

ELECTED MEMBER PORTFOLIO POLICY

Type	Governance
Category	Corporate & Community
Responsible Officer	Director Corporate & Community
First Issued / Adopted	23 January 2019
Review Period	4 years
Last Reviewed	27 April 2022, 26 August 2020
Minutes Reference	OM135/22, OM252/20, OM13/19
Next Review Date	31 July 2026
Applicable Legislation	Local Government Act, 1999
Related Documents	Nil
Public Consultation Required	No
File Reference	9.63.1.4

1. PURPOSE

Port Pirie Regional Council (the Council) has nine Elected Members who come from different backgrounds and bring a diverse mix of skills, knowledge, networks and experience to the Council.

Elected Member Portfolios provide an opportunity for Council to effectively utilise the knowledge and expertise of its Elected Members in supporting optimal strategic and policy decision-making.

Elected Member Portfolios also provide an opportunity for individual Elected Members to deepen their knowledge of portfolio areas and to develop their skills and capabilities to support effective governance and decision-making by the Council.

The purpose of this Policy is to:

1. Define the role of a Portfolio Elected Member; and
2. Clarify expectations and set clear directions for the role of a Portfolio Elected Member.

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2. SCOPE

The Policy applies to all Elected Members of Port Pirie Regional Council.

The main objectives of a Portfolio Elected Member are to:

- deepen individual Elected Members knowledge of portfolio areas and develop skills and capabilities to support effective governance and decision-making by the Council;
- capture and benefit from the diverse mix of skills, knowledge, networks and experience each Elected Member brings for the collective benefit of Council and the community;
- enable Elected Members to advocate and “Champion” strategic and policy issues to Council and the community;
- assist an Elected Member to brief other Elected Members and Council on their specialist portfolio area(s);
- assist Members develop an increasing and more detailed understanding of matters being put to the Council, through the Portfolio Elected Member leading discussion of relevant items;
- foster and develop greater working relationships between Elected Members and senior management who have the operational responsibility for delivering outcomes in Portfolio areas; and
- spread the workload of Council and enable Council as a whole to be better informed.

3. DEFINITIONS

Act means Local Government Act, 1999.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The Mayor is the principal spokesperson for Council.

The main role of Portfolio Elected Members is to be a point of reference (if required) within the Council Chamber for those issues falling within their allocated portfolio. The role of the Portfolio Elected Member recognises separation of responsibilities between Elected Members and administration as required under the Local Government Act.

The Council as a whole is responsible for decision making and cannot delegate decision making to an individual Portfolio Elected Member.

All Elected Members:

- will receive the same information to make informed decisions;
- will retain the opportunity to ask questions about any information that is not clear;
- will be supported and encouraged to actively participate and debate all matters brought before Council; and
- will be supported and encouraged to use the Portfolio system as a means of improving information exchange and communication, not as a means of outsourcing accountability.

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4 POLICY STATEMENT

4.1. Role of a Portfolio Elected Member

Portfolio Elected Members will:

- meet as required with the relevant Directors (or senior management as deemed appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer) to be informed on the topical issues, proposed legislative changes and industry and technology updates relevant to the particular portfolio;
- be thoroughly familiar with the Council's Community Plan, in particular the objectives and strategies for the activities within the portfolio;
- liaise with the community and attend meetings, forums etc. as required with regard to their portfolio;
- liaise with other Portfolio Elected Members regarding matters that may affect their portfolio areas; and
- report to Council as considered necessary on relevant strategic activities within the portfolio.

The communication of information to Elected Members in general should not change, with all Elected Members being provided opportunity to be abreast of major issues. Portfolio holders may advise what extra information should be communicated to Council.

4.2. Terms of Appointment

The allocation of Portfolio Elected Members will occur within the first 3 Ordinary Meetings following the periodical election.

4.3. Accountability and Extent of Authority

Portfolio Elected Members do not hold any authority to make decisions or commitments on behalf on Council.

Portfolio Elected Members will not independently of Council set policy or direct Officers in carrying out their duties, are not responsible for the operational performance or outcomes of the portfolio area, have no specific delegation and cannot direct council staff.

Consistent with the Code of Conduct for Council members, Portfolio Elected Members must abide by and promote Council decisions and policies.

4.4. Briefing of Portfolio Members

Briefings of Portfolio Members will be undertaken consistent with the requirements of section 90 (8) of the Local Government Act, and the applicable Council code or policy, in that depending upon the topic(s) of the briefing, they will be deemed to be either informal gatherings or designated Information or briefing session.

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5.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

This policy will be available to be downloaded, free of charge, from Council's internet site: www.pirie.sa.gov.au

Copies will be provided to interested parties upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

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