

POLICY TITLE:

COUNCILLOR PORTFOLIO POLICY

File Reference No:

13.6.1

Date Adopted:

XX XX XX

Minute No:

XX

Last Updated:

New Policy

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are:

- (a) The workload associated with being an elected member is shared across all Councillors.
- (b) The Councillor's individual skills, knowledge and background are utilised by linking them to an area of interest.
- (c) Council will be better informed by the portfolio holder who will have a more intimate understanding of the portfolio's strategic activities and issues than Councillor generally.
- (d) The portfolio councillor will be able to speak with knowledge on strategic matters and projects in his/her portfolio at Council meetings and publicly if requested by the Mayor.
- (e) Ratepayers and members of the community can identify which Councillor to approach according to the strategic issue at hand.
- (f) Council's Executive Management Team have designated Councillors to work with on strategic issues, to act as sounding boards and to represent the public interest.
- (g) Councillors are seen to be reporting back to the community and accountable for progress against assigned strategic objectives.
- (h) Councillor training and attendance at conferences can be tailored to the assigned portfolio along with representation on Committees and working groups.

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POLICY STATEMENT

1. PURPOSE

Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to provide an efficient focus for Councillor activity as an Elected Member during their term of office and to spread the workload across all elected representatives. Councillors may contribute to policy and strategic direction across all areas, however, this is a demanding role. The aim of portfolios is to utilize Councillor areas of community interest and expertise and provide a more focused role of Councillors as representatives during their term. In addition, this approach provides an opportunity for Councillor development, meaningful engagement with senior management and a clear avenue for strategic input and advice.
- 1.2 The main role of Portfolios for Councillors is to be a spokesperson within the Council Chamber for those issues falling within their allocated portfolio. The Policy defines the relationship between the Councillor and the staff within the portfolio areas, their relationship between the Councillors and the staff within the portfolio area, their involvement in policy discussion, and their role in representing Council on issues that fall within the portfolio.
- 1.3 The expectation is that Councillors who hold a portfolio are committed to being a proactive advocate for their portfolio and are willing to make themselves available for relevant committees, forums and conferences as that representatives and ensure that they are abreast of the information that is made available to them.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Elected Members and the Executive Management Team.

3. DEFINITIONS

Portfolio Councillor – Councillor with responsibility for that particular portfolio.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Role of Portfolio Councillors

- 4.1.1 Portfolio Councillors will meet on occasions with the relevant Directors to be informed on strategic risks and issues, proposed legislative changes and industry trends.
- 4.1.2 Develop an in-depth knowledge of strategic and policy issues related to their area of responsibility, to speak with authority on topics related to the portfolio in the Council Chamber and upon request of the Mayor, to the media.
- 4.1.3 To be thoroughly familiar with the Community Strategic Plan, Operational Plan and Delivery Plan, in particular the objectives and strategies for the activities related to the assigned portfolio.

- 4.1.4 Faithfully represent and advocate Council's adopted policy and corporate positions related to the assigned portfolio.
- 4.1.5 To liaise with the community and attend meetings, forums etc as required as Council's representative with regard to their portfolio.
- 4.1.6 To liaise with other Portfolio Councillors regarding matters that may affect their portfolio areas.
- 4.1.7 In consultation with the Council on relevant strategic activities within the portfolio, as and when required and to respond to questions with notice related to their portfolio when questions are directed to them as portfolio holders by other Councillors.

4.2 Role of Executive Management Team

- 4.2.1 Recognise the role formally allocated to the portfolio holders by Council and to offer high levels of support and engagement in a practical and open manner.
- 4.2.2 Provide practical opportunities and assistance to enable portfolio holders to gain increased knowledge and expertise in the specific portfolio area.

4.3 Powers & Authorities

- 4.3.1 The Portfolio system provides no formal delegated authority to the Portfolio Councillor. It provides, however, the Councillor with the opportunity to develop and maintain a heightened level of knowledge and leadership across an assigned strategic objective.
- 4.3.2 The Portfolio system does not diminish Councillors' Statutory responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council's Code of Conduct and other relevant legislation.
- 4.3.3 Councillors must be mindful of their strategic focus and their obligations under the Code of Conduct to ensure that they do not direct Council staff or interfere with Council operations.
- 4.3.4 The portfolio system must not eventuate in a portfolio Councillor assuming any of the roles normally prescribed to the Mayor under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

4.4 Communications & Advocacy

- 4.4.1 The Mayor remains the principal Council spokesperson. When appropriate, the Mayor may request that another Councillor speak on the issue, primarily this will be the Deputy Mayor or the designated Portfolio Councillor.
- 4.4.2 The communication of information to Councillors in general should not change, with all Councillors being abreast of major issues requiring all Councillors' knowledge for possible future Council action.
- 4.4.3 Intergovernmental Relations and Advocacy are a core responsibility of the Mayor. However, the Mayor may choose to delegate responsibility for advocacy on specific matters to a Portfolio Councillor, as, and when, required.

5. COUNCILLOR PORTFOLIOS

Focus Area	Functions	Committee Linkages
Compliance Cr ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Control • Compliance 	Planning & Economic Development Committee
Community Services Cr ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged Services • Health Services • Community Services • Youth Services • Childcare and Early Learning • Libraries • Affordable housing • Domestic violence 	Community Advisory group Central Northern Libraries (including the NSW Public Library Association) Local Government Womens' Association Summerhill Lodge Committee
Cultural Development Cr ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts programs 	Cultural & Events Advisory Group
People and Place Cr ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation reserves • Sporting facilities • Sports and activity development • Parks and Gardens 	Cultural & Events Advisory Group
Environmental Cr ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime prevention • Waste management (including illegal dumping) • Noxious weeds & pest animals 	Planning & Economic Development Committee Community Advisory Group Shenhua Watermark Community Consultative Committee Werris Creek Coal Community Consultative Committee
Infrastructure & Transport Cr ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset management • Roads • Stormwater & Drainage • Water Services 	Liverpool Plains Traffic Committee Mid North Weight of Loads

Tourism & Economic Development Cr ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Economic Development • Tourism • Visitor Information • Strategic Land Use Planning • Communication • Community Engagement 	Cultural & Events Advisory Group ARM Inc. Committee
Governance & Finance Cr ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial sustainability • Corporate planning • Integrated Planning & Reporting • Internal Audit • Risk Management 	Internal Audit Committee
Education & Training Cr ??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Vocational Training • Volunteers 	Community Advisory Group

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Mildura Rural City Council – Councillor Portfolio Policy
- Charters Towers Regional Council – Councillor’s Portfolio System & Protocols
- Barkly Regional Council – Councillor Portfolio Policy
- Gympie Regional Council – Councillor Portfolio Policy
- Gunnedah Shire Council – Draft Councillor Portfolio Policy