

TITLE:	Councillor Portfolio Policy		
DIVISION:			
ADOPTED BY:	Council		
DATE OF ADOPTION:	19 February 2015	DATE OF REVIEW:	1 February 2019
MOTION NUMBER:	18/15		
POLICY NUMBER:	CP000042		
AUTHORISED:	Chief Executive Officer		

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:

All employees of the Barkly Regional Council and Elected Members

PREAMBLE

The aim of all policy is for Councillors to provide strategic input into the effective operational framework of the organisation under S.11 of the Local Government Act

SUMMARY

The purpose of this policy is to provide an efficient focus for Councillor activity as an Elected member during their term of office. Councillors contribute to policy and strategic direction across all areas however this is a demanding role. The aim of portfolios is to utilise Councillor areas of community interest and expertise and provide a more focused role for 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.

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 area, their involvement in policy discussion, and their role in representing Council on issues that fall within the portfolio

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 representative and ensure that they are abreast of the information that is made available to them.

OBJECTIVES

The Portfolio Councillors' main role will be in the Council Chamber advising on topical issues and advocating for their portfolio area by requesting Council action or resources. Portfolio Councillors should adhere to Councillor Contact and Request Procedures, and not be involved in the day to day operation of the portfolio area.

Council will be better informed by the Portfolio Councillor who will have a more significant understanding of the portfolio activities and issues than Councillors generally. The Portfolio Councillor will be able to speak with knowledge of specific issues and activities of his/ her portfolio at Council meetings, and publicly if requested to by the President.

Utilising the ability to greater inform Councillors on specific areas of Council's functions will maximise the use of all Councillor's time, whilst ensuring Council has at its disposal all relevant information for making decisions. The Portfolio Councillor will contribute to Officer's understanding of the Council's preferences and direction.

BACKGROUND

Elected Members provide strategic input across the Council as an organization. However many individuals have specialised expertise or interests that can be more effectively utilized by the allocation of portfolios. This will allow Elected Members to build a stronger relationship with senior management and also to develop a significant knowledge base which will add value to the Strategic planning processes of Council. Portfolios have the added benefit of enhancing efficiency and also providing significant professional development opportunity for Elected Members

POLICY STATEMENT

The main role of Portfolio Councillors is to be a spokesperson within the Council Chamber for those issues falling within their allocated portfolio. Portfolio Councillors should adhere to Councillor Contact and Request Procedures, and not be involved in the day to day operation of the portfolio area. Councillors should make themselves available to attend relevant forums, committee meetings and conferences.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Portfolio Councillors will regularly meet with the relevant Director (and senior management as deemed appropriate) to be informed on the topical issues, proposed legislative changes and industry and technology updates.

Portfolio Councillors will be well informed of controversial legislation or proposals and will endeavour to have a detailed understanding of issues.

Portfolio Councillors will not independently of Council set policy, or give instructions on report preparation. Portfolio Councillors may discuss the proposed content of reports with Directors or senior officers but the report preparation and content will always remain the officer's responsibility, and it should be prepared free from influence or improper direction from the Portfolio Councillor.

Portfolio Councillors are not responsible for the performance outcomes of the portfolio area.

The communication of information to Councillors in general should not change, with all Councillors being kept well-informed of major controversial issues requiring all Councillor's knowledge for possible future Council action. Portfolio holders may advise what extra information should be communicated to Council. This may be via email or information report to Council.

There is no provision for a Portfolio Councillor to sign any documents as a portfolio holder.

Any press releases or media enquiries will be handled by the President and Portfolio Councillors will only speak to an issue if requested by the President.

The Portfolio Councillors' main role will be in the Council Chamber advising on topical issues and advocating for their portfolio area by requesting Council action or resources.

Council officers will facilitate the attendance of the portfolio Councillor at relevant committee meetings, forums and conferences.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Nil

LEGISLATION, TERMINOLOGY AND REFERENCES

NT Local Government Act

Conflict of Interest Policy

Code of Conduct Policy

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELEGATION

The CEO has delegated authority to implement this policy

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This Policy is to be reviewed every four (4) years, and may be reviewed at other times at the discretion of Chief Executive Officer.