



Policy Name	Responsibilities, Induction and Training (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members)	
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## 1. PURPOSE

The West Arnhem Regional Council is committed to ensuring our Elected Members, Local Authority Members and Council Committee Members (Members) have access to the corporate support, information, and resources they need to undertake their roles appropriately and to the best of their ability. This includes our commitment to building and sustaining strong professional working relationships between our Members, and between Members and our senior staff led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a framework for understanding the respective roles and responsibilities of Council, Local Authorities, and Council Committees.
- Confirm Council's commitment to a formalised process for providing new Members with induction training, and opportunities for ongoing training and development.

Provide guidance on how Members and Council staff are to interact, including the processes and requirements for incoming and outgoing correspondence record keeping.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members, and to all employees of the West Arnhem Regional Council with responsibility for applying this policy.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

In the context of this policy the following definitions apply:

**Correspondence Register** means the electronic record of Council's correspondence, kept by applying metadata in Council's compliant electronic recordkeeping system.





**Elected Member** means an individual elected to Council, including the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillors.

**Local Authority Member** means a member of a Local Authority as appointed by the West Arnhem Regional Council.

**Mandatory training** means any training that an Elected Member must complete as part of their roles and responsibilities.

**Member** means a collective noun referring to Elected Members, Local Authority Members, and Council Committee Members of the West Arnhem Regional Council.

#### 4. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to provide Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members with a framework for understanding their respective roles and responsibilities. Council is committed to ensuring our Members have access to the corporate support, resources, and knowledge they need to undertake their roles appropriately and to the best of their ability.

To this end, the policy confirms Council's commitment to provide Members with induction training and provides guidance on how Elected Members are to interact with Council employees, including in relation to incoming and outgoing correspondence record keeping requirements.

##### **Role and responsibilities of the Mayor and Elected Members of Council**

The West Arnhem Regional Council consists of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Ordinary Members. The role of Council and of the Mayor, is as stipulated in the *Local Government Act*.

In undertaking their roles, all Elected Members have a responsibility to comply with the provisions of the *Local Government Act*, *Local Government Regulations*, *Ministerial Guidelines* and Council policy and procedures.

##### *Additional Roles and Responsibilities of the Mayor*

The Office of the Mayor also entails some additional responsibilities, which are recognised and supported through the provision of Mayoral Allowance/s. See *Allowances and Expenses Policy (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members)*.

The role of the Mayor is viewed as a 24-hour responsibility. As such, it is important that the Mayor acts with integrity at all times, and in accordance with the *Code of Conduct*, as both their professional and personal conduct is likely to be viewed by the public as the conduct of the Mayor of the West Arnhem Regional Council.

The Mayor is also the principal spokesperson for Council, including with the media, and has a responsibility to be familiar with and comply with Council's *Marketing, Media and Communications Policy*.

##### *Elected Member Acting as a Formal Representative of Council*

From time to time, Council may be asked to nominate the Mayor (or another Elected Member), to act as a formal representative of Council on a committee or body organised by a government, non-government, or community organisation (e.g., LGANT, other community committees, boards etc.).

To be a recognised representative of Council, the Mayor/Elected Member in question will need to receive formal approval from Council.

As part of the approval process for appointing a recognised representative of Council, Council will undertake the following steps:



- Council will direct Council administration to undertake a due diligence check of the organisation in question, to ensure good governance practices are in place and to mitigate any risk of reputational damage to the Mayor/Member and/or Council.
- Council will take into consideration the following questions:
  - Are there any conflicts of interest, perceived or otherwise?
  - What are the cost implications with regard to resources, travel etc.?
  - Will the time, workload and subject matter conflict with the roles and responsibilities of the Mayor/Member and/or Council?
  - What benefits are evident for Council?



#### *Acting Principal Member Arrangements*

In the event that the Mayor will be travelling outside of the West Arnhem Region for a period of time greater than 14 days, the Mayor must notify the CEO within a reasonable time frame. Arrangements will be made for an Acting Principal Member, which in the first instance will be the Deputy Mayor.

#### *Elected Member Interaction with Council's Administrative Management*

Council is committed to building and sustaining strong professional working relationships between our Elected Members, and between Elected Members and Council's senior staff led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

During induction training, Members will receive information about the protocols for interaction with Council employees.

Council recognises that Council's Community Service Managers (CSM) are often a first point of contact for our Elected Members within communities. Any requests made by a Member to a CSM (or another member of Council staff) will go through the appropriate approval process.

Pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, an Elected Member (individually) – in contrast to Elected Members as a collective – has no direct authority in the absence of Council approval, to:

- Commit Council to a course of action; or
- Commit Council resources; or
- Direct staff under any circumstances.

An Elected Member, including the Mayor, may request the CEO to include an item on the Agenda for a forthcoming Meeting for Council consideration so to progress an idea, project, or proposal. Council can then determine the appropriate action.

#### *Correspondence and Record Keeping*

Council is committed to complying with the legislative requirements in relation to incoming and outgoing correspondence. All correspondence sent to or addressed by the Mayor or Council, is a record of Council and therefore, the correspondence forms part of Council property.

- Incoming correspondence is any document formally addressed to the Mayor or an Elected Member of Council. The document can be in paper or electronic format, including an attachment to an email.
- Outgoing correspondence is any document formally addressed by or on behalf of the Mayor or an Elected Member of Council. The document can be in paper or electronic format, including an attachment to an email.



A copy of all incoming and outgoing correspondence is to be saved into Council's *Correspondence Register*, in accordance with Council's *Procedure - Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence*.

All incoming and outgoing correspondence is to be:

- Saved into Council's electronic recordkeeping system.
- Entered into the *Correspondence Register*.
- Made available at the next scheduled Ordinary Council Meeting and included as an agenda item; and
- Archived as a permanent document.

Any correspondence tabled under the incoming and outgoing correspondence agenda item may also be tabled as a separate business paper in the same or subsequent meeting.

Any other item deemed necessary by the CEO, Mayor, or Deputy Mayor may be tabled as part of the Incoming or Outgoing Correspondence Agenda Item.

### **Role and Responsibilities of Local Authorities**

In accordance with the legislative requirements, Council maintains Local Authorities in the Gunbalanya (Oenpelli), Maningrida, Minjilang, and Warruwi communities.

Council is committed to the principles of good governance and to ensuring that our Local Authorities are supported to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively and efficiently with the community at the heart of all advice and recommendations that are provided to Council.

Council will actively support Local Authorities and where necessary facilitate and create opportunities for residents to participate in and/or contribute to local government.

Local Authorities operate within the framework of the *Local Government Act*, *Local Government Regulations*, *Ministerial Guidelines* (including *Guideline 8: Regional Councils and Local Authorities*), and Council policy and procedures.

In undertaking their roles, Local Authority Members have a responsibility to:

- Actively support the democratically elected governing body that is the West Arnhem Regional Council.
- Act as an advisory body only to Council. It is Council's prerogative to approve or not approve recommendations from Local Authorities.
- Ensure that community needs are at the forefront of all advice and recommendations to Council.

The CEO will ensure that there is secretariat and administrative support for Local Authorities.

Council will have an up-to-date list of its Local Authorities, with the names of members, meeting dates, agendas, and minutes, available on Council's website.

### **Role and Responsibilities of Council Committees**

Under the *Local Government Act*, Council may establish a Council Committee that consists of members appointed by Council. The functions of that Committee (either advisory or executive) will be assigned by Council and reflected in the Committee's Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference are to reflect any relevant legislative requirements and include directions on the roles and responsibilities of the Committee, Committee Membership, Committee Meetings, and Authority of the Committee. While the Committee remains under the control and direction of Council, the Committee may determine its own meeting procedures. See the *Scheduling and Conduct of Meetings (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy*.



In undertaking their roles, all Committee Members have a responsibility to comply with the provisions of the *Local Government Act, Local Government Regulations, Ministerial Guidelines, the Committee's Terms of Reference*, and Council policy and procedures.

In accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Regulations*, the CEO (or delegate) is responsible for maintaining a list of Council's committees and the membership of those committees.

### **Induction and Training for Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members**

Council is committed to providing Members with appropriate induction training to provide them with the context and knowledge they need to perform their roles efficiently, effectively and to the best of their ability.

Following the results of a general election being declared, Council will organise for all Elected Members to receive induction training, which will cover the following broad topics:

- **Orientation to Council:** which may include but is not limited to Areas and Elected Representatives of the West Arnhem Regional Council; Local Government Association of the NT (LGANT); Relationship between Council and the Northern Territory Government; Powers of Council; Roles and Responsibilities of Elected Members and Separation of Powers to Council and it's Staff; The Function of Local Authorities; The Function of Council Committees; Staffing profile, Organisational Chart and Statutory delegations.
- **Strategic Context and Directions:** which may include but is not limited to Current Operations, Key Policy Areas and Projects, Key Contractual Obligations, Funding Agreements and Initiatives, The Strategic Plan/Regional Plan, Core and Non-Core functions of Council.
- **Conduct of Members and Procedure at Meetings:** which may include but is not limited to Relationship and Interaction with Council staff, Policies applicable to Members (e.g., Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest etc), Meeting Procedure/s, Terms of Disqualification for Members.
- **Corporate Governance:** which may include but is not limited to Finance (Budget, Expenditure to date, rating principles), Risk and Compliance Management, Governance practices, Leadership practices, Community Building and Development, Diversity, and Inclusivity practices at Council.

Induction training session/s will be delivered at a location convenient to presenters and participants.

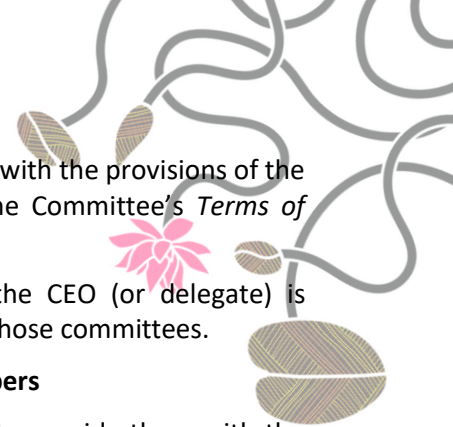
In the event of a casual vacancy that is filled by a new Elected Member, Council will organise to provide the new Member with induction training.

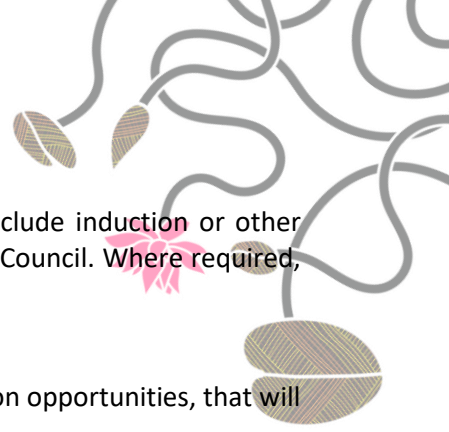
Local Authority Members and Council Committee Members will also receive induction training to support them to understand and undertake their respective roles to the best of their ability.

Local Authority Members will be invited to attend an orientation and information session, which will include (but is not limited to):

- Information to help them understand their role and responsibilities.
- Introductions to key contacts at Council.
- Familiarising them with the support and resources available to them in their roles as Local Authority Members.

Council Committee Members will also receive information to help them understand their roles and responsibilities, and to orientate them to the Terms of Reference for the Committee.





### *Mandatory Training for Elected Members*

Elected Members will be required to undertake mandatory training. This may include induction or other training sessions, with content and the timeframe for completion being set by the Council. Where required, mandatory training will be provided in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.

### *Ongoing Training and Development Opportunities for Members*

Council is committed to providing our Members with ongoing training and education opportunities, that will support them in their roles.

In addition to induction training, Elected Members receive a *Professional Development Allowance* to attend conferences or training courses that enable Elected Members to continue to develop their capabilities in their role. See *Allowances and Expenses (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy*.

Council will also look to capitalise on other opportunities for our Members to access training and development, which may include (but is not limited to):

- Having a guest speaker or presentation at a Meeting where Members are in attendance.
- Negotiating access to training or forums being held by Council for Council employees.
- Delivery of periodic, targeted training designed to address areas of knowledge that Council determines it would benefit from, and/or grow the capability of our Members to perform in their roles.

### **Responsibilities**

- All Members are responsible for actively participating in Induction training.
- The CEO (or delegate) is responsible for designing induction training program/s, in consultation with the Mayor.
- The Chief Capability Officer, People and Learning is responsible for coordinating preparation and delivery of all induction training.
- The Governance Coordinator is responsible for maintaining and making available on Council's website, an up-to-date list of Council's Local Authorities, the names of Members, meeting dates, agendas, and minutes.
- The CEO (or delegate) is responsible for maintaining a register of Elected Members in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations*.

The CEO (or delegate) is responsible for creating and maintaining the *Correspondence Register*, in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations*.

## **5. Responsibilities**

The Executive Manager, Office of the CEO is the Policy Custodian for this policy and is responsible for reviewing the operation of the policy (every 3 years or more frequently as may be required), and for monitoring continuing relevance, effectiveness, and consistency with related documents and the Law.

Following approval of this policy document, the Executive Manager, Office of the CEO (or a nominated delegate) is also responsible for ensuring that the implementation and communication plan is implemented and that all Council employees have access to the policy.



## 6. Related Documents

### Legislation and References

Local Government Act (NT)

Local Government Regulations (NT)

Local Government General Instruction Number 3: Audit Committees (NT)

Ministerial Guideline 8: Regional Councils and Local Authorities (NT)

### Policy documents

Allowances and Expenses Policy (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members)

Code of Conduct Policy (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members)

Conflict of Interest Policy (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members)

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members)

Local Authority Appointments, Resignations and Terminations Policy

Marketing, Media and Communications Policy

Scheduling and Conduct of Meetings Policy (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members)

Travel and Accommodation Policy (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members)

### Procedures

Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence Procedure

### Instructions, tools, guidelines, forms and templates

Register of Council Members

Correspondence Register

List of Committees and Membership

Magiq Guide – Correspondence Registration

