documents

3.1 Primary

Nil

3.2 Secondary

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Civic Events Policy

Councillor Acceptable Requests Guidelines Policy

Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland (Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs)

Community Engagement Policy

Council Meeting Procedures Policy

Media Policy

4 Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

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| Act | <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer A person who holds an appointment under section 194 of the Act. This includes a person acting in this position. |
| Council | Rockhampton Regional Council |
| Councillor/s | The Mayor and/or Councillors of Council, within the meaning of the Act. |
| Corporate Plan | Council's 5 year outline of the strategic direction of the local government as required by the <i>Local Government Regulation 2012</i> . |

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| Employee | Local government employee: (a) The CEO; or (b) A person holding an appointment under section 196 of the Act. |
| Leadership Team | CEO, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, general managers, Manager Workforce and Governance and Chief Financial Officer. |
| Manager | Employee appointed to a position delegated a corporate band 3. |
| Mayor | The Mayor is an elected member of Council, also referred to as a Councillor, with additional responsibilities as outlined in section 12(4) of the Act. |
| Meeting | Ordinary meeting at Council. |
| Operational Plan | The annual plan adopted by Council as required by the <i>Local Government Regulation 2012</i> . |
| Portfolio | A specified strategic priority, service and function of Council. |
| Portfolio Councillor | A Councillor who has been allocated responsibility of a portfolio. |
| Region | Rockhampton Regional Area defined by the Local Government Areas of Queensland. |
| Report | Documents and information that relate to the business to be dealt with at a meeting. |

5 Policy Statement

Council has established a portfolio system for nominated Councillors to be assigned specific responsibilities linked to the key strategic priorities of Council and the core responsibilities that it is required to discharge consistent with the local government principles contained in the Act.

5.1 Role of Portfolio Councillors

In addition to their responsibilities as a Councillor under the Act, Portfolio Councillors are required to:

- (a) Familiarise themselves with the Corporate Plan and Operational Plan, in particular the objectives, strategies, issues and activities which are relevant to their portfolio;
- (b) Liaise with other Portfolio Councillors regarding matters that may affect their respective portfolio areas;
- (c) Keep the Mayor and the relevant divisional Councillor (as appropriate) fully informed on portfolio matters;
- (d) Act as the official Council spokesperson or representative on portfolio relevant matters in accordance with this policy to ensure consistent communication and messaging on portfolio relevant matters;
- (e) Liaise with and engage with industry and community groups and associations on portfolio related matters;
- (f) Provide an elected representative's viewpoint and act as a sounding board for employees and Council on issues relating to their portfolio through participation, discussion and debate at meetings;
- (g) Lead discussion and generally advocate for the advancement of Council's key priorities and decisions relevant to their portfolio responsibilities; and
- (h) Introduce reports under their relevant portfolio at meetings.

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5.1.1 Limitations

The role of Portfolio Councillors is subject to the following limitations:

- (a) The Act and the framework established under this policy does not provide for formal delegated authority to a Portfolio Councillor for policy determination and operational decision-making for matters relevant to their portfolio.
- (b) Portfolio Councillors do not hold any specific statutory or governance responsibilities related to their portfolio beyond those which they ordinarily hold as a Councillor.
- (c) In discharging their responsibilities as Portfolio Councillors and consistent with their role under the Act and the local government principles as provided for under the Act, Councillors should maintain a focus on strategic issues relevant to their portfolio, rather than day to day operational matters.
- (d) A Portfolio Councillor does not assume any of the roles, powers and functions assigned to the Mayor under the Act unless delegated by the Mayor. This includes the portfolio responsibilities exclusively assigned to the Mayor.
- (e) This policy does not set aside or amend the provisions contained in the following instruments:
 - (i) The Act;
 - (ii) The *Local Government Regulation 2012*;
 - (iii) The Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland; and/or
 - (iv) The Councillors Acceptable Requests Guidelines Policy.
- (f) Where there is any inconsistency between this policy and a provision in any of the instruments detailed in paragraph 5.1.1(e) of this policy the provision of the instrument shall prevail to the extent of any inconsistency.

5.2 Role of the Mayor and Councillors

5.2.1 Mayor and Councillor Responsibilities

A Councillor must represent the current and future interests of the residents of the local government area.

All Councillors have the following responsibilities under the Act:

- (a) Ensuring the local government:
 - (i) Discharges its responsibilities under this Act;
 - (ii) Achieves its corporate plan; and
 - (iii) Complies with all laws that apply to local governments;
- (b) Providing high quality leadership to the local government and the community;
- (c) Participating in council meetings, policy development, and decision-making, for the benefit of the local government area;
- (d) Being accountable to the community for the local government's performance.

Specific responsibilities are assigned to the Mayor under the Act including:

- (a) Leading and managing meetings of the local government at which the Mayor is the chairperson, including managing the conduct of the participants at the meetings;
- (b) Leading, managing, and providing strategic direction to, the CEO in order to achieve the high quality administration of the local government;

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- (c) Directing the CEO in accordance with a resolution, or a document adopted by resolution, of the local government;
- (d) Conducting a performance appraisal of the CEO, at least annually, in the way that is decided by the local government;
- (e) Ensuring that the local government promptly provides the Minister with the information about the local government area, or the local government, that is requested by the Minister;
- (f) Being a member of each standing committee of the local government; and
- (g) Representing the local government at ceremonial or civic functions.

5.3 Spokesperson/Media

5.3.1 Mayor

The Mayor is typically the spokesperson on regional issues, which include but are not necessarily limited to:

- (a) Matters of emergency, for example floods, fires, cyclones;
- (b) Major reputation management;
- (c) State and/or Federal Government matters, policies, plans, initiatives and relationships;
- (d) Civic events in accordance with Council's Civic Events Policy;
- (e) Initiatives and projects of major regional significance;
- (f) Region wide planning matters;
- (g) Major regional events and promotions;
- (h) General commentary on the performance of the regional economy and Council finances which impact on or are relevant to the Region generally; and
- (i) Matters of regional environmental significance.

If the Mayor is not available to comment on a regional issue and/or project as detailed above, the Deputy Mayor will be the Council spokesperson for the media.

5.3.2 Portfolio Media

The Portfolio Councillor should be the key Council spokesperson on a portfolio related matter (other than those matters specified in paragraph 5.3.1). The Mayor can also make comment on any portfolio matters and be quoted in Council releases along with the Portfolio Councillor (including for media statements arising from decisions of Council).

Where a portfolio-related issue or project has a Divisional focus, the Divisional Councillor will assist and work with the Portfolio Councillor, with the Portfolio Councillor being the lead spokesperson on that matter with the opportunity being provided to the Divisional Councillor to be secondary spokesperson.

If neither the Mayor nor Deputy Mayor is available to comment on a regional issue and/or project, a relevant Divisional Councillor or the CEO may act as the spokesperson in that instance for the media.

All media will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Media Policy and Media Procedure.

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5.4 Operating Protocols

5.4.1 Support

Portfolio Councillors must be appropriately supported by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, general managers and managers to enable them to:

- (a) Be across the details of portfolio relevant proposals coming before Council;
- (b) Be well placed to present and advocate portfolio issues within the community;
- (c) Remain informed of research and other developments relevant to their portfolio; and
- (d) Understand and communicate the implications of decisions by other levels of government on portfolio matters.

5.4.2 Engagement with Leadership Team and Managers

Portfolio Councillors should be engaged by the Leadership Team at the earliest opportunity:

- (a) On all matters where there is an intention to develop a report;
- (b) Where it is proposed to conduct community engagement activities in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy; and/or
- (c) On matters which are likely to generate media or strong community interest.

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer, general managers and managers should meet regularly with their Portfolio Councillor(s) to ensure they remain informed of current information, service issues and proposed response strategies.

5.4.3 Reports

Reports to a meeting which are relevant to a portfolio should be introduced by the Portfolio Councillor(s). The Portfolio Councillor does not have to support the recommendations in a report but should be aware a report is proposed for a meeting and is fully briefed on the content, direction and proposals in the report.

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer, general managers and managers should ensure the Portfolio Councillor(s) is provided with a detailed briefing note prior to the meeting for any reports that the Portfolio Councillor is presenting.

5.4.3.1 Dual Portfolio Matters

Where a matter spans the responsibilities of more than one Portfolio Councillor, the relevant general manager(s) and manager(s) or Deputy Chief Executive Officer will work collaboratively with the Portfolio Councillors to ensure their needs are addressed in line with the roles, obligations and protocols within this policy. Similarly, the relevant Portfolio Councillors shall engage with each other and the Mayor at the earliest opportunity on issues and matters which span their portfolio responsibilities.

5.5 Assistant Portfolio Councillors

Subject to a resolution of Council, a Councillor may be nominated as an Assistant Portfolio Councillor to assist a Portfolio Councillor. In each case, the areas of responsibility for the Councillor assisting are to be specified. The areas of responsibility may span the whole portfolio, or may be targeted at a specific element of the portfolio.

The Portfolio Councillor should be the spokesperson for matters relevant to that Portfolio. The Portfolio Councillor may however, agree that the Assistant Portfolio Councillor may act as a spokesperson on specific portfolio issues, matters or projects.

When assisting a Portfolio Councillor the Assistant Portfolio Councillor is to receive the same information and support as the Portfolio Councillor on those matters relevant to the responsibilities assigned to the Assistant Portfolio Councillor as detailed in paragraph 5.6.

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5.6 Portfolio Appointments

The Portfolio appointments of Portfolio Councillors are as follows:

| Portfolio | Portfolio Councillor | Assistant Portfolio Councillor (and area of responsibility) |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| Advance Rockhampton – Economic Development and Events | Mayor Margaret Strelow | Councillor Tony Williams – Special Responsibility for Tourism |
| Waste and Waste to Resource Implementation | Councillor Shane Latcham | |
| Airport Growth and Development | Councillor Neil Fisher | |
| Infrastructure | Councillor Tony Williams | |
| Planning and Regulation | Councillor Ellen Smith | |
| Sports, Parks and Public Spaces | Councillor Cherie Rutherford | |
| Communities | Councillor Drew Wickerson | |
| Water and Supporting a Better Environment | Councillor Donna Kirkland | |

6 Review Timelines

This policy is reviewed when any of the following occur:

- (a) The related information is amended or replaced; or
- (b) Other circumstances as determined from time to time by Council.

7 Document Management

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| Sponsor | Chief Executive Officer |
| Business Owner | Chief Executive Officer |
| Policy Owner | Chief Executive Officer |
| Policy Quality Control | Legal and Governance |



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