

# Acceptable Request Guidelines for Councillors

*Local Government Act 2009*



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# 1. Policy Statement

These guidelines are adopted by resolution of Townsville City Council (Council) in accordance with section 170A(7) of the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act) to:

- prescribe the way in which Councillors may make requests for information and advice from Council employees; and
- establish reasonable limits on requests that a Councillor may make.

Councillors must comply with these guidelines.

# 2. Principles

These guidelines record the way in which Councillors may:

- ask a Council employee for advice to assist the Councillor to carry out their responsibilities under the Act; and
- ask a Council employee for information related to the Council.

When creating these guidelines, Council has sought to strike a balance between:

- providing Councillors with access to advice and information required for Councillors to discharge their responsibilities under the Act;
- minimising the use of community resources for political purposes; and,
- responding to Councillors' requests in a timely way while minimising resource demands and the negative impact that those demands have upon service delivery.

Councillor requests for advice or information must comply with the principles which guide decision making by Councillors and Council employees stated in section 4 of the Act as:

- transparent and effective processes, and decision-making in the public interest;
- sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services;
- democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement;
- good governance of, and by, local government; and,
- ethical and legal behaviour of Councillors and local government employees.

# 3. Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors and Council employees.

# 4. Responsibility

Role	Responsibility
Councillors	Councillors are responsible for adhering to this guideline when

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Role	Responsibility
	making requests for information and advice from Council employees.
<b>Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managers</b>	Council's CEO and managers are to ensure that this guideline is understood and adhered to by all Councillors and employees.
<b>Councillor Support</b>	Councillor Support is responsible for receiving and processing any Councillor requests for information or advice in accordance with this guideline.
<b>Employees</b>	Employees are responsible for managing any Councillor requests for information or advice in accordance with this guideline. Employees must refer any requests that deviate from this guideline to their respective manager.

## 5. Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Advice</b>	means the provision of knowledge or opinion by a Council employee to assist a Councillor to carry out their duties under the Act. For example, a Councillor may ask a Council employee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to advise the Councillor on a process to be followed for an application made by a ratepayer to Council;</li> <li>to advise on appropriate wording for a resolution which the Councillor proposes;</li> <li>to advise on the wording of changes to policies or frameworks to achieve an outcome which the Councillor seeks.</li> </ul>
<b>Caretaker Period</b>	means the period during an election for the local government that - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) starts on the day when public notice of the holding of the election is given under the <i>Local Government Electoral Act</i>; and</li> <li>(b) ends at the conclusion of the election.</li> </ul>
<b>Conflict of Interest (COI)</b>	<b>For Councillors</b> - as defined in Schedule 4 of the Act. <b>For employees</b> - involves a conflict between the official duties and private interests of an employee in which the employee has

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Term	Definition
	<p>private or professional interests which could improperly influence the performance of their official duties and responsibilities.</p> <p>A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived or potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) <b>Actual conflict of interest</b> - where an employee has private or professional interests that conflict with their duty to put the public interest first.</li> <li>(b) <b>Perceived conflict of interest</b> - where an employee appears to have private or professional interests that conflict with their duty to put the public interest first. This may arise even if the employee has not acted in conflict with their duties to Council, but the existence of particular circumstances and relationships may create the perception amongst other employees or the public, that a conflict exists.</li> <li>(c) <b>Potential conflict of interest</b> - where it is reasonably possible that an employee's private or professional interests will give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest.</li> </ul>
<b>Councillor</b>	means all elected representatives including the Mayor.
<b>Councillor Support</b>	means dedicated administrative support and dedicated email set up exclusively for Councillors to submit requests for information and advice.
<b>Employees</b>	includes any persons employed directly by Townsville City Council but does not include volunteers, contractors, labour hire or contract personnel.
<b>Information</b>	means information contained in existing records or documents (in printed or electronic form) relating to Council and to which the Council has access. For example, a Councillor may ask the CEO for a copy of an application that was submitted by a ratepayer.
<b>Manager</b>	means an individual responsible for overseeing and coordinating specific functions, departments, teams or projects with Townsville City Council.
<b>Other Approved Delegate</b>	for the purposes of these guidelines, means any employee nominated in writing by the CEO or a Director as approved to receive requests for advice directly from Councillors. . The CEO

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Term	Definition
	<p>is authorised to amend that list as necessary without re-submitting this guideline to Council for adoption. Other approved delegates under these guidelines include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors;</li> <li>• General Managers;</li> <li>• Employees within the Executive Support Team; and,</li> <li>• Employees within the Councillor Support Team.</li> </ul> <p>For clarity, this authority enables the CEO to require a Councillor or Councillors to direct all requests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to an employee that the CEO nominates;</li> <li>• about a particular subject to an employee that the CEO nominates; or,</li> <li>• to a particular email address.</li> </ul> <p>When those requirements do not apply to all Councillors or are stipulated as applying only to a nominated date, it is not necessary that the CEO formally amends this guideline in order for the requirements to take effect.</p>
<b>Request</b>	means a request by a Councillor for information or advice.

## 6. Guideline

Section 170 of the Act states:

- (1) The Mayor may give a direction to the Chief Executive Officer.
- (2) However, a direction under subsection (1) must not be given if—
  - (a) it is inconsistent with a resolution, or a document adopted by resolution, of the local government; or
  - (b) it relates to the appointment of a local government employee under section 196(3); or
  - (c) it relates to disciplinary action by the Chief Executive Officer in relation to a local government employee under section 197 or a councillor advisor; or
  - (d) it would result in the Chief Executive Officer contravening a provision of an Act.
- (3) No Councillor, including the Mayor, may give a direction to any other local government employee, except in accordance with guidelines made under section 170AA about the provision of administrative support to Councillors. Councillors should ensure that when making a request for advice that the manner and wording of their request is not a direction to the employee.

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## 6.1. Mayor and Chairpersons

Section 170A(6) of the Act provides that these guidelines do not bind the Mayor or the chairperson of a committee who makes a request for advice about their role as chairperson of the committee.

To facilitate efficient provision of service by employees, the Mayor and chairpersons are encouraged to comply with these guidelines in all cases.

## 6.2. General Requirements for Requests

Service requests made by residents or by Councillors on behalf of residents are not considered as requests for advice or information.

When sending a service request to Councillor Support, Councillors should include sufficient information on the approved template, where possible, to enable employees to respond, for example, the name and contact details of a resident if employees are required to contact the resident/requestor.

Councillors request advice when they request an update on the status of a service request or the process to be followed for the actioning of a service request. Those requests for advice must be made in a way that complies with these guidelines.

Councillors are reminded that any request for information or advice they make, and the response/s provided may be subject to disclosure if an application for access is made under the *Right to Information Act 2009* or a court process.

When requesting information or advice Councillors must:

- act in accordance with the local government principles prescribed in section 4(2) of the Act;
- comply with all laws that apply to the local government, as well as Council policies, procedures and guidelines;
- act in accordance with the [Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland](#);
- act in accordance with all of the obligations set out in Chapter 6, Division 6 of the Act;
- not direct, or attempt to direct any Council employee to do anything;
- not behave toward Council employees in an overbearing or threatening manner;
- not coerce or entice, or attempt to coerce or entice, any Council employee to do anything that does not comply with these guidelines;
- not unreasonably disrupt a Council employee in the undertaking of that Council employee's routine employment obligations;
- not place, or attempt to place, any Council employee in a position that would create a conflict of interest (COI) for that Council employee, or that would compromise the integrity and honest performance of that Council employee;
- not make a request for information when provision of that information would breach any obligations of confidentiality under the law - for example, the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*, *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*, *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003*;
- during the caretaker period, not request information or advice that involves or relates to major policy decisions of Council or which will result in, or be likely to result in, any

inappropriate political gain or advantage for the Councillors (as per section 90A - 90D of the Act);

- act in good faith; and,
- be respectful, reasonable and professional.

### 6.3. Employee Attendance at Meetings

Any Councillor may request the CEO or relevant Director to arrange for an employee to attend a meeting involving the Councillor and a member of the public.

Such a request is not a request for advice under section 170A of the Act. The CEO or relevant Director is authorised to approve or refuse the Councillor's request. Reasons must be provided to the Councillor when a request is refused.

If a request for employees to attend a meeting is approved on the understanding that the Councillor will attend the meeting in person, and the Councillor will no longer attend that meeting in person, the Councillor must give notice of the Councillor's changed plans to the CEO or relevant Director and (if the Councillor knows the identity of the employee/s nominated to attend the meeting) the nominated employee/s. That notice must be given at least two hours prior to the scheduled start of the meeting unless there are exceptional circumstances that prevent the Councillor providing that period of notice.

### 6.4. Interaction between Councillors and Employees

In the case of a genuine emergency, Councillors should contact the CEO or Director of the relevant area of responsibility by phone to determine the appropriate approach and timelines.

[Attachment 1](#) provides a list of approved communication channels for Councillors.

In some instances, a Director or the CEO will direct individual employees to contact Councillors to provide specific information or clarification relating to a specific matter.

Councillors must ensure that:

- any interaction they have with employees is at all times carried out in a respectful, reasonable and professional manner;
- the Councillor contacts only specifically approved employees solely in relation to matters specific to that officer's area of individual responsibility, and that all other requests are directed through Councillor Support unless otherwise directed in writing by the CEO; and,
- the Councillor does not attempt to use Councillor Support in a way that might circumvent an access restriction under these guidelines.

### 6.5. Process for Making a Request for Information or Advice

A Councillor may request advice to assist in carrying out the Councillor's responsibility under the Act, or information about the Council, from:

- the CEO;
- an approved employee when the request is specific to that employee's area of responsibility;
- by lodging the request to the Councillor Support email; or,

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- direct to a Councillor Support administrative officer via telephone or in person.

The CEO may require:

- all of the Councillor's requests, or requests about a particular matter, be made to or be responded to by a nominated employee; and
- a request be made in writing.

A request for advice may include (without limiting the scope of such advice) advice as to wording for resolutions or policy amendments and so forth to achieve an end that a Councillor is seeking; ultimately, it will be a matter for Council as a whole whether a resolution passes or fails, or whether an amendment to policy passes or fails. Whether the request for advice can be accommodated will depend upon the resources required to provide such advice as referred to below.

When making a written request for information or advice to any approved employee, a Councillor must ensure that a copy of the request is:

- provided to the relevant Director; and
- copied to Councillor Support.

See [Attachment 1](#) for the approved communication channels for Councillors.

All Councillor requests to Councillor Support are to be acknowledged within one business day. The Act requires responses to be provided within 10 business days, except when responding to the request is complex and requires more time. Those requests must be responded to by an interim response provided within 10 business days and then a final response within 20 business days of the request date. The Council acknowledges that on some occasions provision of a comprehensive response can take more than 20 business days.

When responding to a Councillor's request is anticipated to require the allocation of resources in excess of three hours of employees' time, or the expenditure of funds, the Councillor may be asked to consider making the request through a Notice of Motion to a Council meeting.

## 6.6. Provision of Requested Documents or Information

The entitlement for Councillors to have access to information is solely for the purpose of exercising the roles and responsibilities of a Councillor. The power to request advice and information must not be used for political purposes and does not create the right to disclose information obtained by a Councillor to another person unless the information is already in the public domain.

Councillors must inform themselves about their responsibilities under the Act regarding the sharing or further distribution of Council information or advice. Councillors must not publish, share, or distribute information or contents of advice unless the Councillor has first determined that it is permissible for the Councillor to do so.

While not every document is considered 'Confidential', Councillors must be mindful that information provided may contain confidential material and must be handled appropriately to ensure that Council maintains its reputation and good standing with the community and meets its obligations at law.

Employees will endeavour to inform Councillors if a response contains confidential information, and it is not in the public interest to circulate the information to others, but Councillors are solely responsible for ensuring that they deal with information appropriately.

Councillors must not conclude that because some general topic is known to the public, Councillors are free to disclose details provided in a workshop about that topic.

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Before releasing any information, Councillors must be mindful of:

- section 171(1) and (3) - Use of information by Councillors;
- section 201F - Prohibited use of inside information; and,
- Councillors have an obligation under the Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland to:

*At all times strive to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of Council and avoid any action which may diminish its standing, authority or dignity.*

Councillor Support's responses are provided for the information of Councillors only. Councillor Support emails or emails from the operational arm of Council must not be copied or forwarded to residents. If a Councillor wishes to provide a resident with information contained in an email from Councillor Support, then - provided that the information is not confidential - the Councillor may extract the information and place it into a new email from the Councillor to the resident. The Councillor Support and operational arm email addresses are not to be revealed to members of the public.

Any simple requests that are not sent via Councillor Support will be forwarded or redirected to Councillor Support by employees. This may impact upon the time taken to respond.

Procedures relating to the conduct of Councillor Support are an operational matter to be determined by the CEO; however, Councillors will be consulted about any proposed changes.

## 6.7. Reasonable Limits on Requests for Information

These guidelines set reasonable limits on requests made by Councillors.

Councillors must not request information:

- that is a record of the conduct tribunal;
- if disclosure of the information to the Councillor would be contrary to an order of the court or tribunal;
- that would be privileged from production in a legal proceeding on the grounds of legal professional privilege;
- that would disclose personal information, other than when the information is solely required to assist the person about whom the request is made;
- which relates to a public interest disclosure under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*;
- that is confidential information under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*;
- that is about matters relating to the conduct of any Councillor pursuant to Part 3, Chapter 5A of the Act;
- that is a record in relation to an employee's recruitment, performance or remuneration with the exception of the recruitment and performance of the CEO; or,
- when responding to the request will place an unreasonable demand on Council's resources. The CEO is to advise the Councillor when they consider that a request contravenes this requirement. As a guide to the CEO, the Council records that any response that will require more than three hours of employee time to prepare may place an unreasonable demand on Council's resources and may be referred to Council so that Council can decide whether a response to the request is to be provided.

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## 6.8. Requests for Advice or Information

### 6.8.1 Requests to be Made in Writing and Responses Provided to Maximise Information Provision to Councillors

All requests for advice or information should be confirmed in writing.

To minimise resources dedicated to the provision of advice and information, and to facilitate discussion between Councillors about the advice or information provided, the Council directs the CEO to exercise a preference to providing the information or advice to all Councillors at the same time, preferably in a Councillor workshop.

As a guide, the Council records information that is likely to be of use, interest or value to more than a single Councillor in all cases other than when the information is relevant only to one resident/family.

### 6.8.2 Requests Made during Meetings

Confusion can occur when a Councillor asks a question during discussion of a matter at a meeting, and the answer cannot be provided during the meeting. In that case, it is not clear whether the Councillor remains interested in having the question answered.

To provide clarity in the processing of Councillor requests made during meetings, any question or request that cannot be answered during the meeting will only be answered after the meeting if:

- the majority of Councillors present at the meeting resolve that the request be made, in which case an answer will be prepared and provided to all Councillors either as soon as practicable, or during a future meeting or workshop as the CEO decides; or
- the majority of Councillors present at the meeting do not resolve that the request be made, if subsequent to the meeting a Councillor makes a written request for the information or advice in the manner provided for in these guidelines.

### 6.8.3 Requests for Information Relating to a Matter in Respect of which the Councillor Has a Prescribed or Declarable Conflict of Interest

Councillors have an obligation to ensure that they deal transparently with matters in which they have a COI.

A Councillor must not make a request in respect of a matter in which the Councillor may have a prescribed or declarable COI:

- without the Council first resolving that the Councillor may make the request; or
- except to the extent necessary to enable the Councillor to determine whether they have a COI in the matter,

unless:

- (a) the matter is an ordinary business matter as detailed in section 150EF of the Act applies; or
- (b) a Council meeting has resolved pursuant to section 150ES of the Act that the Councillor may participate in a decision about the matter; or
- (c) the Councillor:

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- first applies to the Council for approval to make the request;
- gives reasons as to why it is necessary that the Councillor make the request;
- sets out how the Councillor proposes to manage the Councillors' COI in the matter, or why that Conflict should not preclude the Councillor making the request; and
- the Council resolves to approve the Councillor making the request.

When the CEO believes that a Councillor has made a request in respect of a matter in which the Councillor may have a prescribed or declarable COI:

- (a) the CEO must in writing advise the Councillor about that belief, explaining the basis upon which the belief was formed;
- (b) the Councillor must either:
  - withdraw the request; or
  - in writing inform the CEO that the advice or information is requested to enable the Council to determine whether the Councillor has a prescribed or declarable COI; or
  - in writing certify to the CEO that the Councillor does not have a prescribed or declarable COI in the matter.
- (c) If the Councillor advises that the advice or information is requested to enable the Councillor to determine whether the Councillor has a prescribed or declarable COI, the CEO must restrict the advice or information provided to the Councillor to the minimum necessary to fulfill that purpose.
- (d) The time period set out in section 170A of the Act for the CEO to provide information or advice in response to the request does not commence until the CEO receives the Councillor's written response provided pursuant to clause 6.8.3(b).

## 6.8.4 Requests for Confidential Draft and Deliberative Process Documents

The operational arm of the Council frequently creates, receives and develops deliberative process documents that contain confidential information, and information that if released prematurely would enable a recipient to obtain a commercial advantage or to prejudice negotiations between the Council and affected persons and companies. There is a potential for the Council to become liable for loss suffered by others through the early release of such information.

Temporarily limiting Councillors' access to that draft information does not impact upon Councillor decision making because Councillors will be provided with reports and information to inform their decision making about the matter at the time the relevant Committee or Council as a whole is asked to make decisions about the matter to which the information relates.

Council wishes to minimise the potential for inappropriate or inadvertent release of deliberative process documents, and to minimise the opportunity for allegations to be made that a Councillor has intentionally or inadvertently released information contained in those documents.

The Council adopts the following reasonable limits upon a Councillor's ability to request and obtain deliberative process information before the deliberation to which the information relates is finalised.

If a Councillor requests advice, information or documents that are confidential and:

- are still in development by Council's administrative arm, including, but not limited to, documents that are the subject of internal consultation within Council's administrative arm,



or require further consideration and deliberation at an administrative level before being presented to Council (including to a Committee of Council) for consideration or a decision; or

- will be the subject of a future report to be brought before a Committee or the full Council, and the relevant employee forms the view that it is advisable or expedient to present the advice, information or documents as part of a report to a Committee or the full Council,

(together, the “Draft Information”), the employee who receives the request is not required to provide the Draft Information to the Councillor.

If a Councillor is informed that the Draft Information that the Councillor has requested will not be provided in response to the request, the Councillor may write to the CEO asking for a review of that decision. The review request need not be considered unless it includes an explanation about why the Councillor immediately requires the Draft Information to discharge their responsibilities as a Councillor. If a review request relates to a decision made by the CEO, then upon receipt of the review request the CEO must refer the request to the Mayor for decision.

### 6.8.5 Provision of Information by Allowing Councillors to ‘View Only’

Where ‘view only’ access to information is the preferred option available, Councillor Support officers will organise a suitable time and location. Appropriate reasons to allow ‘view only’ access to a Councillor are when:

- the information requested relates to a tender, quotation or contractual arrangement;
- the copying or scanning information would unreasonably divert resources of the relevant department from its other operations; or
- where there is an agreement or understanding by Council that documents will not copy or reproduce the information; or
- where the contents of the document are considered by the CEO to be of such a confidential nature that a risk could arise in the provision of the document in hardcopy or electronic format.

When the CEO reasonably believes that a response to a request involves providing a Councillor with access to information that has commercial sensitivity, the CEO has discretion to make the information available to the Councillor solely by the provision of access to view the documents, and without providing copies of the documents.

When a Councillor request is responded to by the provision of viewing access only, the Councillor must not photograph, transcribe or otherwise record any part of the information.

If a Councillor is informed that their request will be responded to by the provision of viewing access only, the Councillor may write to the Mayor asking for a review of that decision. The review request need not be considered unless it includes an explanation about why the Councillor requires copies of the documents to discharge their responsibilities as a Councillor.

### 6.8.6 Requests for Information or Advice Provided Previously

Councillors are under obligations to:

- carry out their responsibilities conscientiously and in the best interests of the Council and the community; and
- have proper regard for the obligations of Council employees.

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To discharge those obligations, it is necessary that before making a request, Councillors should first seek to determine whether the information or advice has been provided to them previously or is readily available to them by:

- conducting a simple search of those parts of the Council's information system that are available to Councillors; or
- determining if the information is available in the public domain.

When a Councillor requests information or advice that has been provided previously or is available in the public domain, the employee who receives the request:

- is not required to again provide the information to the Councillor; and
- must advise the Councillor about how to search for the information or where the information is publicly available.

### 6.8.7 Duty to Strive to Maintain and Strengthen the Public's Trust and Confidence in the Integrity of Council and Avoid Any Action which May Diminish Council's Standing, Authority or Dignity

Councillors have a duty to strive to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of Council and avoid any action which may diminish Council's standing, authority or dignity.

Councillors are encouraged to seek advice that will assist Councillors to discharge their responsibilities under the Act, and to seek information that will facilitate improving Council's governance and provision of services.

Under the Code of Conduct for Councillors, Councillors must not use employee resources for political purposes that may diminish the Council's standing, authority or dignity.

Public discussion about a Council decision is likely to diminish the Council's standing, authority or dignity if that discussion does not include a presentation of the majority view and the reasons for the decision.

Councillors must not make requests under these guidelines for advice or information when a dominant purpose of the request is to assist the Councillor to publicly criticise a Council decision in a way that may diminishes the Council's standing, authority or dignity. Such requests are only properly made in a Council meeting by a Notice of Motion, which facilitates debate about the request before Council resources are dedicated to responding to the request. The Council reserves to itself the decision-making authority in respect of those requests.

The CEO is to have regard to the public activities of all Councillors before responding to requests for advice or information. When Councillor's actions have given the CEO a reasonable belief that a dominant purpose of a request is to facilitate criticism of a Council decision in a way that may diminish the Council's standing, authority or dignity, the CEO is directed to refer the request to the next Council meeting without providing a response to the requesting Councillor.

## 6.9. Resident Telephone Calls

Council's SERVE Centre on 13 48 10 is open between 8am and 5pm Monday to Friday. All calls to Council outside these hours are directed to Council's after-hours service on 13 48 10.

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It is not appropriate for Councillors to provide residents with an employee's direct contact details. Similarly, employees will not provide residents with Councillors' contact details, other than the details which Councillors have designated for public use.

## 6.10. Other Approved Delegates

Other approved delegates responding to a Councillor's request for advice must ensure that their Director, or in the case the delegate is a Director, the CEO is informed of the receipt of and response to all significant Councillor requests.

If a delegate believes that the cost of actioning a Councillor request will be high (including significant impact to employee resources) and/or outside approved budget, the request must be brought to the attention of the CEO prior to being actioned.

If a delegate is concerned or unsure whether a request made by a Councillor is outside the scope of these guidelines or may not comply with these guidelines, the delegate must seek to resolve those concerns or clarify the matter with the Councillor in the first instance. If the Councillor maintains the request is to be met, the delegate:

- must not act upon the request; and
- must immediately obtain guidance from their Director or the CEO.

## 6.11. Obligation to Report Non-Compliance or Suspected Breaches of Guidelines

Councillors are reminded that when a request by a Councillor, including the Mayor, to an employee does not comply with these guidelines, the CEO must report the matter to the relevant department or agency under applicable legislation, as follows:

Agency	Responsibility
<b>Office of the Independent Assessor</b>	the responsible agency for complaints about the performance or conduct of a Councillor.
<b>Crime and Corruption Commission</b>	the responsible agency for matters involving a reasonable suspicion of corrupt conduct.

Council's Investigation Policy sets out how Council deals with complaints about the suspected conduct breach of Councillors as required by section 150AE of the Act.

## 7. Legal Parameters

*Crime and Corruption Act 2001*

*Information Privacy Act 2009*

*Local Government Act 2009*

*Local Government Regulation 2012*

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*Right to Information Act 2009*

*Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*

*Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003*

## 8. Associated Documents

Civic Protocol Policy

Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland

Confidentiality Policy

Councillor Engagement and Involvement in Planning Functions Policy

Councillor Expenses Reimbursement and Facilities Policy Customer Service Standards

Investigation Policy

Media Relations Policy

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## Attachment 1 - Approved Communication Channels for Councillors

Topic	Approved Communication Channel for Councillors								
	Mayor's Office	CEO's Office	Relevant Director	Relevant General Manager / Principal	Relevant Team Manager / Coordinator	Head of Councillor Support	Councillor Support Officers	Chief Legal Officer / In-House Counsel	IT Help Desk
Council plan, strategy and policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Operational issues, service delivery		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Media and communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Civic and ceremonial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Committee matters	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Councillor questions						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Legal matters								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Planning matters			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Regulatory matters				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Code of Conduct		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
IT help									<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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## Topics

Topic	Description
<b>Council plan, strategy and policy</b>	Issues relating to policy direction, forward scheduling, budget proposals or priority timetables.
<b>Operational issues, service delivery</b>	Information on day-to-day service including service levels, scheduling, or service-related advice to a member of the public
<b>Media and communications</b>	Confirmation of media content or more complex issues including service complaints
<b>Civic and ceremonial</b>	Invitations, protocol and events
<b>IT Help</b>	Day to day service matters associated with computer and/or mobile devices
<b>Committee matters</b>	Matters relating to the business or service-related content of a committee
<b>Councillor questions</b>	All requests for information or assistance of a general nature
<b>Planning matters</b>	Information on development applications, planning approvals, guidelines and tools, contentious projects
<b>Regulatory matters</b>	Inappropriate involvement by Councillors in all stages of matters of investigation and enforcement must not occur. Councillors may request only general information regarding such matters
<b>Code of Conduct</b>	<p>Part 5A of the Act imposes upon Councillors the obligation to comply with the Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland (the Code). Under the Code, Councillors must:</p> <p>(a) Carry out RESPONSIBILITIES conscientiously and in the best interests of the Council and the community</p> <p><i>For example, Councillors will, at a minimum, have the following responsibilities:</i></p> <p><i>1.1 Attend and participate meaningfully in all Council meetings, committee meetings, informal meetings, briefings, relevant workshops and training opportunities to assist them in fulfilling their roles other than in exceptional circumstances and/or where prior leave is given</i></p>

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Topic	Description
	<p><i>1.2 Respect and comply with all policies, procedures and resolutions of Council.</i></p> <p>(b) Treat people in a reasonable, just, RESPECTFUL and non-discriminatory way.</p> <p><i>For example, Councillors will, at a minimum, act in the following ways:</i></p> <p><i>2.1 Treat fellow Councillors, Council employees and members of the public with courtesy, honesty and fairness</i></p> <p><i>2.2 Not use abusive, obscene or threatening language (either oral or written) or behaviour towards other Councillors, Council employees or members of the public</i></p> <p><i>2.3 Have proper regard for other people's rights, obligations, cultural differences, safety, health and welfare.</i></p> <p>(c) Ensure conduct does not reflect adversely on the REPUTATION of Council</p> <p><i>For example, Councillors will, at a minimum, conduct themselves in the following manner:</i></p> <p><i>3.1 When expressing an opinion dissenting with the majority decision of Council, respect the democratic process by acknowledging that the Council decision represents the majority view of the Council</i></p> <p><i>3.2 When making public comment, clearly state whether they are speaking on behalf of Council or expressing their personal views</i></p> <p><i>3.3 At all times strive to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of Council and avoid any action which may diminish its standing, authority or dignity</i></p> <p>A Councillor request for information is not acceptable and is not properly made unless in making the request the Councillor has fully complied with the <i>Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland</i>.</p>