

1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework and associated protocols for the appointment of Councillors to portfolios ("Portfolio Councillors"). The appointment as Portfolio Councillor is to enable Councillors to develop appropriate relationships within the organisation to enable delivery of Council's strategic priorities and focus areas.

This policy provides a high level outline of the Councillor Portfolio framework and the associated operating protocols for meeting with General Managers and Managers for portfolio matters.

The objective of a Councillor Portfolio framework is to enable:

- Council to be better informed by Portfolio Councillors who will have a more detailed understanding of the portfolio's strategic activities, key focus areas and high level risks;
- a Portfolio Councillor to speak on behalf of Council to the media and publicly on the allocated portfolio;
- Portfolio Councillors to attend and liaise with the community (including meetings and forums regarding their portfolio);
- Portfolio Councillors to represent Council's key priorities and decisions relevant to the portfolio area; and
- Portfolio Councillors to address Council with their knowledge on strategic matters and focus areas for the relevant portfolio at Council meetings.

2 Scope and applications

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

3 Principles

Council is committed to the local government principles in the *Local Government Act 2009* which includes having good governance, transparent and effective processes and decision making in the public interest, and ethical and legal behaviour of Councillors and local government employees.

In addition to upholding the principles outlined above, Council is committed to upholding the obligations within the *Human Rights Act 2019* by considering the provisions of the Act when making decisions relevant to this policy.

4 Content

This policy and protocols, adopted by resolution, outline the process to facilitate Councillors with an opportunity to develop and maintain a heightened level of knowledge, leadership and representation across the region in a specified portfolio. In addition, it may provide a greater knowledge for Portfolio Councillors for a specified branch within a portfolio.

5 Responsibilities/accountabilities

5.1 Role of Portfolio Councillors

In addition to their responsibilities as a Councillor under the *Local Government Act 2009*, Councillors as Portfolio Councillors are required to:

- keep abreast of Council proposals, issues and activities which are relevant to their portfolio(s);
- review and gain a knowledge of the Corporate Plan, Operational Plan and Council Budget with emphasis on their respective portfolio areas;

- meet monthly or fortnightly (or for a greater period as agreed between the Portfolio Councillors and the General Manager (i.e. Christmas and New Year period etc.)) with the relevant portfolio General Manager to be informed on portfolio focus areas, key issues and strategies for activities within the portfolio (these meetings may be conducted in person, teleconference and/or Skype/Microsoft Teams);
- act as the official Council spokesperson or representative on portfolio relevant matters (as the portfolio(s) may contain various branches, the Portfolio Councillor for media representation for the current term has been allocated in accordance with Appendix 2);
- provide input and feedback to the relevant General Manager associated with a portfolio on relevant portfolio matters;
- reasonably attend community forums in relation to their portfolio;
- liaise with other Portfolio Councillors relating to matters affecting the other Councillors' portfolio area;
- provide support and feedback as an elected representative's viewpoint to General Managers and the organisation on portfolio matters; and
- liaise with staff in accordance with 2.09 Acceptable Request Guidelines and Councillors Code of Conduct.

5.2 Role of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in the Portfolio System

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor jointly:

- resolve any disputes between Portfolio Councillors on media engagements in relation to their portfolio;
- meet with Chief Executive Officer and General Manager(s) individually to receive feedback on the portfolio system meetings;
- allocate any new Councillor during the term to portfolio(s); and
- re-allocate portfolio(s) for Councillors if required for any reason i.e. material conflicts of interest, resignation, disputes etc.

5.3 Operating Protocols for the Portfolio System

1. Portfolio Councillors must be reasonably supported by the General Manager and Managers to enable them to:
 - a. be reasonably across the details of key portfolio proposals coming before Council and current major projects;
 - b. be provided reasonable information for presentation and advocacy portfolio issues within the community; and
 - c. understand and communicate the implications of decisions by other levels of government on portfolio matters.
2. The General Manager will:
 - a. schedule portfolio meetings fortnightly or monthly (or for a greater period as agreed between the Portfolio Councillors and the General Manager (i.e. Christmas and New Year period etc.));
 - b. issue a general agenda for portfolio updates at least two days prior to the scheduled portfolio meeting. The agenda can include reasonable items requested by Portfolio Councillors. As a guide, the agenda will include key items (reasonably determined by the General Manager) associated with the portfolio for the upcoming related Standing Committee, prospective media releases and community engagement requirements, updates on major projects, updates on high level significant risks, discussion on portfolio related upcoming information sessions and general key focus areas (the portfolio general updates agenda should not exceed one and a half hours of meeting time per fortnight);
 - c. request the Manager of a branch to attend and update Portfolio Councillors at a portfolio meeting as required from time to time; and

- d. chair the portfolio meeting.

5.4 Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer may at their discretion attend any portfolio meetings and contribute to the agenda and meeting function as required.

5.5 Authorities and Limitations

The following authorities and limitations apply to Portfolio Councillors:

1. Portfolio Councillors are subject to the *Local Government Act 2009*. The Portfolio system does not provide for formal delegated authority to a Portfolio Councillor for policy determination and operational decision-making for matters relevant to their portfolio;
2. The Portfolio system does not set aside or alter the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009* which require corporate decisions on policies and resources to be reached at properly constituted Council meetings;
3. In accordance with *Local Government Act 2009* or the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Portfolio Councillors whether severally or jointly:
 - a. cannot direct Council employees;
 - b. must abide by Council policies; and
 - c. must abide by Council decisions;
4. The Portfolio system does not seek to set aside or amend any of the instruments nominated below. Where there is any inconsistency between the Portfolio system and a provision in any of the following instruments, the provision of the instrument shall prevail to the extent of any inconsistency in:
 - a. any other requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009* or the *Local Government Regulation 2012*;
 - b. the Councillors Code of Conduct; and/or
 - c. the Acceptable Requests Guidelines for Councillors in relation to communication between Councillors and Council staff;
5. Portfolio Councillors do not hold any specific statutory or governance responsibilities related to their portfolio beyond those which they ordinarily hold as an elected Councillor; and
6. In discharging their responsibilities as Portfolio Councillors and consistent with their role under the *Local Government Act 2009*, Councillors should maintain a focus on strategic issues relevant to their portfolio, rather than the day-to-day operational matters.

5.6 Communication

Portfolio Councillors must ensure that all:

- interactions with the media are compliant with the 2.35 Media Policy; and
- interactions with staff are in accordance with 2.09 Acceptable Request Guidelines and the Councillors Code of Conduct.

5.7 Portfolio Allocations

Appendix 1 outlines the Councillors assigned to the relevant portfolios. Appendix 2 lists the Councillors assigned to be a spokesperson for media representation for portfolio branch items.

6 Relevant laws

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

7 Related policies/documents

Members of the public can access Council policies on Council's website. If a policy listed below does not appear on the website please contact 131 872 or email info@tr.qld.gov.au to request a copy. Staff may access policies via the [Policy Register and Review Schedule](#).

Council policies

2.07 Guidelines for Councillors Receiving Customer Requests or Complaints

2.09 Acceptable Request Guidelines for Councillors

2.20 Guidelines for the Conduct of Councillor Briefings and Workshops

2.35 Media Policy

2.69 Information, Communication and Technology Policy

Other documents

Best practice standing orders for local government and standing committee meetings

Code of Conduct for Employees

Councillors Code of Conduct

Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029

8 Related forms

Not applicable

9 Definitions

Term	Definition
Chief Executive Officer	the Chief Executive Officer for Council or acting Chief Executive Officer for Council.
Council	Toowoomba Regional Council.
Councillor(s)	Councillor for Toowoomba Regional Council including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
Councillors Code of Conduct	the Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland adopted by the Queensland Government on 22 February 2024.
Deputy Mayor	the appointed Deputy Mayor for Council.
General Managers	General Managers include the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Executive Officer;

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Manager Environment and Community Services; • General Manager Corporate Services; • General Manager Infrastructure Services; • General Manager Planning and Development; and • General Manager Water and Waste Services. <p>For the purpose of this policy, General Managers may include an employee acting in the position of a General Manager.</p>
Managers	a Branch Manager (or acting Branch Manager) for the Office of the Chief Executive Officer, Water and Waste Services Group, Infrastructure Services Group, Planning and Development Group, Environment and Community Services Group and Corporate Services Group.
Mayor	the elected Mayor for Council.
Portfolio Councillor	A Councillor appointed by Council resolution to a portfolio to perform functions as described in this policy.
Portfolio	<p>Means the following portfolios established by Council for the purpose of this policy;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Projects Portfolio; • Business Transformation Portfolio; • Environment and Community Services Portfolio; • Corporate Services Portfolio; • Infrastructure Services Portfolio; • Planning and Development Portfolio; and • Water and Waste Services Portfolio.

10 Policy details

Policy category:	Council Policy	Policy version number ¹ :	5.00
Date adopted/approved:	13 May 2025	Effective date:	13 May 2025
Approval authority:	Council		

¹ Printed copies are uncontrolled. It is the user's responsibility to ensure that any copies of policy documents are the current issue. Any delegations should be verified via the relevant Delegation Register as it takes precedence if there is a conflict. The Chief Executive Officer will, if necessary, be the sole arbiter in resolving any issues of conflict

Policy Owner:	Governance and Legal Services Branch – Office of the CEO
Contact officer:	Manager Governance and Legal Services
Review date:	May 2028

11 Revision history

Policy version	Approval date	DM Reference
1.00	14 December 2010	3732433v2
2.00	13 December 2016	6899021v2
3.00	23 April 2020	7403648v2
4.00	28 May 2024	11549668v2
5.00	13 May 2025	12095162v2

Appendix 1 - Portfolio Councillor appointments

Water and Waste Portfolio

Cr Rebecca Vonhoff (Deputy Mayor)
Cr Bill Cahill
Cr Melissa Taylor
Cr Kerry Shine

Infrastructure Services Portfolio

Cr Carol Taylor
Cr Gary Gardner
Cr Trevor Manteufel
Cr Bill Cahill

Planning and Development Portfolio

Cr Geoff McDonald (Mayor)
Cr Gary Gardner
Cr Kerry Shine
Cr Tim McMahon
Cr Trevor Manteufel
Cr Edwina Farquhar

Environment and Community Portfolio

Cr James O'Shea
Cr Melissa Taylor
Cr Tim McMahon
Cr Bill Cahill
Cr Trevor Manteufel

Corporate Services Portfolio

Cr James O'Shea
Cr Tim McMahon
Cr Gary Gardner
Cr Edwina Farquhar
Cr Melissa Taylor

Business Transformation and Strategy Portfolio

Cr Geoff McDonald (Mayor)
Cr Rebecca Vonhoff (Deputy Mayor)
Cr Bill Cahill
Cr Edwina Farquhar

Major Projects Portfolio

Cr Geoff McDonald (Mayor)
Cr Rebecca Vonhoff (Deputy Mayor)
Cr Carol Taylor
Cr Gary Gardner

Appendix 2 - Portfolio Councillor appointments for media representation and community engagement queries

Mayor, Cr Geoff McDonald

Major Projects
Business Transformation and Strategy
Economic Development

Cr Tim McMahon

PLACE
Parks and Recreation Services
Financial Services

Deputy Mayor, Cr Rebecca Vonhoff

Major Projects
Business Transformation and Strategy
Strategic Water Planning and Capability Delivery

Cr Carol Taylor

Major Projects
Construction and Maintenance

Cr James O'Shea

Community Development, Facilities and Tourism
Customer Communication and Engagement

Cr Bill Cahill

Business Transformation and Strategy
Water Infrastructure Services
Enterprise Project Management and Project Services
Environmental and Regulatory Services

Cr Melissa Taylor

Waste Services
Library and Cultural Services
People, Culture and Engagement

Cr Edwina Farquhar

Business Transformation and Strategy
Economic Development
Information, Communication and Technology

Cr Kerry Shine

Water Operations
Planning

Cr Trevor Manteufel

Transport and Drainage Planning
Development Infrastructure and Growth
Property Services

Cr Gary Gardner

Major Projects
Fleet and Logistics
Planning
Financial Services