



LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
AGENDA**

**Tuesday 8 October 2024
6:30 pm**

TO BE HELD IN THE Leeton Shire Council Chambers
23-25 Chelmsford Place, Leeton NSW 2705

Authorised for release: Jackie Kruger (General Manager)

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS

OBLIGATIONS	
Oath [Affirmation] of Office by Councillors	I swear [solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm] that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of Leeton Shire Council and that I will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> or any other Act to the best of my ability and judgement.
Code of Conduct / Conflicts of Interest	
It is also a requirement that the Mayor and Councillors disclose conflicts of interest in relation to items listed for consideration on the Agenda or which are considered at this meeting in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.	
Pecuniary Interests	<p>A Councillor who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Council is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the Council at which the matter is being considered, must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting.</p> <p>The Councillor must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed, or at any time during which the Council is voting on any question in relation to the matter.
Non-pecuniary conflict of interests	A Councillor who has a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter, must disclose the relevant private interest in relation to the matter fully and on each occasion on which the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises in relation to the matter.
Significant nonpecuniary interests	A Councillor who has a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in relation to a matter under consideration at a Council meeting, must manage the conflict of interest as if they had a pecuniary interest in the matter.
Non-significant nonpecuniary interests	A Councillor who determines that they have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter that is not significant and does not require further action, when disclosing the interest must also explain why conflict of interest is not significant and does not require further action in the circumstances.
Code of Meeting Practice	
Council Meetings	Meetings of Leeton Shire Council are conducted in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice which supports open, accessible and accountable government.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Recording of Council Meetings	
Videorecording	<p>In the spirit of open, accessible and transparent government, this meeting of the Leeton Shire Council is being streamed live on Council's website. By speaking at a Council meeting, members of the public agree to being recorded and must ensure their speech to the Council is respectful and use appropriate language. A person who uses defamatory, discriminatory or offensive language may be exposed to liability for which Council takes no responsibility. Any part of this meeting that is held in closed session will not be recorded.</p> <p>Council meetings are uploaded to Council's website and social media accounts. This allows our community greater access to Council proceedings, decisions and debate.</p>
Speaking / Addressing Council (Public Forum)	
Pre-Registration to Speak at Council Meetings	<p>Members of the public must register by Midday via Councils' website or email council@leeton.nsw.gov.au of the day of the Meeting to speak at Council Meetings.</p> <p>If you wish to register to speak, please fill the Apply to Address Council Form, available from the Leeton Shire Council website, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your name;• contact details;• item on the agenda you wish to speak to; and <p>whether you are for or against the recommendation in the agenda.</p>
Acknowledgment of Council	
Acknowledgment of Council	<p>Leeton Shire Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri People and their continued impact on our Community.</p> <p>We acknowledge their connection to the land, water and sky.</p> <p>We acknowledge all Aboriginal people who have made the Leeton Shire their home.</p> <p>As such we pay our respects to all Aboriginal Elders, past, present and emerging of our Shire.</p>

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6.1. GENERAL MANAGER'S MATTERS

ITEM 6.1.1. OATHS AND AFFIRMATIONS OF OFFICE

AUTHOR/S: Manager Governance, Corporate & Customer Service

APPROVER/S: Director of Corporate/CFO

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

There is a requirement under the *Local Government Act 1993*, for Councillors to take an Oath or Affirmation of office.

Oaths or Affirmations of office must be taken by each Councillor at or before the first meeting of the Council after being elected.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council records that, prior to the first meeting (this meeting) of Leeton Shire Council following the 14 September 2024 Local Government Elections,:

1. the Oath of office was undertaken by:
 - [list of Councillors taking the Oath to be inserted into resolution]
 2. the Affirmation of office was undertaken by:
 - [list of Councillors taking the Oath to be inserted into resolution]
-

REPORT

(a) Background

There is a requirement under section 233A the *Local Government Act 1993*, for Councillors to take an Oath or Affirmation of office. The prescribed words of the Oath and Affirmation are contained in (**Attachment 1**) this report.

(b) Discussion

An Oath or Affirmation is taken by each Councillor as the first item of business for the meeting. A record must be kept of the taking of the Oath or Affirmation and this will be done by recording the taking of the Oath or Affirmation by each Councillor in the minutes of this meeting.

It should be noted that under section 233A (3) (4) of the *Local Government Act 1993*:

- A Councillor who fails, without a reasonable excuse, to take the Oath of office or make an Affirmation of office in accordance with this section 233A (1) (2) is not entitled to attend a meeting as a Councillor until the Councillor has taken the Oath or made the Affirmation.
- Any absence of a Councillor from an ordinary meeting of the Council that the Councillor is not entitled to attend because of this section is taken to be an absence without prior leave of the Council.

The procedure for the taking of Oaths/Affirmations of Office will be as follows:

- Each Councillor will be required to stand and read either the Oath or Affirmation of Office (**Attachment 1**) when the General Manager calls their name.
- This will be video recorded and will be published on Council's website in the same way audio recordings of all Council meetings are published on Council's website.
- The names of those Councillors taking the Oath and those taking the Affirmation of Office will also be recorded in the Minutes of this Council meeting.

(c) Options

Nil – taking an Oath or Affirmation of Office is a statutory requirement.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

Nil – there is no direct financial impact for this matter.

(b) Policy

Code of Conduct (**Attachment 2**)

Code of Meeting Practice (**Attachment 3**)

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (section 233A)

(d) Risk

If a Councillor is absent without leave for three (3) consecutive Ordinary Council meetings their office is automatically declared vacant and a by-election (or countback within the first 18 months of the election if the Council has resolved that this will be the case) must be held.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

NSW Office of Local Government

(b) Internal

General Manager

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

9. Governance and Administration

9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy

This is in accordance with the Code of Conduct, Code of Meeting Practice and Procedures for the Administration of the Code of Conduct.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Oath or Affirmation of Office

Attachment 2 - Code of Conduct

Attachment 3 - Code of Meeting Practice



OATH OF OFFICE BY COUNCILLOR

I [name of Councillor] swear that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of Leeton Shire and the Leeton Shire Council and that I will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the *Local Government Act 1993* or any other Act to the best of my ability and judgment.



AFFIRMATION OF OFFICE BY COUNCILLOR

I [name of Councillor] solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of Leeton Shire and the Leeton Shire Council and that I will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the *Local Government Act 1993* or any other Act to the best of my ability and judgment.



LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

CODE OF CONDUCT
FEBRUARY 2022

DOCUMENT AUTHORISATION

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Governance Officer				
REVIEWED BY	Executive Manager IPR, Governance and Engagement				
DATE ADOPTED:	23 February 2022				
ADOPTED BY:	Leeton Shire Council				
RESOLUTION NO: (IF RELEVANT):	22/006				
REVIEW DUE DATE:	October 2024				
REVISION NUMBER:	5				
PREVIOUS VERSIONS:	DATE	DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS	AUTHOR/EDITOR	REVIEW/SIGN OFF	MINUTE NO (IF RELEVANT)
1	30 January 2013	Advice from Circular No 12-45	Director Corporate Services	Council	13/008
2	26 June 2013	Post-election review of Council policies/Formal adoption	Director Corporate Services	Council	13/136
3	27 January 2016	Advice Circular No 15-41/17	Director Corporate Services	Council	16/004
4	22 February 2017	Post-election review of Council policies/Formal adoption	Director Corporate Services	Council	17/008
5	23 February 2022	Advice of Circular 20-32 and post-election review of Council policies	Executive Manager IPR/ Governance & Engagement	Council	22/006

REVIEW OF THIS CODE

This Code will be reviewed within 12 months of a Local Government election or as required in the event of legislative changes and/or new Model Code of Conduct. Any major amendments to the document must be made by way of a Council Resolution. Minor amendments such as corrections to spelling and formatting may be made without approval from the Council.

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1. PURPOSE

Leeton Shire Council's Code of Conduct has been developed using the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* ("the Model Code of Conduct") and is made under section 440 of the *Local Government Act 1993* ("the Act") and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* ("the Regulation").

The Code of Conduct sets the minimum standards of conduct for council officials. It is prescribed by regulation to assist council officials to:

- understand and comply with the standards of conduct that are expected of them
- enable them to fulfil their statutory duty to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence (section 439)
- act in a way that enhances public confidence in local government.

2. TO WHOM DOES THIS CODE APPLY?

Councillors, administrators, members of staff, delegates of council (including members of council committees that are delegates of a council) and any other person engaged in activities for and on behalf of Council must comply with the applicable provisions of Leeton Shire Council's Code of Conduct. It is the personal responsibility of council officials to comply with the standards in the code and to regularly review their personal circumstances and conduct with this in mind.

Failure by a councillor to comply with the standards of conduct prescribed under this code constitutes misconduct for the purposes of the Act. The Act provides for a range of penalties that may be imposed on councillors for misconduct, including suspension or disqualification from civic office. A councillor who has been suspended on three or more occasions for misconduct is automatically disqualified from holding civic office for five years.

Failure by a member of staff to comply with a council's code of conduct may give rise to disciplinary action.

3. DEFINITIONS

In this code the following terms have the following meanings:

the Act	<i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
administrator	an administrator of a council appointed under the LGA other than an administrator appointed under section 66
committee	see the definition of "council committee"
complaint	a code of conduct complaint made for the purposes of clauses 5.1 and 5.2 of the Procedures.
conduct	includes acts and omissions
council	includes county councils and joint organisations
council committee	a committee established by a council comprising of councillors, staff or other persons that the council has delegated functions to and the council's audit, risk and improvement committee
council committee member	a person other than a councillor or member of staff of a council who is a member of a council committee other than a wholly advisory committee, and a person other than a councillor who is a member of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee
council official	includes councillors, members of staff of a council, administrators, council committee members, delegates of council and, for the purposes of clause 5.16, council advisers
councillor	any person elected or appointed to civic office, including the mayor and includes members and chairpersons of county councils and voting representatives of the boards of joint organisations and chairpersons of joint organisations
delegate of council	a person (other than a councillor or member of staff of a council) or body, and the individual members of that body, to whom a function of the council is delegated
designated person	a person referred to in clause 5.8
election campaign	includes council, state and federal election campaigns
environmental planning instrument	has the same meaning as it has in the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
general manager	includes the executive officer of a joint organisation
joint organisation	a joint organisation established under section 400O of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
local planning panel	a local planning panel constituted under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>

mayor	includes the chairperson of a county council or a joint organisation
members of staff of a council	includes members of staff of county councils and joint organisations
the Office	Office of Local Government
personal information	information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database and whether or not recorded in a material form) about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion
the Procedures	<i>the Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW</i> prescribed under the Regulation
the Regulation	<i>the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</i>
voting representative	a voting representative of the board of a joint organisation
wholly advisory committee	a council committee that the council has not delegated any functions to

4. GENERAL CONDUCT OBLIGATIONS

General conduct

- 4.1 You must not conduct yourself in a manner that:
- is likely to bring the council or other council officials into disrepute
 - is contrary to statutory requirements or the council's administrative requirements or policies
 - is improper or unethical
 - is an abuse of power
 - causes, comprises or involves intimidation or verbal abuse
 - involves the misuse of your position to obtain a private benefit
 - constitutes harassment or bullying behaviour under this code, or is unlawfully discriminatory.
- 4.2 You must act lawfully and honestly, and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence in carrying out your functions under the Local Government Act or any other Act (section 439).

Fairness and equity

- 4.3 You must consider issues consistently, promptly and fairly. You must deal with matters in accordance with established procedures, in a non-discriminatory manner.
- 4.4 You must take all relevant facts known to you, or that you should be reasonably aware of, into consideration and have regard to the particular merits of each case. You must not take irrelevant matters or circumstances into consideration when making decisions.
- 4.5 An act or omission in good faith, whether or not it involves error, will not constitute a breach of clauses 4.3 or 4.4.

Harassment and discrimination

- 4.6 You must not harass or unlawfully discriminate against others or support others who harass or unlawfully discriminate against others, on the grounds of age, disability, race (including colour, national or ethnic origin or immigrant status) sex, pregnancy, marital or relationship status, family responsibilities or breastfeeding, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status or political, religious or other affiliation.
- 4.7 For the purposes of this code, "harassment" is any form of behaviour towards a person that:
- is not wanted by the person
 - offends, humiliates or intimidates the person, and
 - creates a hostile environment.

Bullying

- 4.8 You must not engage in bullying behaviour towards others.
- 4.9 For the purposes of this code, "bullying behaviour" is any behaviour in which:
- a person or a group of people repeatedly behaves unreasonably towards another person or a group of persons and
 - the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety.

- 4.10 Bullying behaviour may involve, but is not limited to, any of the following types of behaviour:
- a) aggressive, threatening or intimidating conduct
 - b) belittling or humiliating comments
 - c) spreading malicious rumours
 - d) teasing, practical jokes or 'initiation ceremonies'
 - e) exclusion from work-related events
 - f) unreasonable work expectations, including too much or too little work, or work below or beyond a worker's skill level
 - g) displaying offensive material
 - h) pressure to behave in an inappropriate manner.
- 4.11 Reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable manner does not constitute bullying behaviour for the purposes of this code. Examples of reasonable management action may include, but are not limited to:
- a) performance management processes
 - b) disciplinary action for misconduct
 - c) informing a worker about unsatisfactory work performance or inappropriate work behaviour
 - d) directing a worker to perform duties in keeping with their job
 - e) maintaining reasonable workplace goals and standards
 - f) legitimately exercising a regulatory function
 - g) legitimately implementing a council policy or administrative processes.

Work health and safety

- 4.12 All council officials, including councillors, owe statutory duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WH&S Act). You must comply with your duties under the WH&S Act and your responsibilities under any policies or procedures adopted by the council to ensure workplace health and safety. Specifically, you must:
- a) take reasonable care for your own health and safety
 - b) take reasonable care that your acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons
 - c) comply, so far as you are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given to ensure compliance with the WH&S Act and any policies or procedures adopted by the council to ensure workplace health and safety
 - d) cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the council relating to workplace health or safety that has been notified to council staff
 - e) report accidents, incidents, near misses, to the general manager or such other staff member nominated by the general manager, and take part in any incident investigations
 - f) so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, co-operate and coordinate with all others who have a duty under the WH&S Act in relation to the same matter.

Land use planning, development assessment and other regulatory functions

- 4.13 You must ensure that land use planning, development assessment and other regulatory decisions are properly made, and that all parties are dealt with fairly. You must avoid any occasion for suspicion of improper conduct in the exercise of land use planning, development assessment and other regulatory functions.
- 4.14 In exercising land use planning, development assessment and other regulatory functions, you

must ensure that no action, statement or communication between yourself and others conveys any suggestion of willingness to improperly provide concessions or preferential or unduly unfavourable treatment.

Binding caucus votes

- 4.15 You must not participate in binding caucus votes in relation to matters to be considered at a council or committee meeting.
- 4.16 For the purposes of clause 4.15, a binding caucus vote is a process whereby a group of councillors are compelled by a threat of disciplinary or other adverse action to comply with a predetermined position on a matter before the council or committee, irrespective of the personal views of individual members of the group on the merits of the matter before the council or committee.
- 4.17 Clause 4.15 does not prohibit councillors from discussing a matter before the council or committee prior to considering the matter in question at a council or committee meeting, or from voluntarily holding a shared view with other councillors on the merits of a matter.
- 4.18 Clause 4.15 does not apply to a decision to elect the mayor or deputy mayor, or to nominate a person to be a member of a council committee or a representative of the council on an external body.

Obligations in relation to meetings

- 4.19 You must comply with rulings by the chair at council and committee meetings or other proceedings of the council unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.
- 4.20 You must not engage in bullying behaviour (as defined under this Part) towards the chair, other council officials or any members of the public present during council or committee meetings or other proceedings of the council (such as, but not limited to, workshops and briefing sessions).
- 4.21 You must not engage in conduct that disrupts council or committee meetings or other proceedings of the council (such as, but not limited to, workshops and briefing sessions), or that would otherwise be inconsistent with the orderly conduct of meetings.
- 4.22 If you are a councillor, you must not engage in any acts of disorder or other conduct that is intended to prevent the proper or effective functioning of the council, or of a committee of the council. Without limiting this clause, you must not:
 - a) leave a meeting of the council or a committee for the purposes of depriving the meeting of a quorum, or
 - b) submit a rescission motion with respect to a decision for the purposes of voting against it to prevent another councillor from submitting a rescission motion with respect to the same decision, or
 - c) deliberately seek to impede the consideration of business at a meeting.

5. PECUNIARY INTERESTS

What is a pecuniary interest?

- 5.1 A pecuniary interest is an interest that you have in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to you or a person referred to in clause 5.3.
- 5.2 You will not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision you might make in relation to the matter, or if the interest is of a kind specified in clause 5.6.
- 5.3 For the purposes of this Part, you will have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is:
- a) your interest, or
 - b) the interest of your spouse or de facto partner, your relative, or your partner or employer, or
 - c) a company or other body of which you, or your nominee, partner or employer, is a shareholder or member.
- 5.4 For the purposes of clause 5.3:
- a) Your "relative" is any of the following:
 - i) your parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child
 - ii) your spouse's or de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child
 - iii) the spouse or de facto partner of a person referred to in paragraphs (i) and (ii).
 - b) "de facto partner" has the same meaning as defined in section 21C of the *Interpretation Act 1987*.
- 5.5 You will not have a pecuniary interest in relation to a person referred to in subclauses 5.3(b) or (c):
- a) if you are unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of your spouse, de facto partner, relative, partner, employer or company or other body, or
 - b) just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, a council or a statutory body, or is employed by the Crown, or
 - c) just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of a council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter, so long as the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

What interests do not have to be disclosed?

- 5.6 You do not have to disclose the following interests for the purposes of this Part:
- a) your interest as an elector
 - b) your interest as a ratepayer or person liable to pay a charge
 - c) an interest you have in any matter relating to the terms on which the provision of a service or the supply of goods or commodities is offered to the public generally, or to a section of the public that includes persons who are not subject to this code
 - d) an interest you have in any matter relating to the terms on which the provision of a service or the supply of goods or commodities is offered to your relative by the council

in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as apply to persons who are not subject to this code

- e) an interest you have as a member of a club or other organisation or association, unless the interest is as the holder of an office in the club or organisation (whether remunerated or not)
- f) if you are a council committee member, an interest you have as a person chosen to represent the community, or as a member of a non-profit organisation or other community or special interest group, if you have been appointed to represent the organisation or group on the council committee
- g) an interest you have relating to a contract, proposed contract or other matter, if the interest arises only because of a beneficial interest in shares in a company that does not exceed 10 per cent of the voting rights in the company
- h) an interest you have arising from the proposed making by the council of an agreement between the council and a corporation, association or partnership, being a corporation, association or partnership that has more than 25 members, if the interest arises because your relative is a shareholder (but not a director) of the corporation, or is a member (but not a member of the committee) of the association, or is a partner of the partnership
- i) an interest you have arising from the making by the council of a contract or agreement with your relative for, or in relation to, any of the following, but only if the proposed contract or agreement is similar in terms and conditions to such contracts and agreements as have been made, or as are proposed to be made, by the council in respect of similar matters with other residents of the area:
 - i) the performance by the council at the expense of your relative of any work or service in connection with roads or sanitation
 - ii) security for damage to footpaths or roads
 - iii) any other service to be rendered, or act to be done, by the council by or under any Act conferring functions on the council, or by or under any contract
- j) an interest relating to the payment of fees to councillors (including the mayor and deputy mayor)
- k) an interest relating to the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to councillors (including the mayor and deputy mayor) in accordance with a policy under section 252 of the Act,
- l) an interest relating to an election to the office of mayor arising from the fact that a fee for the following 12 months has been determined for the office of mayor
- m) an interest of a person arising from the passing for payment of a regular account for the wages or salary of an employee who is a relative of the person
- n) an interest arising from being covered by, or a proposal to be covered by, indemnity insurance as a councillor or a council committee member
- o) an interest arising from the appointment of a councillor to a body as a representative or delegate of the council, whether or not a fee or other recompense is payable to the representative or delegate.

5.7 For the purposes of clause 5.6, "relative" has the same meaning as in clause 5.4, but includes your spouse or de facto partner.

What disclosures must be made by a designated person?

- 5.8 Designated persons include:
- a) the general manager
 - b) other senior staff of the council for the purposes of section 332 of the Act

- c) a person (other than a member of the senior staff of the council) who is a member of staff of the council or a delegate of the council and who holds a position identified by the council as the position of a designated person because it involves the exercise of functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the person's duty as a member of staff or delegate and the person's private interest
 - d) a person (other than a member of the senior staff of the council) who is a member of a committee of the council identified by the council as a committee whose members are designated persons because the functions of the committee involve the exercise of the council's functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the member's duty as a member of the committee and the member's private interest.
- 5.9 A designated person:
- (a) must prepare and submit written returns of interests in accordance with clauses 5.21, and
 - (b) must disclose pecuniary interests in accordance with clause 5.10.
- 5.10 A designated person must disclose in writing to the general manager (or if the person is the general manager, to the council) the nature of any pecuniary interest the person has in any council matter with which the person is dealing as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the interest.
- 5.11 Clause 5.10 does not require a designated person who is a member of staff of the council to disclose a pecuniary interest if the interest relates only to the person's salary as a member of staff, or to their other conditions of employment.
- 5.12 The general manager must, on receiving a disclosure from a designated person, deal with the matter to which the disclosure relates or refer it to another person to deal with.
- 5.13 A disclosure by the general manager must, as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, be laid on the table at a meeting of the council and the council must deal with the matter to which the disclosure relates or refer it to another person to deal with.

What disclosures must be made by council staff other than designated persons?

- 5.14 A member of staff of council, other than a designated person, must disclose in writing to their manager or the general manager the nature of any pecuniary interest they have in a matter they are dealing with as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the interest.
- 5.15 The staff member's manager or the general manager must, on receiving a disclosure under clause 5.14, deal with the matter to which the disclosure relates or refer it to another person to deal with.

What disclosures must be made by council advisers?

- 5.16 A person who, at the request or with the consent of the council or a council committee, gives advice on any matter at any meeting of the council or committee, must disclose the nature of any pecuniary interest the person has in the matter to the meeting at the time the advice is given. The person is not required to disclose the person's interest as an adviser.
- 5.17 A person does not breach clause 5.16 if the person did not know, and could not reasonably be expected to have known, that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which they had a pecuniary interest.

What disclosures must be made by a council committee member?

- 5.18 A council committee member must disclose pecuniary interests in accordance with clause 5.28 and comply with clause 5.29.
- 5.19 For the purposes of clause 5.18, a "council committee member" includes a member of staff of council who is a member of the committee.

What disclosures must be made by a councillor?

- 5.20 A councillor:
- a) must prepare and submit written returns of interests in accordance with clause 5.21, and
 - b) must disclose pecuniary interests in accordance with clause 5.28 and comply with clause 5.29 where it is applicable.

Disclosure of interests in written returns

- 5.21 A councillor or designated person must make and lodge with the general manager a return in the form set out in Schedule 2 to this code, disclosing the councillor's or designated person's interests as specified in schedule 1 to this code within 3 months after:
- a) becoming a councillor or designated person, and
 - b) 30 June of each year, and
 - c) the councillor or designated person becoming aware of an interest they are required to disclose under schedule 1 that has not been previously disclosed in a return lodged under paragraphs (a) or (b).
- 5.22 A person need not make and lodge a return under clause 5.21, paragraphs (a) and (b) if:
- a) they made and lodged a return under that clause in the preceding 3 months, or
 - b) they have ceased to be a councillor or designated person in the preceding 3 months.
- 5.23 A person must not make and lodge a return that the person knows or ought reasonably to know is false or misleading in a material particular.
- 5.24 The general manager must keep a register of returns required to be made and lodged with the general manager.
- 5.25 Returns required to be lodged with the general manager under clause 5.21(a) and (b) must be tabled at the first meeting of the council after the last day the return is required to be lodged.
- 5.26 Returns required to be lodged with the general manager under clause 5.21(c) must be tabled at the next council meeting after the return is lodged.
- 5.27 Information contained in returns made and lodged under clause 5.21 is to be made publicly available in accordance with the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, the *Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009* and any guidelines issued by the Information Commissioner.

Disclosure of pecuniary interests at meetings

- 5.28 A councillor or a council committee member who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the council is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the council or committee at which the matter is being considered, must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.
- 5.29 The councillor or council committee member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the council or committee:
- a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or

- committee, or
- b) at any time during which the council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.
- 5.30 In the case of a meeting of a board of a joint organisation, a voting representative is taken to be present at the meeting for the purposes of clauses 5.28 and 5.29 where they participate in the meeting by telephone or other electronic means.
- 5.31 A disclosure made at a meeting of a council or council committee must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 5.32 A general notice may be given to the general manager in writing by a councillor or a council committee member to the effect that the councillor or council committee member, or the councillor's or council committee member's spouse, de facto partner or relative, is:
- a) a member of, or in the employment of, a specified company or other body, or
 - b) a partner of, or in the employment of, a specified person.
- Such a notice is, unless and until the notice is withdrawn or until the end of the term of the council in which it is given (whichever is the sooner), sufficient disclosure of the councillor's or council committee member's interest in a matter relating to the specified company, body or person that may be the subject of consideration by the council or council committee after the date of the notice.
- 5.33 A councillor or a council committee member is not prevented from being present at and taking part in a meeting at which a matter is being considered, or from voting on the matter, merely because the councillor or council committee member has an interest in the matter of a kind referred to in clause 5.6.
- 5.34 A person does not breach clauses 5.28 or 5.29 if the person did not know, and could not reasonably be expected to have known, that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which they had a pecuniary interest.
- 5.35 Despite clause 5.29, a councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter may participate in a decision to delegate consideration of the matter in question to another body or person.
- 5.36 Clause 5.29 does not apply to a councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting if:
- a) the matter is a proposal relating to:
 - i. the making of a principal environmental planning instrument applying to the whole or a significant portion of the council's area, or
 - ii. the amendment, alteration or repeal of an environmental planning instrument where the amendment, alteration or repeal applies to the whole or a significant portion of the council's area, and
 - b) the pecuniary interest arises only because of an interest of the councillor in the councillor's principal place of residence or an interest of another person (whose interests are relevant under clause 5.3) in that person's principal place of residence, and
 - c) the councillor made a special disclosure under clause 5.37 in relation to the interest before the commencement of the meeting.
- 5.37 A special disclosure of a pecuniary interest made for the purposes of clause 5.36(c) must:
- a) be in the form set out in schedule 3 of this code and contain the information required by that form, and
 - b) be laid on the table at a meeting of the council as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, and the information contained in the special disclosure is to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

- 5.38 The Minister for Local Government may, conditionally or unconditionally, allow a councillor or a council committee member who has a pecuniary interest in a matter with which the council is concerned to be present at a meeting of the council or committee, to take part in the consideration or discussion of the matter and to vote on the matter if the Minister is of the opinion:
- a) that the number of councillors prevented from voting would be so great a proportion of the whole as to impede the transaction of business, or
 - b) that it is in the interests of the electors for the area to do so.
- 5.39 A councillor or a council committee member with a pecuniary interest in a matter who is permitted to be present at a meeting of the council or committee, to take part in the consideration or discussion of the matter and to vote on the matter under clause 5.38, must still disclose the interest they have in the matter in accordance with clause 5.28.

6. NON-PECUNIARY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

What is a non-pecuniary conflict of interest?

- 6.1 Non-pecuniary interests are private or personal interests a council official has that do not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in clause 5.1 of this code. These commonly arise out of family or personal relationships, or out of involvement in sporting, social, religious or other cultural groups and associations, and may include an interest of a financial nature.
- 6.2 A non-pecuniary conflict of interest exists where a reasonable and informed person would perceive that you could be influenced by a private interest when carrying out your official functions in relation to a matter.
- 6.3 The personal or political views of a council official do not constitute a private interest for the purposes of clause 6.2.
- 6.4 Non-pecuniary conflicts of interest must be identified and appropriately managed to uphold community confidence in the probity of council decision-making. The onus is on you to identify any non-pecuniary conflict of interest you may have in matters that you deal with, to disclose the interest fully and in writing, and to take appropriate action to manage the conflict in accordance with this code.
- 6.5 When considering whether or not you have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter you are dealing with, it is always important to think about how others would view your situation.

Managing non-pecuniary conflicts of interest

- 6.6 Where you have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter for the purposes of clause 6.2, you must disclose the relevant private interest you have in relation to the matter fully and in writing as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the non-pecuniary conflict of interest and on each occasion on which the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises in relation to the matter. In the case of members of council staff other than the general manager, such a disclosure is to be made to the staff member's manager. In the case of the general manager, such a disclosure is to be made to the mayor.
- 6.7 If a disclosure is made at a council or committee meeting, both the disclosure and the nature of the interest must be recorded in the minutes on each occasion on which the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises. This disclosure constitutes disclosure in writing for the purposes of clause 6.6.
- 6.8 How you manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest will depend on whether or not it is significant.
- 6.9 As a general rule, a non-pecuniary conflict of interest will be significant where it does not involve a pecuniary interest for the purposes of clause 5.1, but it involves:
 - a) a relationship between a council official and another person who is affected by a decision or a matter under consideration that is particularly close, such as a current or former spouse or de facto partner, a relative for the purposes of clause 5.4 or another person from the council official's extended family that the council official has a close personal relationship with, or another person living in the same household
 - b) other relationships with persons who are affected by a decision or a matter under consideration that are particularly close, such as friendships and business relationships. Closeness is defined by the nature of the friendship or business relationship, the

- frequency of contact and the duration of the friendship or relationship.
- c) an affiliation between the council official and an organisation (such as a sporting body, club, religious, cultural or charitable organisation, corporation or association) that is affected by a decision or a matter under consideration that is particularly strong. The strength of a council official's affiliation with an organisation is to be determined by the extent to which they actively participate in the management, administration or other activities of the organisation.
 - d) membership, as the council's representative, of the board or management committee of an organisation that is affected by a decision or a matter under consideration, in circumstances where the interests of the council and the organisation are potentially in conflict in relation to the particular matter
 - e) a financial interest (other than an interest of a type referred to in clause 5.6) that is not a pecuniary interest for the purposes of clause 5.1.
 - f) the conferral or loss of a personal benefit other than one conferred or lost as a member of the community or a broader class of people affected by a decision.
- 6.10 Significant non-pecuniary conflicts of interest must be managed in one of two ways:
- a) by not participating in consideration of, or decision making in relation to, the matter in which you have the significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest and the matter being allocated to another person for consideration or determination, or
 - b) if the significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises in relation to a matter under consideration at a council or committee meeting, by managing the conflict of interest as if you had a pecuniary interest in the matter by complying with clauses 5.28 and 5.29.
- 6.11 If you determine that you have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter that is not significant and does not require further action, when disclosing the interest, you must also explain in writing why you consider that the non-pecuniary conflict of interest is not significant and does not require further action in the circumstances.
- 6.12 If you are a member of staff of council other than the general manager, the decision on which option should be taken to manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest must be made in consultation with and at the direction of your manager. In the case of the general manager, the decision on which option should be taken to manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest must be made in consultation with and at the direction of the mayor.
- 6.13 Despite clause 6.10(b), a councillor who has a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter, may participate in a decision to delegate consideration of the matter in question to another body or person.
- 6.14 Council committee members are not required to declare and manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in accordance with the requirements of this Part where it arises from an interest they have as a person chosen to represent the community, or as a member of a non-profit organisation or other community or special interest group, if they have been appointed to represent the organisation or group on the council committee.

Political donations

- 6.15 Councillors should be aware that matters before council or committee meetings involving their political donors may also give rise to a non-pecuniary conflict of interest.
- 6.16 Where you are a councillor and have received or knowingly benefitted from a reportable political donation:
- a) made by a major political donor in the previous four years, and

- b) the major political donor has a matter before council, you must declare a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in the matter, disclose the nature of the interest, and manage the conflict of interest as if you had a pecuniary interest in the matter by complying with clauses 5.28 and 5.29. A disclosure made under this clause must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 6.17 For the purposes of this Part:
- a) a "reportable political donation" has the same meaning as it has in section 6 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*
 - b) "major political donor" has the same meaning as it has in the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*.
- 6.18 Councillors should note that political donations that are not a "reportable political donation", or political donations to a registered political party or group by which a councillor is endorsed, may still give rise to a non-pecuniary conflict of interest. Councillors should determine whether or not such conflicts are significant for the purposes of clause 6.9 and take the appropriate action to manage them.
- 6.19 Despite clause 6.16, a councillor who has received or knowingly benefitted from a reportable political donation of the kind referred to in that clause, may participate in a decision to delegate consideration of the matter in question to another body or person.

Loss of quorum as a result of compliance with this Part

- 6.20 A councillor who would otherwise be precluded from participating in the consideration of a matter under this Part because they have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in the matter is permitted to participate in consideration of the matter if:
- a) the matter is a proposal relating to:
 - i. the making of a principal environmental planning instrument applying to the whole or a significant portion of the council's area, or
 - ii. the amendment, alteration or repeal of an environmental planning instrument where the amendment, alteration or repeal applies to the whole or a significant portion of the council's area, and
 - b) the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises only because of an interest that a person has in that person's principal place of residence, and
 - c) the councillor discloses the interest they have in the matter that would otherwise have precluded their participation in consideration of the matter under this Part in accordance with clause 6.6.
- 6.21 The Minister for Local Government may, conditionally or unconditionally, allow a councillor or a council committee member who is precluded under this Part from participating in the consideration of a matter to be present at a meeting of the council or committee, to take part in the consideration or discussion of the matter and to vote on the matter if the Minister is of the opinion:
- a) that the number of councillors prevented from voting would be so great a proportion of the whole as to impede the transaction of business, or
 - b) that it is in the interests of the electors for the area to do so.
- 6.22 Where the Minister exempts a councillor or committee member from complying with a requirement under this Part under clause 6.21, the councillor or committee member must still disclose any interests they have in the matter the exemption applies to, in accordance with clause 6.6.

Other business or employment

- 6.23 The general manager must not engage, for remuneration, in private employment, contract

work or other business outside the service of the council without the approval of the council.

- 6.24 A member of staff must not engage, for remuneration, in private employment, contract work or other business outside the service of the council that relates to the business of the council or that might conflict with the staff member's council duties unless they have notified the general manager in writing of the employment, work or business and the general manager has given their written approval for the staff member to engage in the employment, work or business.
- 6.25 The general manager may at any time prohibit a member of staff from engaging, for remuneration, in private employment, contract work or other business outside the service of the council that relates to the business of the council, or that might conflict with the staff member's council duties.
- 6.26 A member of staff must not engage, for remuneration, in private employment, contract work or other business outside the service of the council if prohibited from doing so.
- 6.27 Members of staff must ensure that any outside employment, work or business they engage in will not:
- a) conflict with their official duties
 - b) involve using confidential information or council resources obtained through their work with the council including where private use is permitted
 - c) require them to work while on council duty
 - d) discredit or disadvantage the council
 - e) pose, due to fatigue, a risk to their health or safety, or to the health and safety of their co-workers.

Personal dealings with council

- 6.28 You may have reason to deal with your council in your personal capacity (for example, as a ratepayer, recipient of a council service or applicant for a development consent granted by council). You must not expect or request preferential treatment in relation to any matter in which you have a private interest because of your position. You must avoid any action that could lead members of the public to believe that you are seeking preferential treatment.
- 6.29 You must undertake any personal dealings you have with the council in a manner that is consistent with the way other members of the community deal with the council. You must also ensure that you disclose and appropriately manage any conflict of interest you may have in any matter in accordance with the requirements of this code.

7. PERSONAL BENEFIT

- 7.1 For the purposes of this Part, a gift or a benefit is something offered to or received by a council official or someone personally associated with them for their personal use and enjoyment.
- 7.2 A reference to a gift or benefit in this Part does not include:
- a) items with a value of \$10 or less
 - b) a political donation for the purposes of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*
 - c) a gift provided to the council as part of a cultural exchange or sister-city relationship that is not converted for the personal use or enjoyment of any individual council official or someone personally associated with them
 - d) a benefit or facility provided by the council to an employee or councillor
 - e) attendance by a council official at a work-related event or function for the purposes of performing their official duties, or
 - f) free or subsidised meals, beverages or refreshments of token value provided to council officials in conjunction with the performance of their official duties such as, but not limited to:
 - i. the discussion of official business
 - ii. work-related events such as council-sponsored or community events, training, education sessions or workshops
 - iii. conferences
 - iv. council functions or events
 - v. social functions organised by groups, such as council committees and community organisations.

Gifts and benefits

- 7.3 You must avoid situations that would give rise to the appearance that a person or body is attempting to secure favourable treatment from you or from the council, through the provision of gifts, benefits or hospitality of any kind to you or someone personally associated with you.
- 7.4 A gift or benefit is deemed to have been accepted by you for the purposes of this Part, where it is received by you or someone personally associated with you.

How are offers of gifts and benefits to be dealt with?

- 7.5 You must not:
- a) seek or accept a bribe or other improper inducement
 - b) seek gifts or benefits of any kind
 - c) accept any gift or benefit that may create a sense of obligation on your part, or may be perceived to be intended or likely to influence you in carrying out your public duty
 - d) subject to clause 7.7, accept any gift or benefit of more than token value as defined by clause 7.9
 - e) accept an offer of cash or a cash-like gift as defined by clause 7.13, regardless of the amount
 - f) participate in competitions for prizes where eligibility is based on the council being in or entering into a customer-supplier relationship with the competition organiser
 - g) personally benefit from reward points programs when purchasing on behalf of the council.

- 7.6 Where you receive a gift or benefit of any value other than one referred to in clause 7.2, you must disclose this promptly to your manager or the general manager in writing. The recipient, manager, or general manager must ensure that, at a minimum, the following details are recorded in the council's gift register:
- a) the nature of the gift or benefit
 - b) the estimated monetary value of the gift or benefit
 - c) the name of the person who provided the gift or benefit, and
 - d) the date on which the gift or benefit was received.
- 7.7 Where you receive a gift or benefit of more than token value that cannot reasonably be refused or returned, the gift or benefit must be surrendered to the council, unless the nature of the gift or benefit makes this impractical.

Gifts and benefits of token value

- 7.8 You may accept gifts and benefits of token value. Gifts and benefits of token value are one or more gifts or benefits received from a person or organisation over a 12-month period that, when aggregated, do not exceed a value of \$100. They include, but are not limited to:
- a) invitations to and attendance at local social, cultural or sporting events with a ticket value that does not exceed \$100
 - b) gifts of alcohol that do not exceed a value of \$100
 - c) ties, scarves, coasters, tie pins, diaries, chocolates or flowers or the like
 - d) prizes or awards that do not exceed \$100 in value.

Gifts and benefits of more than token value

- 7.9 Gifts or benefits that exceed \$100 in value are gifts or benefits of more than token value for the purposes of clause 7.5(d) and, subject to clause 7.7, must not be accepted.
- 7.10 Gifts and benefits of more than token value include, but are not limited to, tickets to major sporting events (such as international matches or matches in national sporting codes) with a ticket value that exceeds \$100, corporate hospitality at a corporate facility at major sporting events, free or discounted products or services for personal use provided on terms that are not available to the general public or a broad class of persons, the use of holiday homes, artworks, free or discounted travel.
- 7.11 Where you have accepted a gift or benefit of token value from a person or organisation, you must not accept a further gift or benefit from the same person or organisation or another person associated with that person or organisation within a single 12-month period where the value of the gift, added to the value of earlier gifts received from the same person or organisation, or a person associated with that person or organisation, during the same 12-month period would exceed \$100 in value.
- 7.12 For the purposes of this Part, the value of a gift or benefit is the monetary value of the gift or benefit inclusive of GST.

"Cash-like gifts"

- 7.13 For the purposes of clause 7.5(e), "cash-like gifts" include but are not limited to, gift vouchers, credit cards, debit cards with credit on them, prepayments such as phone or internet credit, lottery tickets, memberships or entitlements to discounts that are not available to the general public or a broad class of persons.

Improper and undue influence

- 7.14 You must not use your position to influence other council officials in the performance of their official functions to obtain a private benefit for yourself or for somebody else. A councillor will not be in breach of this clause where they seek to influence other council officials through the proper exercise of their role as prescribed under the Act.
- 7.15 You must not take advantage (or seek to take advantage) of your status or position with council, or of functions you perform for council, in order to obtain a private benefit for yourself or for any other person or body.

8. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN COUNCIL OFFICIALS

Obligations of councillors and administrators

- 8.1 Each council is a body politic. The councillors or administrator/s are the governing body of the council. Under section 223 of the Act, the role of the governing body of the council includes the development and endorsement of the strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of the council, including those relating to workforce policy, and to keep the performance of the council under review.
- 8.2 Councillors or administrators must not:
- direct council staff other than by giving appropriate direction to the general manager by way of council or committee resolution, or by the mayor or administrator exercising their functions under section 226 of the Act
 - in any public or private forum, direct or influence, or attempt to direct or influence, any other member of the staff of the council or a delegate of the council in the exercise of the functions of the staff member or delegate
 - contact a member of the staff of the council on council-related business unless in accordance with the policy and procedures governing the interaction of councillors and council staff that have been authorised by the council and the general manager
 - contact or issue instructions to any of the council's contractors, including the council's legal advisers, unless by the mayor or administrator exercising their functions under section 226 of the Act.
- 8.3 Despite clause 8.2, councillors may contact the council's external auditor or the chair of the council's audit risk and improvement committee to provide information reasonably necessary for the external auditor or the audit, risk and improvement committee to effectively perform their functions.

Obligations of staff

- 8.4 Under section 335 of the Act, the role of the general manager includes conducting the day-to-day management of the council in accordance with the strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of the council, implementing without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council and ensuring that the mayor and other councillors are given timely information and advice and the administrative and professional support necessary to effectively discharge their official functions.
- 8.5 Members of staff of council must:
- give their attention to the business of the council while on duty
 - ensure that their work is carried out ethically, efficiently, economically and effectively
 - carry out reasonable and lawful directions given by any person having authority to give such directions
 - give effect to the lawful decisions, policies and procedures of the council, whether or not the staff member agrees with or approves of them
 - ensure that any participation in political activities outside the service of the council does not interfere with the performance of their official duties.

Inappropriate interactions

- 8.6 You must not engage in any of the following inappropriate interactions:
- councillors and administrators approaching staff and staff organisations to discuss individual or operational staff matters (other than matters relating to broader workforce policy), grievances, workplace investigations and disciplinary matters

- b) council staff approaching councillors and administrators to discuss individual or operational staff matters (other than matters relating to broader workforce policy), grievances, workplace investigations and disciplinary matters
- c) subject to clause 9.6, council staff refusing to give information that is available to other councillors to a particular councillor
- d) councillors and administrators who have lodged an application with the council, discussing the matter with council staff in staff-only areas of the council
- e) councillors and administrators approaching members of local planning panels or discussing any application that is either before the panel or that will come before the panel at some future time, except during a panel meeting where the application forms part of the agenda and the councillor has a right to be heard by the panel at the meeting
- f) councillors and administrators being overbearing or threatening to council staff
- g) council staff being overbearing or threatening to councillors or administrators
- h) councillors and administrators making personal attacks on council staff or engaging in conduct towards staff that would be contrary to the general conduct provisions in Part 3 of this code in public forums including social media
- i) councillors and administrators directing or pressuring council staff in the performance of their work, or recommendations they should make
- j) council staff providing ad hoc advice to councillors and administrators without recording or documenting the interaction as they would if the advice was provided to a member of the community
- k) council staff meeting with applicants or objectors alone AND outside office hours to discuss planning applications or proposals
- l) councillors attending on-site inspection meetings with lawyers and/or consultants engaged by the council associated with current or proposed legal proceedings unless permitted to do so by the council's general manager or, in the case of the mayor or administrator, unless they are exercising their functions under section 226 of the Act.

9. ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COUNCIL RESOURCES

Councillor and administrator access to information

- 9.1 The general manager is responsible for ensuring that councillors and administrators can access information necessary for the performance of their official functions. The general manager and public officer are also responsible for ensuring that members of the public can access publicly available council information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (the GIPA Act).
- 9.2 The general manager must provide councillors and administrators with the information necessary to effectively discharge their official functions.
- 9.3 Members of staff of council must provide full and timely information to councillors and administrators sufficient to enable them to exercise their official functions and in accordance with council procedures.
- 9.4 Members of staff of council who provide any information to a particular councillor in the performance of their official functions must also make it available to any other councillor who requests it and in accordance with council procedures.
- 9.5 Councillors and administrators who have a private interest only in council information have the same rights of access as any member of the public.
- 9.6 Despite clause 9.4, councillors and administrators who are precluded from participating in the consideration of a matter under this code because they have a conflict of interest in the matter, are not entitled to request access to council information in relation to the matter unless the information is otherwise available to members of the public, or the council has determined to make the information available under the GIPA Act.

Councillors and administrators to properly examine and consider information

- 9.7 Councillors and administrators must ensure that they comply with their duty under section 439 of the Act to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence by properly examining and considering all the information provided to them relating to matters that they are required to make a decision on.

Refusal of access to information

- 9.8 Where the general manager or public officer determine to refuse access to information requested by a councillor or administrator, they must act reasonably. In reaching this decision they must take into account whether or not the information requested is necessary for the councillor or administrator to perform their official functions (see clause 9.2) and whether they have disclosed a conflict of interest in the matter the information relates to that would preclude their participation in consideration of the matter (see clause 9.6). The general manager or public officer must state the reasons for the decision if access is refused.

Use of certain council information

- 9.9 In regard to information obtained in your capacity as a council official, you must:
 - a) subject to clause 9.14, only access council information needed for council business
 - b) not use that council information for private purposes
 - c) not seek or obtain, either directly or indirectly, any financial benefit or other improper advantage for yourself, or any other person or body, from any information to which you have access by virtue of your office or position with council

- d) only release council information in accordance with established council policies and procedures and in compliance with relevant legislation.

Use and security of confidential information

- 9.10 You must maintain the integrity and security of confidential information in your possession, or for which you are responsible.
- 9.11 In addition to your general obligations relating to the use of council information, you must:
 - a) only access confidential information that you have been authorised to access and only do so for the purposes of exercising your official functions
 - b) protect confidential information
 - c) only release confidential information if you have authority to do so
 - d) only use confidential information for the purpose for which it is intended to be used
 - e) not use confidential information gained through your official position for the purpose of securing a private benefit for yourself or for any other person
 - f) not use confidential information with the intention to cause harm or detriment to the council or any other person or body
 - g) not disclose any confidential information discussed during a confidential session of a council or committee meeting or any other confidential forum (such as, but not limited to, workshops or briefing sessions).

Personal information

- 9.12 When dealing with personal information you must comply with:
 - a) the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*
 - b) the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*
 - c) the Information Protection Principles and Health Privacy Principles
 - d) the council's privacy management plan
 - e) the Privacy Code of Practice for Local Government

Use of council resources

- 9.13 You must use council resources ethically, effectively, efficiently and carefully in exercising your official functions, and must not use them for private purposes, except when supplied as part of a contract of employment (but not for private business purposes), unless this use is lawfully authorised and proper payment is made where appropriate.
- 9.14 Union delegates and consultative committee members may have reasonable access to council resources and information for the purposes of carrying out their industrial responsibilities, including but not limited to:
 - a) the representation of members with respect to disciplinary matters
 - b) the representation of employees with respect to grievances and disputes
 - c) functions associated with the role of the local consultative committee.
- 9.15 You must be scrupulous in your use of council property, including intellectual property, official services, facilities, technology and electronic devices and must not permit their misuse by any other person or body.
- 9.16 You must avoid any action or situation that could create the appearance that council property, official services or public facilities are being improperly used for your benefit or the benefit of any other person or body.

- 9.17 You must not use council resources (including council staff), property or facilities for the purpose of assisting your election campaign or the election campaigns of others unless the resources, property or facilities are otherwise available for use or hire by the public and any publicly advertised fee is paid for use of the resources, property or facility.
- 9.18 You must not use the council letterhead, council crests, council email or social media or other information that could give the appearance it is official council material:
- a) for the purpose of assisting your election campaign or the election campaign of others, or
 - b) for other non-official purposes.
- 9.19 You must not convert any property of the council to your own use unless properly authorised.

Internet access

- 9.20 You must not use council's computer resources or mobile or other devices to search for, access, download or communicate any material of an offensive, obscene, pornographic, threatening, abusive or defamatory nature, or that could otherwise lead to criminal penalty or civil liability and/or damage the council's reputation.

Council record keeping

- 9.21 You must comply with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* and the Leeton Shire Council's records management policy & procedures.
- 9.22 All information created, sent and received in your official capacity is a council record and must be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* and the council's approved records management policies and practices.
- 9.23 All information stored in either soft or hard copy on council supplied resources (including technology devices and email accounts) is deemed to be related to the business of the council and will be treated as council records, regardless of whether the original intention was to create the information for personal purposes.
- 9.24 You must not destroy, alter, or dispose of council information or records, unless authorised to do so. If you need to alter or dispose of council information or records, you must do so in consultation with the council's records manager and comply with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998*.

Councillor access to council buildings

- 9.25 Councillors and administrators are entitled to have access to the council chamber, committee room, mayor's office (subject to availability), councillors' rooms, and public areas of council's buildings during normal business hours and for meetings. Councillors and administrators needing access to these facilities at other times must obtain authority from the general manager.
- 9.26 Councillors and administrators must not enter staff-only areas of council buildings without the approval of the general manager (or their delegate) or as provided for in the procedures governing the interaction of councillors and council staff.
- 9.27 Councillors and administrators must ensure that when they are within a staff only area they refrain from conduct that could be perceived to improperly influence council staff decisions.

10. MAINTAINING THE INTEGRITY OF THIS CODE

Complaints made for an improper purpose

- 10.1 You must not make or threaten to make a complaint or cause a complaint to be made alleging a breach of this code for an improper purpose.
- 10.2 For the purposes of clause 10.1, a complaint is made for an improper purpose where it is trivial, frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith, or where it otherwise lacks merit and has been made substantially for one or more of the following purposes:
- a) to bully, intimidate or harass another council official
 - b) to damage another council official's reputation
 - c) to obtain a political advantage
 - d) to influence a council official in the exercise of their official functions or to prevent or disrupt the exercise of those functions
 - e) to influence the council in the exercise of its functions or to prevent or disrupt the exercise of those functions
 - f) to avoid disciplinary action under the Procedures
 - g) to take reprisal action against a person for making a complaint alleging a breach of this code
 - h) to take reprisal action against a person for exercising a function prescribed under the Procedures
 - i) to prevent or disrupt the effective administration of this code under the Procedures.

Detrimental action

- 10.3 You must not take detrimental action or cause detrimental action to be taken against a person substantially in reprisal for a complaint they have made alleging a breach of this code.
- 10.4 You must not take detrimental action or cause detrimental action to be taken against a person substantially in reprisal for any function they have exercised under the Procedures.
- 10.5 For the purposes of clauses 10.3 and 10.4, a detrimental action is an action causing, comprising or involving any of the following:
- a) injury, damage or loss
 - b) intimidation or harassment
 - c) discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to employment
 - d) dismissal from, or prejudice in, employment
 - e) disciplinary proceedings.

Compliance with requirements under the Procedures

- 10.6 You must not engage in conduct that is calculated to impede or disrupt the consideration of a matter under the Procedures.
- 10.7 You must comply with a reasonable and lawful request made by a person exercising a function under the Procedures. A failure to make a written or oral submission invited under the Procedures will not constitute a breach of this clause.
- 10.8 You must comply with a practice ruling made by the Office under the Procedures.

Disclosure of information about the consideration of a matter under the Procedures

- 10.9 All allegations of breaches of this code must be dealt with under and in accordance with the Procedures.
- 10.10 You must not allege breaches of this code other than by way of a complaint made or initiated under the Procedures.
- 10.11 You must not make allegations about, or disclose information about, suspected breaches of this code at council, committee or other meetings, whether open to the public or not, or in any other forum, whether public or not.
- 10.12 You must not disclose information about a complaint you have made alleging a breach of this code or a matter being considered under the Procedures except for the purposes of seeking legal advice, unless the disclosure is otherwise permitted under the Procedures.
- 10.13 Nothing under this Part prevents a person from making a public interest disclosure to an appropriate public authority or investigative authority under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994*.

Complaints alleging a breach of this Part

- 10.14 Complaints alleging a breach of this Part by a councillor, the general manager or an administrator are to be managed by the Office. This clause does not prevent the Office from referring an alleged breach of this Part back to the council for consideration in accordance with the Procedures.
- 10.15 Complaints alleging a breach of this Part by other council officials are to be managed by the general manager in accordance with the Procedures.

SCHEDULE 1: DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS AND OTHER MATTERS IN WRITTEN RETURNS SUBMITTED UNDER CLAUSE 5.21

PART 1: PRELIMINARY

Definitions

1. For the purposes of the schedules to this code, the following definitions apply:

address means:

- a) in relation to a person other than a corporation, the last residential or business address of the person known to the councillor or designated person disclosing the address, or
- b) in relation to a corporation, the address of the registered office of the corporation in New South Wales or, if there is no such office, the address of the principal office of the corporation in the place where it is registered, or
- c) in relation to any real property, the street address of the property.

de facto partner has the same meaning as defined in section 21C of the *Interpretation Act 1987*.

disposition of property means a conveyance, transfer, assignment, settlement, delivery, payment or other alienation of property, including the following:

- a) the allotment of shares in a company
- b) the creation of a trust in respect of property
- c) the grant or creation of a lease, mortgage, charge, easement, license, power, partnership or interest in respect of property
- d) the release, discharge, surrender, forfeiture or abandonment, at law or in equity, of a debt, contract or chose in action, or of an interest in respect of property
- e) the exercise by a person of a general power of appointment over property in favour of another person
- f) a transaction entered into by a person who intends by the transaction to diminish, directly or indirectly, the value of the person's own property and to increase the value of the property of another person.

gift means a disposition of property made otherwise than by will (whether or not by instrument in writing) without consideration, or with inadequate consideration, in money or money's worth passing from the person to whom the disposition was made to the person who made the disposition, but does not include a financial or other contribution to travel.

interest means:

- a) in relation to property, an estate, interest, right or power, at law or in equity, in or over the property, or
- b) in relation to a corporation, a relevant interest (within the meaning of section 9 of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth) in securities issued or made available by the corporation.

listed company means a company that is listed within the meaning of section 9 of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

occupation includes trade, profession and vocation.

professional or business association means an incorporated or unincorporated body or organisation having as one of its objects or activities the promotion of the economic interests of its members in any occupation.

property includes money.

return date means:

- a) in the case of a return made under clause 5.21 (a), the date on which a person became a councillor or designated person
- b) in the case of a return made under clause 5.21 (b), 30 June of the year in which the return is made
- c) in the case of a return made under clause 5.21 (c), the date on which the councillor or designated person became aware of the interest to be disclosed.

relative includes any of the following:

- a) a person's spouse or de facto partner
- b) a person's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child
- c) a person's spouse's or de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child
- d) the spouse or de facto partner of a person referred to in paragraphs (b) and (c).

travel includes accommodation incidental to a journey.

Matters relating to the interests that must be included in returns

2. *Interests etc. outside New South Wales:* A reference in this schedule or in schedule 2 to a disclosure concerning a corporation or other thing includes any reference to a disclosure concerning a corporation registered, or other thing arising or received, outside New South Wales.
3. *References to interests in real property:* A reference in this schedule or in schedule 2 to real property in which a councillor or designated person has an interest includes a reference to any real property situated in Australia in which the councillor or designated person has an interest.
4. *Gifts, loans etc. from related corporations:* For the purposes of this schedule and schedule 2, gifts or contributions to travel given, loans made, or goods or services supplied, to a councillor or designated person by two or more corporations that are related to each other for the purposes of section 50 of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth are all given, made or supplied by a single corporation.

PART 2: PECUNIARY INTERESTS TO BE DISCLOSED IN RETURNS

Real property

5. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of this code must disclose:
 - a) the street address of each parcel of real property in which they had an interest on the return date, and
 - b) the street address of each parcel of real property in which they had an interest in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and
 - c) the nature of the interest.
6. An interest in a parcel of real property need not be disclosed in a return if the person making the return had the interest only:
 - a) as executor of the will, or administrator of the estate, of a deceased person and not as a beneficiary under the will or intestacy, or
 - b) as a trustee, if the interest was acquired in the ordinary course of an occupation not related to their duties as the holder of a position required to make a return.
7. An interest in a parcel of real property need not be disclosed in a return if the person ceased to hold the interest prior to becoming a councillor or designated person.
8. For the purposes of clause 5 of this schedule, "interest" includes an option to purchase.

Gifts

9. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of this code must disclose:
 - a) a description of each gift received in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and
 - b) the name and address of the donor of each of the gifts.
10. A gift need not be included in a return if:
 - a) it did not exceed \$500, unless it was among gifts totaling more than \$500 made by the same person during a period of 12 months or less, or
 - b) it was a political donation disclosed, or required to be disclosed, under Part 3 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*, or
 - c) the donor was a relative of the donee, or
 - d) subject to paragraph (a), it was received prior to the person becoming a councillor or designated person.
11. For the purposes of clause 10 of this schedule, the amount of a gift other than money is an amount equal to the value of the property given.

Contributions to travel

12. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of this code must disclose:
 - a) the name and address of each person who made any financial or other contribution to the expenses of any travel undertaken by the person in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and
 - b) the dates on which the travel was undertaken, and
 - c) the names of the states and territories, and of the overseas countries, in which the travel was undertaken.

13. A financial or other contribution to any travel need not be disclosed under this clause if it:
- a) was made from public funds (including a contribution arising from travel on free passes issued under an Act or from travel in government or council vehicles), or
 - b) was made by a relative of the traveller, or
 - c) was made in the ordinary course of an occupation of the traveller that is not related to their functions as the holder of a position requiring the making of a return, or
 - d) did not exceed \$250, unless it was among gifts totaling more than \$250 made by the same person during a 12-month period or less, or
 - e) was a political donation disclosed, or required to be disclosed, under Part 3 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*, or
 - f) was made by a political party of which the traveller was a member and the travel was undertaken for the purpose of political activity of the party in New South Wales, or to enable the traveller to represent the party within Australia, or
 - g) subject to paragraph (d) it was received prior to the person becoming a councillor or designated person.
14. For the purposes of clause 13 of this schedule, the amount of a contribution (other than a financial contribution) is an amount equal to the value of the contribution.

Interests and positions in corporations

15. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of this code must disclose:
- a) the name and address of each corporation in which they had an interest or held a position (whether remunerated or not) on the return date, and
 - b) the name and address of each corporation in which they had an interest or held a position in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and
 - c) the nature of the interest, or the position held, in each of the corporations, and
 - d) a description of the principal objects (if any) of each of the corporations, except in the case of a listed company.
16. An interest in, or a position held in, a corporation need not be disclosed if the corporation is:
- a) formed for the purpose of providing recreation or amusement, or for promoting commerce, industry, art, science, religion or charity, or for any other community purpose, and
 - b) required to apply its profits or other income in promoting its objects, and
 - c) prohibited from paying any dividend to its members.
17. An interest in a corporation need not be disclosed if the interest is a beneficial interest in shares in a company that does not exceed 10 per cent of the voting rights in the company.
18. An interest or a position in a corporation need not be disclosed if the person ceased to hold the interest or position prior to becoming a councillor or designated person.

Interests as a property developer or a close associate of a property developer

19. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of this code must disclose whether they were a property developer, or a close associate of a corporation that, or an individual who, is a property developer, on the return date.
20. For the purposes of clause 19 of this schedule:
- a) *close associate*, in relation to a corporation or an individual, has the same meaning as it has in section 53 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*.

- b) *property developer* has the same meaning as it has in Division 7 of Part 3 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*.

Positions in trade unions and professional or business associations

21. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of the code must disclose:
- a) the name of each trade union, and of each professional or business association, in which they held any position (whether remunerated or not) on the return date
 - b) the name of each trade union, and of each professional or business association, in which they have held any position (whether remunerated or not) in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and
 - c) a description of the position held in each of the unions and associations.
22. A position held in a trade union or a professional or business association need not be disclosed if the person ceased to hold the position prior to becoming a councillor or designated person.

Dispositions of real property

23. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of this code must disclose particulars of each disposition of real property by the person (including the street address of the affected property) in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, under which they wholly or partly retained the use and benefit of the property or the right to re-acquire the property.
24. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of this code must disclose particulars of each disposition of real property to another person (including the street address of the affected property) in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, that is made under arrangements with, but is not made by, the person making the return, being a disposition under which the person making the return obtained wholly or partly the use of the property.
25. A disposition of real property need not be disclosed if it was made prior to a person becoming a councillor or designated person.

Sources of income

26. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of this code must disclose:
- a) each source of income that the person reasonably expects to receive in the period commencing on the first day after the return date and ending on the following 30 June, and
 - b) each source of income received by the person in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year.
27. A reference in clause 26 of this schedule to each source of income received, or reasonably expected to be received, by a person is a reference to:
- a) in relation to income from an occupation of the person:
 - i. a description of the occupation, and
 - ii. if the person is employed or the holder of an office, the name and address of their employer, or a description of the office, and
 - iii. if the person has entered into a partnership with other persons, the name (if any) under which the partnership is conducted, or
 - b) in relation to income from a trust, the name and address of the settlor and the trustee, or
 - c) in relation to any other income, a description sufficient to identify the person from whom, or the circumstances in which, the income was, or is reasonably expected to be, received.

28. The source of any income need not be disclosed by a person in a return if the amount of the income received, or reasonably expected to be received, by the person from that source did not exceed \$500, or is not reasonably expected to exceed \$500, as the case may be.
29. The source of any income received by the person that they ceased to receive prior to becoming a councillor or designated person need not be disclosed.
30. A fee paid to a councillor or to the mayor or deputy mayor under sections 248 or 249 of the Act need not be disclosed.

Debts

31. A person making a return under clause 5.21 of this code must disclose the name and address of each person to whom the person was liable to pay any debt:
 - a) on the return date, and
 - b) at any time in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year.
32. A liability to pay a debt must be disclosed by a person in a return made under clause 5.21 whether or not the amount, or any part of the amount, to be paid was due and payable on the return date or at any time in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, as the case may be.
33. A liability to pay a debt need not be disclosed by a person in a return if:
 - a) the amount to be paid did not exceed \$500 on the return date or in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, as the case may be, unless:
 - i. the debt was one of two or more debts that the person was liable to pay to one person on the return date, or at any time in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, as the case may be, and
 - ii. the amounts to be paid exceeded, in the aggregate, \$500, or
 - b) the person was liable to pay the debt to a relative, or
 - c) in the case of a debt arising from a loan of money the person was liable to pay the debt to an authorised deposit-taking institution or other person whose ordinary business includes the lending of money, and the loan was made in the ordinary course of business of the lender, or
 - d) in the case of a debt arising from the supply of goods or services:
 - i. the goods or services were supplied in the period of 12 months immediately preceding the return date, or were supplied in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, as the case may be, or
 - ii. the goods or services were supplied in the ordinary course of any occupation of the person that is not related to their duties as the holder of a position required to make a return, or
 - e) subject to paragraph (a), the debt was discharged prior to the person becoming a councillor or designated person.

Discretionary disclosures

34. A person may voluntarily disclose in a return any interest, benefit, advantage or liability, whether pecuniary or not, that is not required to be disclosed under another provision of this Schedule.

SCHEDULE 2: FORM OF WRITTEN RETURN OF INTERESTS SUBMITTED UNDER CLAUSE 5.21

'Disclosures by councillors and designated persons' return

1. The pecuniary interests and other matters to be disclosed in this return are prescribed by Schedule 1 of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* (the Model Code of Conduct).
2. If this is the first return you have been required to lodge with the general manager after becoming a councillor or designated person, do not complete Parts C, D and I of the return. All other parts of the return should be completed with appropriate information based on your circumstances at the return date, that is, the date on which you became a councillor or designated person.
3. If you have previously lodged a return with the general manager and you are completing this return for the purposes of disclosing a new interest that was not disclosed in the last return you lodged with the general manager, you must complete all parts of the return with appropriate information for the period from 30 June of the previous financial year or the date on which you became a councillor or designated person, (whichever is the later date), to the return date which is the date you became aware of the new interest to be disclosed in your updated return.
4. If you have previously lodged a return with the general manager and are submitting a new return for the new financial year, you must complete all parts of the return with appropriate information for the 12-month period commencing on 30 June of the previous year to 30 June this year.
5. This form must be completed using block letters or typed.
6. If there is insufficient space for all the information you are required to disclose, you must attach an appendix which is to be properly identified and signed by you.
7. If there are no pecuniary interests or other matters of the kind required to be disclosed under a heading in this form, the word "NIL" is to be placed in an appropriate space under that heading.

Important information

This information is being collected for the purpose of complying with clause 5.21 of the Code of Conduct.

You must not lodge a return that you know or ought reasonably to know is false or misleading in a material particular (see clause 5.23 of the Code of Conduct). Complaints about breaches of these requirements are to be referred to the Office of Local Government and may result in disciplinary action by the council, the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government or the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

The information collected on this form will be kept by the general manager in a register of returns. The general manager is required to table all returns at a council meeting.

Information contained in returns made and lodged under clause 5.21 is to be made publicly available in accordance with the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, the *Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009* and any guidelines issued by the Information Commissioner.

You have an obligation to keep the information contained in this return up to date. If you become aware of a new interest that must be disclosed in this return, or an interest that you have previously failed to disclose, you must submit an updated return within three months of becoming aware of the previously undisclosed interest.

A copy of the blank Disclosure Form appears on the following pages:



Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests and other matters by

.....
 (full name of councillor or designated person)

in respect of the period from 1 July to 30 June (return period)

Signed: Date:
 (councillor's or designated person's signature) (date)

A. Real Property		
Street address of each parcel of real property in which I had an interest at the return date/at any time since 30 June	Nature of interest.	
B. Sources of Income		
1. Sources of income I: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reasonably expect to receive from an occupation at any time during the return period commencing on the first day after the return date and ending on the following 30 June, and received from an occupation at any time since 30 June: 		
Description of occupation	Name and address of employer or description of office held (if applicable)	Name under which partnership conducted (if applicable)
2. Sources of income I: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reasonably expect to receive from a trust during the return period commencing on the first day after the return date and ending on the following 30 June, and received from a trust since 30 June: 		
Name and address of settlor	Name and address of trustee	
3. Sources of other income I: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reasonably expect to receive from a trust during the return period commencing on the first day after the return date and ending on the following 30 June, and received at any time since 30 June: (Include description sufficient to identify the person from whom, or the circumstances in which, that income was received)		
Sources of other income		

H. Debts	
Name and address of each person to whom I was liable to pay any debt at the return date/at any time since 30 June	
I. Dispositions of property	
1. Particulars of each disposition of real property by me at any time since 30 June, as a result of which I retained, either wholly or in part, the use and benefit of the property or the right to re-acquire the property at a later time.	
2. Particulars of each disposition of property to a person by any other person under arrangements made by me, being dispositions made at any time since 30 June, as a result of which I obtained, either wholly or in part, the use and benefit of the property.	
J. Discretionary disclosures	
Office Use Only	
Date Return received:	
Received by:	Checked by:
Trim Ref:	

SCHEDULE 3: FORM OF SPECIAL DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST SUBMITTED UNDER CLAUSE 5.37

1. This form must be completed using block letters or typed.
2. If there is insufficient space for all the information you are required to disclose, you must attach an appendix which is to be properly identified and signed by you.

Important information

This information is being collected for the purpose of making a special disclosure of pecuniary interests under clause 5.36(c) of the *Leeton Shire Council Code of Conduct* (based on clause 5.36(c) of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* (the *Model Code of Conduct*)).

The special disclosure must relate only to a pecuniary interest that a councillor has in the councillor's principal place of residence, or an interest another person (whose interests are relevant under clause 5.3 of Leeton Shire Council's Code of Conduct) has in that person's principal place of residence.

Clause 5.3 of the Code of Conduct states that you will have a pecuniary interest in a matter because of the pecuniary interest of your spouse or your de facto partner or your relative or because your business partner or employer has a pecuniary interest. You will also have a pecuniary interest in a matter because you, your nominee, your business partner or your employer is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.

"Relative" is defined by clause 5.4 of the Code of Conduct as meaning your, your spouse's or your de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child and the spouse or de facto partner of any of those persons.

You must not make a special disclosure that you know or ought reasonably to know is false or misleading in a material particular. Complaints about breaches of these requirements are to be referred to the Office of Local Government and may result in disciplinary action by the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government or the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

This form must be completed by you before the commencement of the council or council committee meeting at which the special disclosure is being made. The completed form must be tabled at the meeting. Everyone is entitled to inspect it. The special disclosure must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

A copy of the blank Special Disclosure Form appears on the following pages:



Special disclosure of pecuniary interests by

.....
 (full name of councillor)

in the matter of

.....
 (name of environmental planning instrument)

which is to be considered at a meeting of the

.....
 [name of council or council committee (as the case requires)]

to be held on theday of20.....

Pecuniary interest	
Address of the affected principal place of residence of the councillor or an associated person, company or body (the identified land)	
Relationship of identified land to the councillor [Tick or cross one box.]	<input type="checkbox"/> The councillor has an interest in the land (e.g. is the owner or has another interest arising out of a mortgage, lease, trust, option or contract, or otherwise). <input type="checkbox"/> An associated person of the councillor has an interest in the land. <input type="checkbox"/> An associated company or body of the councillor has an interest in the land.
Matter giving rise to pecuniary interest¹	
Nature of the land that is subject to a change in zone/planning control by the proposed LEP (the subject land) ² [Tick or cross one box]	<input type="checkbox"/> The identified land. <input type="checkbox"/> Land that adjoins or is adjacent to or is in proximity to the identified land.

¹ Clause 5.1 of the Leeton Shire Council Code of Conduct provides that a pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person. A person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to the matter, or if the interest is of a kind specified in clause 5.6 of the Code of Conduct.

² A pecuniary interest may arise by way of a change of permissible use of land adjoining, adjacent to or in proximity to land in which a councillor or a person, company or body referred to in clause 5.3 of the Code of Conduct has a proprietary interest.

Current zone/planning control <i>[Insert name of current planning instrument and identify relevant zone/planning control applying to the subject land]</i>	
Proposed change of zone/planning control <i>[Insert name of proposed LEP and identify proposed change of zone/planning control applying to the subject land]</i>	
Effect of proposed change of zone/planning control on councillor or associated person <i>[Insert one of the following: "Appreciable financial gain" or "Appreciable financial loss"]</i>	

[If more than one pecuniary interest is to be declared, reprint the above box and fill in for each additional interest.]

.....
(councillor's signature)

.....
(date)

This form is to be retained by the council's general manager and included in full in the minutes of the meeting.



LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

MARCH 2022

DOCUMENT AUTHORISATION

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Governance Officer				
REVIEWED BY	Executive Manager IPR, Governance and Engagement				
LINK TO CSP/DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN:	STRONG LEADERSHIP: 20. A community that is always on the front foot – 20c. Strive to deliver the aspirations of the community through sound governance practice – Continuous review and update of Council policies and plans to appropriately support Council's operations.				
DATE ADOPTED:	23 March 2022				
ADOPTED BY:	LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL				
RESOLUTION NO: (IF RELEVANT):	22/027				
FOR PUBLICATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> INTRANET <input type="checkbox"/> COUNCIL WEBSITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH				
REVIEW DUE DATE:	March 2025				
REVISION NUMBER:	4				
PREVIOUS VERSIONS:	DATE	DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS	AUTHOR/EDITOR	REVIEW/ SIGN OFF	MINUTE NO (IF RELEVANT)
	22/2/2017		Director Corporate Services	Council	17/018
1	27/3/2019	Draft for public exhibition – Model Code of Meeting Practice	Governance & Corporate Planning Coordinator	Council	19/071
2	22/5/2019	Amendments to Council's Order of Business	Governance & Corporate Planning Coordinator	Council	19/108

REVIEW OF THIS CODE

This Code will be reviewed within 12 months of a Local Government General Election or as required in the event of legislative changes. The Code may also be changed as a result of other amendments that are to the advantage of Council and in the spirit of Model Code of Meeting Practice. Any amendment to this Code must be by way of a Council Resolution.

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1. Introduction

This Code of Meeting Practice for Leeton Shire Council has been adopted in accordance with the provisions of the Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Meeting Code) made under section 360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (the Regulation).

This code applies to all meetings of Council and committees of Council of which all the members are Councillors (committees of Council). Council committees whose members include persons other than Councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the Council determines otherwise.

Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

A Council's adopted code of meeting practice may also incorporate the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code and other supplementary provisions. However, a code of meeting practice adopted by a Council must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

A Council and a committee of the Council of which all the members are Councillors must conduct its meetings in accordance with the code of meeting practice adopted by the Council.

2. Meeting Principles

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

- Transparent:** Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.
- Informed:** Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.
- Inclusive:** Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.
- Principled:** Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.
- Trusted:** The community has confidence that Councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.
- Respectful:** Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.
- Effective:** Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.
- Orderly:** Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

3. Before the Meeting

Timing of ordinary Council meetings

- 3.1 Ordinary meetings of the Council will generally be held on the fourth Wednesday of the month commencing at 7pm in the Leeton Shire Council Chambers.
- 3.2 The Council shall, by resolution, set the frequency, time, date and place of its ordinary meetings.

Note: Under section 365 of the Act, Councils are required to meet at least ten (10) times each year, each time in a different month unless the Minister for Local Government has approved a reduction in the number of times that a Council is required to meet each year under section 365A.

Extraordinary meetings

- 3.3 If the Mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) Councillors, the Mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the Council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The Mayor can be one of the two Councillors requesting the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.3 reflects section 366 of the Act.

Notice to the public of Council meetings

- 3.4 The Council must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of committees of the Council.

Note: Clause 3.4 reflects section 9(1) of the Act.

- 3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of a meeting of the Council and of a committee of Council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the Council's website, and in such other manner that the Council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

- 3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to Councillors of ordinary Council meetings

- 3.7 The general manager must send to each Councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the Council, a notice specifying the time, date and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.7 reflects section 367(1) of the Act.

- 3.8 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to Councillors in electronic form, but only if all Councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

Note: Clause 3.8 reflects section 367(3) of the Act.

Notice to Councillors of extraordinary meetings

- 3.9 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to Councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the Council in cases of emergency.

Note: Clause 3.9 reflects section 367(2) of the Act.

Giving notice of business to be considered at Council meetings

- 3.10 A Councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the Council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted 10 (was 7) business days before the meeting is to be held.

- 3.11 A Councillor may, in writing to the general manager, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

- 3.12 If the general manager considers that a notice of motion submitted by a Councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the Council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the general manager may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the Council.
- 3.13 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the Council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the general manager must either:
- prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the Council, or
 - by written notice sent to all Councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the Council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions with notice

- 3.14 A Councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the general manager about the performance or operations of the Council.
- 3.15 A Councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.14 that comprises a complaint against the general manager or a member of staff of the Council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the general manager or a member of staff of the Council.
- 3.16 The general manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.14 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the Council or orally at the meeting.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

- 3.17 The general manager must cause the agenda for a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.
- 3.18 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the Council states:
- all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the Council, and
 - if the Mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
 - all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and
 - any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.10.
- 3.19 Nothing in clause 3.18 limits the powers of the Mayor to put a Mayoral minute to a meeting under clause 9.6.
- 3.20 The general manager must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the Council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the general manager, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The general manager must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next

meeting of the Council.

- 3.21 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public, the general manager must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:
- (a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and
 - (b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.

Note: Clause 3.21 reflects section 9(2A) (a) of the Act.

- 3.22 The general manager must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to Councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public and must not be disclosed by a Councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Statement of ethical obligations

- 3.23 Business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the Council and committees of the Council must contain a statement reminding councillors of their oath of affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the Council's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

- 3.24 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the Council and committees of Council, are to be published on the Council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the Council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the Council.

Note: Clause 3.24 reflects section 9(2) and (4) of the Act.

- 3.25 Clause 3.24 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the general manager has identified under clause 3.21 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 3.24 reflects section 9(2A) (b) of the Act.

- 3.26 For the purposes of clause 3.24, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the Council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to Councillors.

Note: Clause 3.26 reflects section 9(3) of the Act.

- 3.27 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.23, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

Note: Clause 3.27 reflects section 9(5) of the Act.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

- 3.28 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the Council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.
- 3.29 Despite clause 3.28, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the Council, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:
- a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
 - b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.
- 3.30 A motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.
- 3.31 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 3.32 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.29(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Pre-meeting briefing sessions

- 3.33 Prior to each ordinary meeting of the Council, the general manager may arrange a pre-meeting briefing session to brief Councillors on business to be considered at the meeting. Pre-meeting briefing sessions may also be held for extraordinary meetings of the Council and meetings of committees of the Council.
- 3.34 Pre-meeting briefing sessions are to be held in absence of the public.
- 3.35 Pre-meeting briefing sessions may be held by audio-visual link.
- 3.36 The general manager or a member of staff nominated by the general manager is to preside at pre-meeting briefing sessions.
- 3.37 Councillors must not use pre-meeting briefing sessions to debate or make preliminary decisions on items of business they are being briefed on, and any debate and decision-making must be left to the formal Council or committee meeting at which the item of business is to be considered.

4. Public Forums

- 4.1 The Council may hold a public forum commencing **15 minutes** prior to each ordinary meeting of the Council – **or earlier if there is a larger number of speakers, with timing to be determined by the General Manager or their delegate** – for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums may also be held prior to extraordinary Council meetings and meetings of committees of the Council. **The public forum is to be video recorded and provided to the public along with the recording of the Council meeting.**
- 4.2 Public forums may be held by audio-visual link.
- 4.3 Public forums are to be chaired by the mayor or their nominee.
- 4.4 To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the Council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the public forum must be received by by 12noon the day prior to the Council meeting before the date on which the public forum is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the Council meeting the persons wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.
- 4.5 A person may apply to speak on no more than three items of business on the agenda of the Council meeting.
- 4.6 Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak at a public forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the public forum.
- 4.7 The general manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- 4.8 No more than five speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the Council meeting.
- 4.9 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manger of their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the Council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the Council, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will address the Council at the public forum.
- 4.10 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the Mayor or the Mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the Council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.
- 4.11 Approved speakers at the public forum are to register with the Council any written, visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the Council at the public forum, and to identify any equipment needs no more than one day before the public forum. The general manger or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.
- 4.12 The general manager or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers at the public forum.

- 4.13 Each speaker will be allowed three minutes to address the Council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.
- 4.14 Speakers at public forums must not digress from the item on the agenda of the Council meeting they have applied to address the Council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.
- 4.15 A Councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.
- 4.16 Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.15. Answers by the speaker, to each question are to be limited to two minutes.
- 4.17 Speakers at public forums cannot ask questions of the Council, Councillors, or Council staff.
- 4.18 The general manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the Council for up to three minutes in response to an address to the Council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.
- 4.19 Where an address made at a public forum raises matters that require further consideration by Council staff, the general manager may recommend that the Council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matter.
- 4.20 When addressing the Council, speakers at public forum must comply with this code and all other relevant Council codes, policies, and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the Council's code of conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.
- 4.21 If the chairperson considers that a speaker at a public forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.
- 4.22 Clause 4.21 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.
- 4.23 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the general manager or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for such a period as the general manager or their delegate considers appropriate.
- 4.24 Councillors (including the Mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address at a public forum, in the same way that they are required to do so at a Council or committee meeting. The Council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at public forums and how the conflict of interest was managed by the Councillor who made the declaration.

Note: Public forums should not be held as a part of a Council or committee meeting. Council or committee meetings should be reserved for decision-making by the Council or committee of Council. Where public forum is held as part of a Council or committee meeting, it must be conducted in accordance with the other requirements of this code relating to the conduct of Council and committee meetings.

5. Coming Together

Attendance by Councillors at meetings

- 5.1 All Councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the Council and of committees of the Council of which they are members.

Note: A Councillor may not attend a meeting as a Councillor (other than the first meeting of the Council after the Councillor is elected or a meeting at which the Councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

- 5.2 A Councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the Council or of a committee of the Council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this code.

- 5.3 Where a Councillor is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the Council, the Councillor should request that the Council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a Councillor from making an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.

- 5.4 A Councillor's request for leave of absence from Council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the Councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.

- 5.5 The Council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a Councillor's request for a leave of absence.

- 5.6 A Councillor's civic office will become vacant if the Councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the Council without prior leave of the Council, or leave granted by the Council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the Council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

Note: Clause 5.6 reflects section 234(1) (d) of the Act.

- 5.7 A Councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the Council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the general manager at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

The quorum for a meeting

- 5.8 The quorum for a meeting of the Council is a majority of the Councillors of the Council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.

Note: Clause 5.8 reflects section 368(1) of the Act.

- 5.9 Clause 5.8 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the Council.

Note: Clause 5.9 reflects section 368(2) of the Act.

- 5.10 A meeting of the Council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:
- at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or

- b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or
 - c) at any time during the meeting.
- 5.11 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date and place fixed:
- a) by the chairperson, or
 - b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the Councillors present, or
 - c) failing that, by the general manager.
- 5.12 The general manager must record in the Council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the Council, together with the names of the Councillors present.
- 5.13 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety or welfare of Councillors, Council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the Mayor may, in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each Councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the Council's website and in such other manner that the Council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.
- 5.14 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.13, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.3.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

- 5.15 A meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council may be held by audio-visual link where the Mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The Mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of Councillors and staff at risk. The Mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each Councillor.
- 5.16 Where the Mayor determines under clause 5.15 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the general manager must:
- a) give written notice to all Councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and
 - b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all Councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link,
 - c) cause a notice to be published on the Council's website and in such other manner the general manager is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.
- 5.17 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.15 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a Council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.15, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by Councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

- 5.18 Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the Council and Committees of the Council by audio-visual link with the approval of the Council or the relevant committee.
- 5.19 A request by a Councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the general manager prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the Councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.
- 5.20 Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a Councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.19.
- 5.21 The Council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the *health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* when collecting, holding, using and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a Councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.
- 5.22 A Councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council by audio-visual link until the Council or committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The Councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.
- 5.23 A decision whether to approve a request by a Councillor to attend a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the Council or the committee concerned. The resolution must state:
- the meetings the resolution applies to, and
 - the reason why the Councillor is being permitted to attend the meetings by audio-visual link where is on grounds other than illness, disability, or caring responsibilities.
- 5.24 If the Council or committee refuses a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.
- 5.25 A decision whether to approve a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the Council's or the relevant committee's discretion. The Council and committees of the Council must act reasonably when considering requests by Councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link. However, the Council and committees of the Council are under no obligation to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the technical capacity does not exist to allow the Councillor to attend the meeting by these means.
- 5.26 The Council and committees of the Council may refuse a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the Council or committee is satisfied that the Councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality, or to comply with this code on one or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council by audio-visual link.
- 5.27 This code applies to a Councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the Councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a Councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.
- 5.28 A Councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The Councillor's camera must be on at all

times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.

- 5.29 A Councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the Council or the committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the public to attend Council meetings

- 5.30 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the Council and committees of the Council. The Council must ensure that all meetings of the Council and committees of the Council are open to the public.

Note: Clause 5.30 reflects section 10(1) of the Act.

- 5.31 Clause 5.30 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

- 5.32 A person (whether a Councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council if expelled from the meeting:

- (a) by a resolution of the meeting, or
- (b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the Council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

Note: Clause 5.32 reflects section 10(2) of the Act.

Note: If adopted, clauses 15.14 and 15.15 confer a standing authorisation on all chairpersons, meetings of the Council and committees of the Council to expel persons from meetings. If adopted, clause 15.14 authorises chairpersons to expel any person, including Councillor, from a Council or committee meeting. Alternatively, if adopted clause 15.15 authorises chairpersons to expel persons other than Councillors from a Council or committee meeting.

Webcasting of meetings

- 5.33 Each meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council is to be recorded by means of an audio or audio-visual device.

- 5.34 At the start of each meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council, the chairperson must inform the persons attending the meeting that:
- a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on the Council's website, and
 - b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making any defamatory statements.

- 5.35 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the Council's website:

- a) at the same time as the meeting is taking place, or
- b) as soon as practicable after the meeting.

- 5.36 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the Council's website for at least 12 months after the meeting.

- 5.37 Clauses 5.35 and 5.36 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.

Note: Clauses 5.33 – 5.37 reflect section 236 of the Regulation.

- 5.38 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

Attendance of the general manager and other staff at meetings

5.39 The general manager is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee of the Council of which all of the members are Councillors.

Note: Clause 5.39 reflects section 376(1) of the Act.

5.40 The general manager is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the Council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.

Note: Clause 5.40 reflects section 376(2) of the Act.

5.41 The general manager may be excluded from a meeting of the Council or a committee while the Council or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the general manager or the terms of employment of the general manager.

Note: Clause 5.41 reflects section 376(3) of the Act.

5.42 The attendance of other Council staff at a meeting (other than as members of the public), shall be with the approval of the general manager.

5.43 The general manager and other Council staff may attend meetings of the Council and committees of the Council by audio-visual link. Attendance by Council staff at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

6. The Chairperson

The chairperson at meetings

6.1 The Mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the Council.

Note: Clause 6.1 reflects section 369(1) of the Act.

6.2 If the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor (if any) are absent, a Councillor elected to chair the meeting by the Councillors present presides at a meeting of the Council.

Note: Clause 6.2 reflects section 369(2) of the Act.

Election of the chairperson in the absence of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor

6.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the Council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.

6.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:

- a) by the general manager or, in their absence, an employee of the Council designated by the general manager to conduct the election, or
- b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the general manager nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no general manager or designated employee.

6.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be

the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.

- 6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:
- a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and
 - b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.
- 6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.
- 6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

- 6.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the Council:
- a) any Councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and
 - b) every Councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7. Modes of Address

- 7.1 If the chairperson is the Mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.
- 7.2 Where the chairperson is not the Mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.
- 7.3 A Councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.
- 7.4 A Council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms [surname].

8. Order of Business for Ordinary Council Meetings

- 8.1 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of the Council shall be:
1. Civic Prayer or Ethics/Affirmation statement
 2. Acknowledgement of country
 3. Apologies and applications for a leave of absence by Councillors
 4. Confirmation of minutes
 5. Disclosures of interests
 6. Mayoral minute(s)
 7. Reports to Council
 8. Notices of motions/Questions with notice
 9. Confidential matters
 10. Conclusion of the meeting.

Following the meeting, Councillors will provide a verbal update of their activities for the month. The updates will be recorded and provided to the public along with the recording of the Council meeting.

- 8.2 The order of business as fixed under 8.1 may be altered for a particular meeting of the Council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved

without notice.

- 8.3 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.3 may speak to the motion before it is put.

9. Consideration of Business at Council Meetings

Business that can be dealt with at a Council meeting

- 9.1 The Council must not consider business at a meeting of the Council:
- a) unless a Councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.10, and
 - b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the Councillors in accordance with clause 3.7 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.9 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.
- 9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:
- a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the Council, or
 - b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or
 - c) subject to clause 9.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a Mayoral minute, or
 - d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to, a committee of the Council.
- 9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the Council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the Councillors if:
- a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
 - b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.
- 9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3(a) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 9.5 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.3(b).

Mayoral minutes

- 9.6 Subject to clause 9.9, if the Mayor is the chairperson at a meeting of the Council, the Mayor may, by minute signed by the Mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the Council, or of which the Council has official knowledge.
- 9.7 A Mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the Council's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the chairperson is the Mayor) may move the adoption of a Mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.
- 9.8 A recommendation made in a Mayoral minute put by the Mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the Council, a resolution of the Council.
- 9.9 A Mayoral minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.

- 9.10 Where a Mayoral minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the Council's current adopted operational plan, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the Mayoral minute does not identify a funding source, the Council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Staff reports

- 9.11 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the Council, a resolution of the Council.

Reports of committees of Council (where all members are Councillors)

- 9.12 The recommendations of a committee of the Council are, so far as they are adopted by the Council, resolutions of the Council.
- 9.13 If in a report of a committee of the Council distinct recommendations are made, the Council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

- 9.14 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the Council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.10 and 3.14.
- 9.15 A Councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another Councillor about a matter on the agenda.
- 9.16 A Councillor may, through the general manager, put a question to a Council employee about a matter on the agenda. Council employees are only obliged to answer a question put to them through the general manager at the direction of the general manager.
- 9.17 A Councillor or Council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to documents. Where a Councillor or Council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the Council.
- 9.18 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.
- 9.19 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a Councillor or Council employee.

10. Rules of Debate

Motions to be seconded

- 10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

- 10.2 A Councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 is to move the motion

the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.

- 10.3 If a Councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to Councillors, the Councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the Council.
- 10.4 In the absence of a Councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the Council:
- a) any other Councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or
 - b) the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the Council.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

- 10.5 It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the Council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.
- 10.6 The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.
- 10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.
- 10.8 Any motion, amendment, or other matter that the chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Motions requiring the expenditure of funds

- 10.9 A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the Council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the Council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments to motions

- 10.10 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.
- 10.11 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the Council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.
- 10.12 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.
- 10.13 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before Council at any one time.
- 10.14 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the

amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.

- 10.15 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.
- 10.16 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the Councillor who moved the original motion.

Foreshadowed motions

- 10.17 A Councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the Council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.
- 10.18 Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a Councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the Council at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.
- 10.19 Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

- 10.20 A Councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the Council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.
- 10.21 A Councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.
- 10.22 A Councillor must not, without the consent of the Council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.
- 10.23 Despite clause 10.22, the chairperson may permit a Councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the Councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.
- 10.24 Despite clause 10.23, the Council may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.
- 10.25 Despite clauses 10.20 and 10.21, a Councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:
- a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no Councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or
 - b) if at least two (2) Councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) Councillors have spoken against it.

- 10.26 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.
- 10.27 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.20.
- 10.28 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.
- 10.29 All Councillors must be heard without interruption and all other Councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another Councillor is speaking.
- 10.30 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

Note: Please see Attachment 1: The Process of a Motion

11. Voting

Voting entitlements of Councillors

- 11.1 Each Councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.
- Note: Clause 11.1 reflects section 370(1) of the Act.**
- 11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the Council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.
- Note: Clause 11.2 reflects section 370(2) of the Act.**
- 11.3 Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

Voting at Council meetings

- 11.4 A Councillor who is present at a meeting of the Council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion.
- 11.5 If a Councillor who has voted against a motion put at a Council meeting so requests, the general manager must ensure that the Councillor's dissenting vote is recorded in the Council's minutes.
- 11.6 The decision of the chairperson as to the result of a vote is final, unless the decision is immediately challenged and not fewer than two (2) Councillors rise and call for a division.
- 11.7 When a division on a motion is called, the chairperson must ensure that the division takes place immediately. The general manager must ensure that the names of those who vote for the motion and those who vote against it are recorded in the Council's minutes for the meeting.
- 11.8 When a division on a motion is called, any Councillor who fails to vote will be recorded as having voted against the motion in accordance with clause 11.5 of this code.
- 11.9 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However,

the Council may resolve that the voting in any election by Councillors for Mayor or Deputy Mayor is to be by secret ballot.

Voting on planning decisions

- 11.10 The general manager must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the Council or a Council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the Council), the names of the Councillors who supported the decision and the names of any Councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.
- 11.11 For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the Council or a Council committee.
- 11.12 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.
- 11.13 Clauses 11.10–11.12 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Note: Clauses 11.10–11.13 reflect section 375A of the Act.

Note: The requirements of clause 11.11 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.

12. Committee of the Whole

- 12.1 The Council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the Council.

Note: Clause 12.1 reflects section 373 of the Act.

- 12.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the Council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the Council when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.

Note: Clauses 10.20–10.30 limit the number and duration of speeches.

- 12.3 The general manager or, in the absence of the general manager, an employee of the Council designated by the general manager, is responsible for reporting to the Council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full, but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.
- 12.4 The Council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the Council's minutes. However, the Council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

13. Dealing with Items by Exception

- 13.1 The Council or a committee of Council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.
- 13.2 Before the Council or committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask Councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.
- 13.3 The Council or committee must not resolve to adopt any items of business under clause 13.1

that a Councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.

- 13.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the Council or committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.2.
- 13.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.
- 13.6 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.
- 13.7 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the Council's code of conduct.

14. Closure of Council Meeting to the Public

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

- 14.1 The Council or a committee of the Council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:
- personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than Councillors),
 - the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
 - information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
 - commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council, or
 - reveal a trade secret,
 - information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
 - matters affecting the security of the Council, Councillors, Council staff or Council property,
 - advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
 - information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,
 - alleged contraventions of the Council's code of conduct.

Note: Clause 14.1 reflects section 10A(1) and (2) of the Act.

- 14.2 The Council or a committee of the Council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Note: Clause 14.2 reflects section 10A(3) of the Act.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

- 14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:
- except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant

confidentiality, privilege or security, and

- b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the Council or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.3 reflects section 10B(1) of the Act.

- 14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:
- a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the Council or committee is involved, and
 - b) are clearly identified in the advice, and
 - c) are fully discussed in that advice.

Note: Clause 14.4 reflects section 10B(2) of the Act.

- 14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

Note: Clause 14.5 reflects section 10B(3) of the Act.

- 14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:
- a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or
 - b) the discussion of the matter may:
 - i. cause embarrassment to the Council or committee concerned, or to Councillors or to employees of the Council, or
 - ii. cause a loss of confidence in the Council or committee.

Note: Clause 14.6 reflects section 10B(4) of the Act.

- 14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the Council or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Department Chief Executive of the [Office of Local Government](#).

Note: Clause 14.7 reflects section 10B(5) of the Act.

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

- 14.8 Part of a meeting of the Council, or of a committee of the Council, may be closed to the public while the Council or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:
- a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and
 - b) the Council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:
 - i. should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and
 - ii. should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by members of the public

- 14.9 The Council, or a committee of the Council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.
- Note: Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.**
- 14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.
- 14.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the Council in the approved form. Applications must be received by 12 noon on the day prior to the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.
- 14.12 The general manager (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.11. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- 14.13 No more than three (3) speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9.
- 14.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the Council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the Council.
- 14.15 The general manager (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.
- 14.16 Where the Council or a committee of the Council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than three (3) speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.
- 14.17 Each speaker will be allowed three (3) minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of non-Councillors from meetings closed to the public

- 14.18 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a Councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.
- 14.19 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using only

such force as is necessary, remove the first- mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re- entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Obligations of Councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link

- 14.20 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

- 14.21 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:
- a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,
 - b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,
 - c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.20 reflects section 10D of the Act.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

- 14.22 If the Council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.
- 14.23 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.22 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

15. Keeping Order at Meetings

Points of order

- 15.1 A Councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.
- 15.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.
- 15.3 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the Councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

- 15.4 The chairperson, without the intervention of any other Councillor, may call any Councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.

- 15.5 A Councillor who claims that another Councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.
- 15.6 The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the Council.
- 15.7 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

- 15.8 A Councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.
- 15.9 If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.
- 15.10 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

- 15.11 A Councillor commits an act of disorder if the Councillor, at a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council:
- contravenes the Act or any regulation in force under the Act or this code, or
 - assaults or threatens to assault another Councillor or person present at the meeting, or
 - moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the Council or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the Council or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or
 - insults, makes unfavourable personal remarks about, or imputes improper motives to any other Council official, or alleges a breach of the Council's code of conduct, or
 - says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the Council or the committee into disrepute.

Note: Clause 15.11 reflects section 182 of the Regulation.

- 15.12 The chairperson may require a Councillor:
- to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(a) or (b), or (e), or
 - to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.11(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or
 - to retract and apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(d) and (e).

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

- 15.13 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the Council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The Council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of

Councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

- 15.14 All chairpersons of meetings of the Council and committees of the Council are authorised under this code to expel any person, including any Councillor, from a Council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act.
- 15.15 Clause 15.14, does not limit the ability of the Council or a committee of the Council to resolve to expel a person, including a Councillor, from a Council or committee meeting, under section 10(2) (a) of the Act.
- 15.16 A Councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the Council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.12. The expulsion of a Councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the Councillor for the act of disorder concerned.
- Note: Clause 15.16 reflects section 233(2) of the Regulation.**
- 15.17 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the Council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.
- 15.18 Where a Councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 15.19 If a Councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the Council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the Councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the Councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

How disorder by Councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

- 15.20 Where a Councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the Councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this code.
- 15.21 If a Councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the chairperson, may terminate the Councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

- 15.22 Councillors, Council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the Council and committees of the Council.
- 15.23 A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council without the prior authorisation of the Council or the committee.
- 15.24 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.23 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purpose of clause 15.17. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.23, may be expelled from the meeting as

provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.

- 15.25 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first- mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

16. Conflicts of Interest

- 16.1 All Councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the Council and committees of the Council in accordance with the Council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.
- 16.2 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the Council's code of conduct. Where a Councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the Councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the Councillor must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or committee, or at any time during which the Council or committee is voting on the matter.

Note: Details of what constitutes a Pecuniary Interest are detailed in Section Five of the Leeton Shire Council Code of Conduct. An extract of this Section is Attachment Two.

Note: To ensure accurate recording of Pecuniary, Significant Non-Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests, those making such declarations during meetings of Leeton Shire Council and its committees should complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration form. An example of this form is Attachment Three.

17. Decisions of the Council

Council decisions

- 17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the Council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the Council.
- Note: Clause 17.1 reflects section 371 of the Act.**
- 17.2 Decisions made by the Council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering Council decisions

- 17.3 A resolution passed by the Council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.10.
- Note: Clause 17.3 reflects section 372(1) of the Act.**
- 17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.
- Note: Clause 17.4 reflects section 372(2) of the Act.**

- 17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.5 reflects section 372(3) of the Act.

- 17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) Councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Note: Clause 17.6 reflects section 372(4) of the Act.

- 17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.

Note: Clause 17.7 reflects section 372(5) of the Act.

- 17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

Note: Clause 17.8 reflects section 372(7) of the Act.

- 17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.11 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

- 17.10 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application must be submitted to the general manager no later than **one business day** after the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

- 17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Council may be moved on the report of a committee of the Council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the Council.

Note: Clause 17.11 reflects section 372(6) of the Act.

- 17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:
- a notice of motion signed by three Councillors is submitted to the chairperson, and
 - a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and
 - the chairperson rules the business that is the subject of the motion is of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.

- 17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) can speak to the motion before it is put.

- 17.14 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.12(c).

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

- 17.15 Despite the provisions of this Part, a Councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

- a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the Council's resolution, or
 - b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.
- 17.16 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), the Councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.
- 17.17 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.
- 17.18 A motion moved under clause 17.15 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.15 can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 17.19 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.15.
- 17.20 A motion moved under clause 17.15 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

18. Time Limits on Council Meetings

- 18.1 Meetings of the Council and committees of the Council are to conclude no later than **10pm**.
- 18.2 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at **10pm**, the Council or the committee may, by resolution, extend the time of the meeting.
- 18.3 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at **10pm**, and the Council does not resolve to extend the meeting, the chairperson must either:
- a) defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, or
 - b) adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the chairperson.
- 18.4 Clause 18.3 does not limit the ability of the Council or a committee of the Council to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.
- 18.5 Where a meeting is adjourned under clause 18.3 or 18.4, the general manager must:
- a) individually notify each Councillor of the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene, and
 - b) publish the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene on the Council's website and in such other manner that the general manager is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the time, date and place of the reconvened meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

19. After the Meeting

Minutes of meetings

- 19.1 The Council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the Council.

Note: Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.

- 19.2 At a minimum, the general manager must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the Council's minutes:
- a) the names of councillors attending a Council meeting and whether they attend the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
 - b) details of each motion moved at a Council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
 - c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
 - d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
 - e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

- 19.3 The minutes of a Council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the Council.

Note: Clause 19.3 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

- 19.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

- 19.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

Note: Clause 19.5 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

- 19.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

- 19.7 The confirmed minutes of a Council meeting must be published on the Council's website. This clause does not prevent the Council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

- 19.8 The Council and committees of the Council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

Note: Clause 19.8 reflects section 11(1) of the Act.

- 19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.

Note: Clause 19.9 reflects section 11(2) of the Act.

- 19.10 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the Council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.

Note: Clause 19.10 reflects section 11(3) of the Act.

- 19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

Implementation of decisions of the Council

19.12 The general manager is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the Council.

Note: Clause 19.12 reflects section 335(b) of the Act.

20. Council Committees

Note: Currently Leeton Shire Council does not have any Council Committees (February 2022) as defined in Section 20 of this Code.

Application of this Part

20.1 This Part only applies to committees of the Council whose members are all Councillors.

Council committees whose members are all Councillors

20.2 The Council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

20.3 A committee of the Council is to consist of the Mayor and such other Councillors as are elected by the Councillors or appointed by the Council.

20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the Council is to be:

- a) such number of members as the Council decides, or
- b) if the Council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

20.5 The Council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

20.6 The general manager must send to each Councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:

- a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and
- b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

20.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

Attendance at committee meetings

20.8 A committee member (other than the Mayor) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:

- a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences, or
- b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

20.9 Clause 20.8 does not apply if all of the members of the Council are members of the committee.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

- 20.10 A Councillor who is not a member of a committee of the Council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the Councillor is not entitled:
- a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or
 - b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
 - c) to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and Deputy chairperson of Council committees

- 20.11 The chairperson of each committee of the Council must be:
- a) the Mayor, or
 - b) if the Mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the Council, or
 - c) if the Council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.
- 20.12 The Council may elect a member of a committee of the Council as Deputy chairperson of the committee. If the Council does not elect a Deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a Deputy chairperson.
- 20.13 If neither the chairperson nor the Deputy chairperson of a committee of the Council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting chairperson of the committee.
- 20.14 The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the Council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the Deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the chairperson nor the Deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in committee meetings

- 20.15 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the Council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the Council unless the Council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.
- 20.16 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal, the chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the Council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.15.
- 20.17 Voting at a Council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Closure of committee meetings to the public

- 20.18 The provisions of the Act and Part 12 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the Council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the Council to the public.
- 20.19 If a committee of the Council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the Council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

- 20.20 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 18.19 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in committee meetings

- 20.21 The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in Council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the Council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the Council.

Minutes of Council committee meetings

- 20.22 Each committee of the Council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:
- a) The names of Councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
 - b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
 - c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
 - d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
 - e) such other matters specifically required under this code.
- 20.23 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the Council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.
- 20.24 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.
- 20.25 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.
- 20.26 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.
- 20.27 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the Council must be published on the Council's website. This clause does not prevent the Council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the Council on its website prior to their confirmation.

21. Irregularities

- 21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a Council or a Council committee are not invalidated because of:
- a) a vacancy in a civic office, or
 - b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any Councillor or committee member, or
 - c) any defect in the election or appointment of a Councillor or committee member, or
 - d) a failure of a Councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a Council or committee meeting in accordance with the Council's code of conduct, or
 - e) a failure to comply with this code.

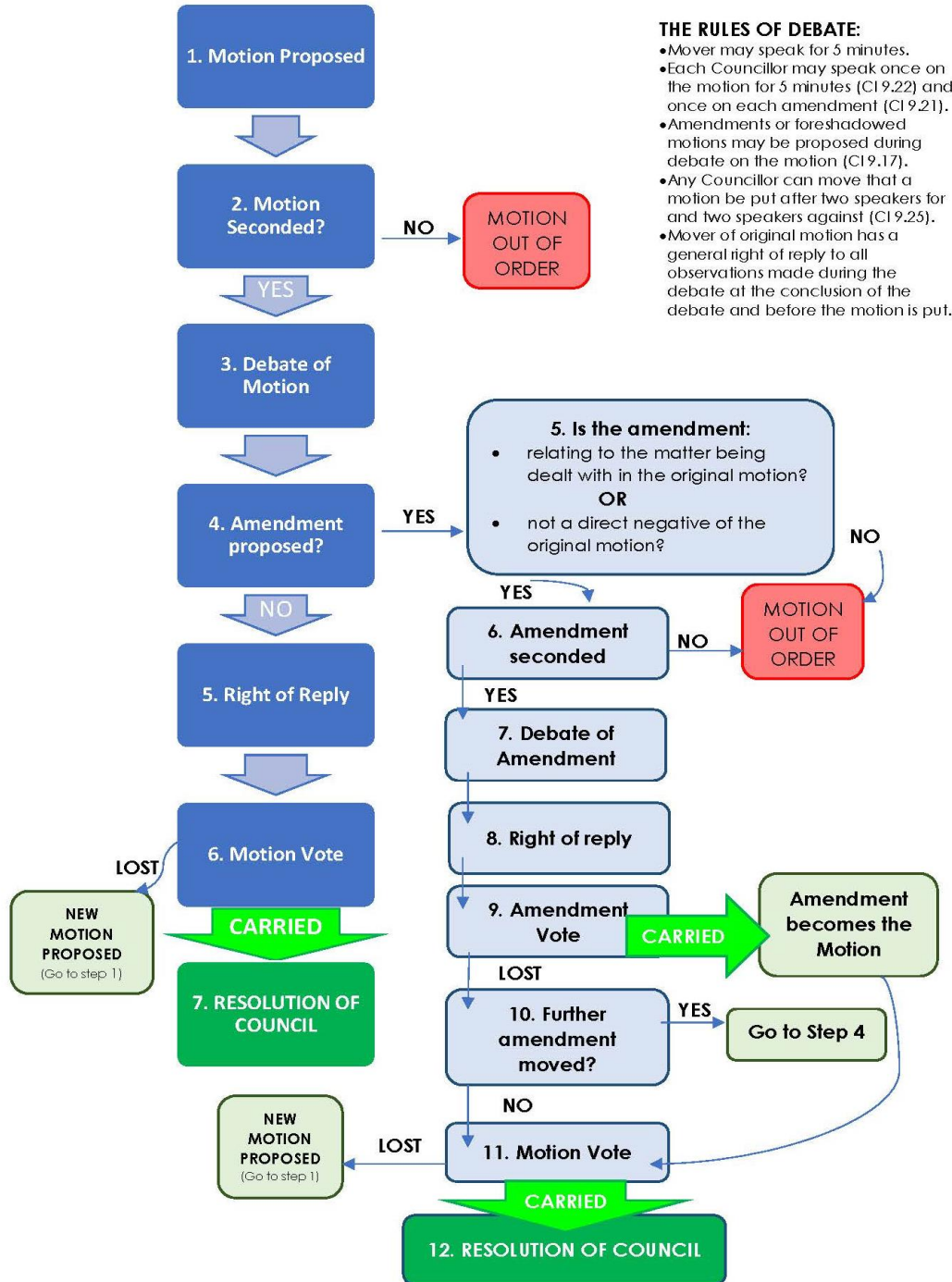
Note: Clause 21.1 reflects section 374 of the Act.

22. Definitions

the Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
act of disorder	means an act of disorder as defined in clause 13.11 of this code
amendment	in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion
audio recorder	any device capable of recording speech
business day	means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales
chairperson	in relation to a meeting of the Council – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 5.1 and 5.2 of this code, and in relation to a meeting of a committee – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 18.11 of this code
this code	means the Council's adopted code of meeting practice
committee of the Council	means a committee established by the Council in accordance with clause 18.2 of this code (being a committee consisting only of Councillors) or the Council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 11.1
Council official	has the same meaning it has in the <i>Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW</i>
day	means calendar day
division	means a request by two Councillors under clause 10.6 of this code requiring the recording of the names of the Councillors who voted both for and against a motion
foreshadowed amendment	means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a Councillor under clause 9.18 of this code during debate on the first amendment
foreshadowed motion	means a motion foreshadowed by a Councillor under clause 9.17 of this code during debate on an original motion
open voting	means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means
planning decision	means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a Council under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act
performance improvement order	means an order issued under section 438A of the Act
quorum	means the minimum number of Councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting
the Regulation	means the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</i>
webcast	a video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time
year	means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June

23. Attachments

Attachment 1. The Process of a Motion



Attachment 2. Section Five of the Leeton Shire Council Code of Conduct

5. PECUNIARY INTERESTS

What is a pecuniary interest?

- 5.1 A pecuniary interest is an interest that you have in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to you or a person referred to in clause 5.3.
- 5.2 You will not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision you might make in relation to the matter, or if the interest is of a kind specified in clause 5.6.
- 5.3 For the purposes of this Part, you will have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is:
- (a) your interest, or
 - (b) the interest of your spouse or de facto partner, your relative, or your partner or employer, or
 - (c) a company or other body of which you, or your nominee, partner or employer, is a shareholder or member.
- 5.4 For the purposes of clause 5.3:
- (a) Your "relative" is any of the following:
 - i) your parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child
 - ii) your spouse's or de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child
 - iii) the spouse or de facto partner of a person referred to in paragraphs (i) and (ii).
 - (b) "de facto partner" has the same meaning as defined in section 21C of the *Interpretation Act 1987*.
- 5.5 You will not have a pecuniary interest in relation to a person referred to in subclauses 5.3(b) or (c):
- (a) if you are unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of your spouse, de facto partner, relative, partner, employer or company or other body, or
 - (b) just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, a Council or a statutory body, or is employed by the Crown, or
 - (c) just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of a Council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter, so long as the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

What interests do not have to be disclosed?

- 5.6 You do not have to disclose the following interests for the purposes of this Part:
- (a) your interest as an elector
 - (b) your interest as a ratepayer or person liable to pay a charge
 - (c) an interest you have in any matter relating to the terms on which the provision of a service or the supply of goods or commodities is offered to the public generally, or to a section of the public that includes persons who are not subject to this code

- (d) an interest you have in any matter relating to the terms on which the provision of a service or the supply of goods or commodities is offered to your relative by the Council in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as apply to persons who are not subject to this code
 - (e) an interest you have as a member of a club or other organisation or association, unless the interest is as the holder of an office in the club or organisation (whether remunerated or not)
 - (f) if you are a Council committee member, an interest you have as a person chosen to represent the community, or as a member of a non-profit organisation or other community or special interest group, if you have been appointed to represent the organisation or group on the Council committee
 - (g) an interest you have relating to a contract, proposed contract or other matter, if the interest arises only because of a beneficial interest in shares in a company that does not exceed 10 per cent of the voting rights in the company
 - (h) an interest you have arising from the proposed making by the Council of an agreement between the Council and a corporation, association or partnership, being a corporation, association or partnership that has more than 25 members, if the interest arises because your relative is a shareholder (but not a director) of the corporation, or is a member (but not a member of the committee) of the association, or is a partner of the partnership
 - (i) an interest you have arising from the making by the Council of a contract or agreement with your relative for, or in relation to, any of the following, but only if the proposed contract or agreement is similar in terms and conditions to such contracts and agreements as have been made, or as are proposed to be made, by the Council in respect of similar matters with other residents of the area:
 - i) the performance by the Council at the expense of your relative of any work or service in connection with roads or sanitation
 - ii) security for damage to footpaths or roads
 - iii) any other service to be rendered, or act to be done, by the Council by or under any Act conferring functions on the Council, or by or under any contract
 - (j) an interest relating to the payment of fees to Councillors (including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor)
 - (k) an interest relating to the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to Councillors (including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor) in accordance with a policy under section 252 of the LGA,
 - (l) an interest relating to an election to the office of Mayor arising from the fact that a fee for the following 12 months has been determined for the office of Mayor
 - (m) an interest of a person arising from the passing for payment of a regular account for the wages or salary of an employee who is a relative of the person
 - (n) an interest arising from being covered by, or a proposal to be covered by, indemnity insurance as a Councillor or a Council committee member
 - (o) an interest arising from the appointment of a Councillor to a body as a representative or delegate of the Council, whether or not a fee or other recompense is payable to the representative or delegate.
- 5.7 For the purposes of clause 5.6, "relative" has the same meaning as in clause 4.4 but includes your spouse or de facto partner.

What disclosures must be made by a designated person?

- 5.8 Designated persons include:
- (a) the general manager
 - (b) other senior staff of the council for the purposes of section 332 of the Act
 - (c) a person (other than a member of the senior staff of the council) who is a member of staff of the council or a delegate of the council and who holds a position identified by the council as the position of a designated person because it involves the exercise of functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the person's duty as a member of staff or delegate and the person's private interest
 - (d) a person (other than a member of the senior staff of the council) who is a member of a committee of the council identified by the council as a committee whose members are designated persons because the functions of the committee involve the exercise of the council's functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the member's duty as a member of the committee and the member's private interest.
- 5.9 A designated person:
- (a) must prepare and submit written returns of interests in accordance with clauses 5.21, and
 - (b) must disclose pecuniary interests in accordance with clause 5.10.
- 5.10 A designated person must disclose in writing to the general manager (or if the person is the general manager, to the council) the nature of any pecuniary interest the person has in any council matter with which the person is dealing as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the interest.
- 5.11 Clause 5.10 does not require a designated person who is a member of staff of the council to disclose a pecuniary interest if the interest relates only to the person's salary as a member of staff, or to their other conditions of employment.
- 5.12 The general manager must, on receiving a disclosure from a designated person, deal with the matter to which the disclosure relates or refer it to another person to deal with.
- 5.13 A disclosure by the general manager must, as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, be laid on the table at a meeting of the council and the council must deal with the matter to which the disclosure relates or refer it to another person to deal with.

What disclosures must be made by council staff other than designated persons?

- 5.14 A member of staff of council, other than a designated person, must disclose in writing to their manager or the general manager the nature of any pecuniary interest they have in a matter they are dealing with as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the interest.
- 5.15 The staff member's manager or the general manager must, on receiving a disclosure under clause 5.14, deal with the matter to which the disclosure relates or refer it to another person to deal with.

What disclosures must be made by council advisers?

- 5.16 A person who, at the request or with the consent of the council or a council committee, gives advice on any matter at any meeting of the council or committee, must disclose the nature of any pecuniary interest the person has in the matter to the meeting at the time the advice is given. The person is not required to disclose the person's interest as an adviser.

- 5.17 A person does not breach clause 5.16 if the person did not know, and could not reasonably be expected to have known, that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which they had a pecuniary interest.

What disclosures must be made by a council committee member?

- 5.18 A council committee member must disclose pecuniary interests in accordance with clause 5.28 and comply with clause 5.29.
- 5.19 For the purposes of clause 5.18, a "council committee member" includes a member of staff of council who is a member of the committee.

What disclosures must be made by a councillor?

- 5.20 A councillor:
- a) must prepare and submit written returns of interests in accordance with clause 5.21, and
 - b) must disclose pecuniary interests in accordance with clause 5.28 and comply with clause 5.29 where it is applicable.

Disclosure of interests in written returns

- 5.21 A councillor or designated person must make and lodge with the general manager a return in the form set out in Schedule 2 to this code, disclosing the councillor's or designated person's interests as specified in schedule 1 to this code within 3 months after:
- a) becoming a councillor or designated person, and
 - b) 30 June of each year, and
 - c) the councillor or designated person becoming aware of an interest they are required to disclose under schedule 1 that has not been previously disclosed in a return lodged under paragraphs (a) or (b).
- 5.22 A person need not make and lodge a return under clause 5.21, paragraphs (a) and (b) if:
- a) they made and lodged a return under that clause in the preceding 3 months, or
 - b) they have ceased to be a councillor or designated person in the preceding 3 months.
- 5.23 A person must not make and lodge a return that the person knows or ought reasonably to know is false or misleading in a material particular.
- 5.24 The general manager must keep a register of returns required to be made and lodged with the general manager.
- 5.25 Returns required to be lodged with the general manager under clause 5.21(a) and (b) must be tabled at the first meeting of the council after the last day the return is required to be lodged.
- 5.26 **Returns required to be lodged with the general manager under clause 5.21(c) must be tabled at the next council meeting after the return is lodged.**
- 5.27 Information contained in returns made and lodged under clause 5.21 is to be made publicly available in accordance with the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, the *Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009* and any guidelines issued by the Information Commissioner.

Disclosure of pecuniary interests at meetings

- 5.28 A Councillor or a Council committee member who has a pecuniary interest in any matter

with which the Council is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the Council or committee at which the matter is being considered, must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.

- 5.29 The Councillor or Council committee member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the Council or committee:
- a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or committee, or
 - b) at any time during which the Council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.
- 5.30 In the case of a meeting of a board of a joint organisation, a voting representative is taken to be present at the meeting for the purposes of clauses 4.28 and 4.29 where they participate in the meeting by telephone or other electronic means.
- 5.31 A disclosure made at a meeting of a Council or Council committee must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 5.32 A general notice may be given to the general manager in writing by a Councillor or a Council committee member to the effect that the Councillor or Council committee member, or the Councillor's or Council committee member's spouse, de facto partner or relative, is:
- a) a member of, or in the employment of, a specified company or other body, or
 - b) a partner of, or in the employment of, a specified person.

Such a notice is, unless and until the notice is withdrawn or until the end of the term of the Council in which it is given (whichever is the sooner), sufficient disclosure of the Councillor's or Council committee member's interest in a matter relating to the specified company, body or person that may be the subject of consideration by the Council or Council committee after the date of the notice.

- 5.33 A Councillor or a Council committee member is not prevented from being present at and taking part in a meeting at which a matter is being considered, or from voting on the matter, merely because the Councillor or Council committee member has an interest in the matter of a kind referred to in clause 4.6.
- 5.34 A person does not breach clauses 4.28 or 4.29 if the person did not know, and could not reasonably be expected to have known, that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which they had a pecuniary interest.
- 5.35 Despite clause 5.29, a Councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter may participate in a decision to delegate consideration of the matter in question to another body or person.
- 5.36 Clause 5.29 does not apply to a Councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting if:
- a) the matter is a proposal relating to:
 - i. the making of a principal environmental planning instrument applying to the whole or a significant portion of the Council's area, or
 - ii. the amendment, alteration or repeal of an environmental planning instrument where the amendment, alteration or repeal applies to the whole or a significant portion of the Council's area, and
 - b) the pecuniary interest arises only because of an interest of the Councillor in the Councillor's principal place of residence or an interest of another person (whose interests are relevant under clause 4.3) in that person's principal place of residence, and

- c) the Councillor made a special disclosure under clause 4.37 in relation to the interest before the commencement of the meeting.
- 5.37 A special disclosure of a pecuniary interest made for the purposes of clause 5.36(c) must:
- a) be in the form set out in schedule 3 of this code and contain the information required by that form, and
 - b) be laid on the table at a meeting of the Council as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, and the information contained in the special disclosure is to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 5.38 The Minister for Local Government may, conditionally or unconditionally, allow a Councillor or a Council committee member who has a pecuniary interest in a matter with which the Council is concerned to be present at a meeting of the Council or committee, to take part in the consideration or discussion of the matter and to vote on the matter if the Minister is of the opinion:
- a) that the number of Councillors prevented from voting would be so great a proportion of the whole as to impede the transaction of business, or
 - b) that it is in the interests of the electors for the area to do so.
- 5.39 A Councillor or a Council committee member with a pecuniary interest in a matter who is permitted to be present at a meeting of the Council or committee, to take part in the consideration or discussion of the matter and to vote on the matter under clause 5.38, must still disclose the interest they have in the matter in accordance with clause 5.28.

Attachment 3. Conflict of Interest Declaration form



Name:
Meeting: Council Meeting Committee Meeting Council Workshop
 Other

MATTER BEING CONSIDERED IN WHICH YOU WISH TO DECLARE AN INTEREST

DATE
AGENDA ITEM

TYPE OF CONFLICT

- Less than significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest.**
Required Action: Make a declaration, stay in the meeting, participate in the debate and vote on the item after describing why the conflict is less than significant and why they are choosing to remain in the Chamber
- Significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest**
Required Action: Immediately make a declaration, do not participate in the item, leave the meeting during discussion and/or consideration of the matter. Not return until the matter is resolved after describing why the conflict is significant.
- Pecuniary conflict of interest.**
Required Action: Immediately make a declaration, do not participate in the item, leave the meeting during discussion and/or consideration of the matter. Not return until the matter is resolved after describing the conflict.

DESCRIPTION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST (Description wording to be included in meeting minutes)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

DECLARATION

I HEREBY DECLARE THAT THE ABOVE DETAILS ARE CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND I MAKE THIS CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DISCLOSURE IN GOOD FAITH

SIGNATURE:: **DATE:**

PLEASE NOTE: In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, if a Councillor has declared a conflict of interest, remains in the Chamber and does not vote, it will be taken that they have voted against the motion.

ITEM 6.1.2. ELECTION OF THE MAYOR

AUTHOR/S: Manager Governance, Corporate & Customer Service

APPROVER/S: Director of Corporate/CFO

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

In circumstances where a Mayor is not elected by the community, section 290 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) states when an election of a Mayor by the Councillors is to be held, in ordinary circumstances.

Section 230(1) of the Act states that a Mayor elected by Councillors holds office for two (2) years, subject to the Act.

This report outlines the procedure for the election of a Mayor by the Councillors.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. The Returning Officer proceeds with the election of the Mayor in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* for a term of office from 8 October 2024 to September 2026.
 2. If there is only (1) nomination for Mayor, authorise the Returning Officer to declare the nominated Councillor to be duly elected Mayor for the term of office.
 3. If there is more than one (1) valid nomination for Mayor:
 - a. determine the method of voting by the Voting Method. (Select Ordinary Ballot, Open Voting or Preferential Voting method).
 - b. Once the election result is known, authorise the Returning Officer to read publicly the final vote count and declare the candidate with the majority votes the duly elected Mayor for the term of office.
 4. The Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government, the Chief Executive of Local Government NSW, the Executive Officer of Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) and the Secretary of NSW County Mayors be advised of the result of the election of the Mayor for the period from the 8 October 2024 to September 2026.
-

REPORT

(a) Background

In accordance with Section 282(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), Councillors must elect a Mayor from among their number unless they have a popularly elected Mayor.

The Act also provides that where the Mayor is elected by the Councillors, he/she holds the office for two (2) years under Section 230(1) of the Act.

The election of the Mayor must be conducted in accordance with section 394 and Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General Regulation) 2021 (the Regulation), (**Attachment 1**) and Council's Code of Meeting Practice (see **Attachment 3 from Item 6.1.1**).

Councillors need to be present at the meeting in person to participate in voting by means other than an open ballot.

The election is to be conducted by the General Manager, a Council employee designated (the Returning Officer) by the General Manager.

Ballot papers will be issued if a decision is made to hold the election by Ballot. If a decision is made for "Open Voting" then this will be by a show of hands.

(b) Discussion

In accordance with Section 227(a) of the Local Government Act, 1993 the Mayor of Leeton Shire Council is elected by the Councillors from among their number.

Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 outlines the following procedures for the election of Mayor.

Returning Officer

The General Manager has nominated and appointed the Manager Governance, Corporate and Customer Service as the Returning Officer.

Prior to Election

Before this Council meeting at which the election will be conducted, the Returning Officer has given notice of the election to the Councillors.

Nomination Process

1. A Councillor may be nominated without notice for election as Mayor.
2. The nomination is to be made in writing by two (2) or more Councillors (one (1) of whom may be the nominee). The nomination is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing.
3. The nomination form (**Attachment 2**) is to be sent via email (sarahg@leeton.nsw.gov.au) prior or delivered in person to the Returning Officer at the meeting. Staff would appreciate notice prior to the meeting, if possible, as this assists with preparations for the election (if relevant).
4. The Returning Officer is to announce the names of the nominees at the Council meeting at which the election is to be held.

Election

If only one (1) Councillor is nominated for the position of Mayor, that Councillor is elected.

If more than one (1) Councillor has been nominated, Council must determine by resolution, the method of voting for the position of Mayor, by way of one (1) of the following methods:

- Open voting – i.e. by show of hands,
- Ordinary ballot – i.e. a secret ballot (place an “X” against the candidate of their choice),
- Preferential ballot – i.e. place 1, 2, 3 etc. against each candidate.

The Returning Officer must ask for a motion to be put to the meeting by one (1) of the Councillors on the preferred method of voting for the election of a Chairperson. This must then be seconded and voted on by the Councillors.

The elections of Mayor and Deputy Mayor are the only times Council can choose to vote by way of secret ballot. In all other matters open voting must be used. The election is to be held at the Council meeting at which the Council resolves on the method of voting.

Leeton Shire Council has traditionally held the vote by the ‘Ordinary Ballot’ method.

Ordinary Ballot or Open Voting

This Part applies if the election proceeds by Ordinary Ballot or by Open Voting (i.e. show of hands).

Marking of Ballot-Papers

1. If the election proceeds by ordinary ballot, the returning officer is to decide the manner in which votes are to be marked on the ballot-papers.
2. The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part must be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
3. An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

Count— Two (2) Candidates

1. If there are only two (2) candidates, the candidate with the higher number of votes is elected.
2. If there are only two (2) candidates and they are tied, the one elected is to be chosen by lot.

Count— Three (3) or more Candidates

1. If there are three (3) or more candidates, the one with the lowest number of votes is to be excluded.
2. If three (3) or more candidates then remain, a further vote is to be taken of those candidates and the one with the lowest number of votes from that further vote is to be excluded.
3. If, after that, three (3) or more candidates still remain, the procedure set out in subsection (2) is to be repeated until only two (2) candidates remain.
4. A further vote is to be taken of the two (2) remaining candidates.
5. Section 6 of this Schedule then applies to the determination of the election as if the two (2) remaining candidates had been the only candidates.
6. If at any stage during a count under subsection (1) or (2), 2 or more candidates are tied on the lowest number of votes, the one excluded is to be chosen by lot.

Preferential Ballot

1. This part applies if the election proceeds by preferential ballot.
2. The ballot papers are to contain the names of all the candidates. The Councillors are to mark their votes by placing the numbers "1", "2" and so on against the various names so as to indicate the order of their preference for all the candidates.

Count for Preferential Ballot

1. If a candidate has an absolute majority of first preference votes, that candidate is elected.
2. If not, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is excluded and the votes on the un-exhausted ballot papers counted to him or her are transferred to the candidates with second preferences on those ballot papers.
3. A candidate who then has an absolute majority of votes is elected, but, if no candidate then has an absolute majority of votes, the process of excluding the candidate who has the lowest number of votes and counting each of his or her un-exhausted ballot papers to the candidates remaining in the election next in order of the voter's preference is repeated until one candidate has received an absolute majority of votes. The latter is elected.
4. In the clause "absolute majority" in relation to votes means a number which is more than one half of the number of formal un-exhausted ballot papers.

Preferential Voting - Tied Candidates

1. If, on any count of votes, there are two (2) candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for the two (2) candidates are equal the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have received an absolute majority of votes and is therefore taken to be elected.
2. If, on any count of votes, there are 3 or more candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for two (2) or more candidates are equal and those candidates are the ones with the lowest number of votes on the count of the votes the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have the lowest number of votes and is therefore excluded.

To choose a candidate by lot, the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes are written on similar slips of paper by the Returning Officer, the slips are folded by the Returning Officer so as to prevent the names being seen, the slips are mixed and one is drawn at random by the Returning Officer and the candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is chosen.

Result

The result of the election (including the name of the candidate elected as Mayor or deputy mayor) is

- a. to be declared to the Councillors at the Council meeting at which the election is held by the Returning Officer, and
- b. to be delivered or sent to the Secretary and the Chief Executive Officer of Local Government NSW and other relevant organisations.

Summary

Nomination forms for the position of Mayor are attached (**Attachment 2**). These may be completed and returned to the Returning Officer (Manager Governance, Corporate and Customer Service) at any time before the Council Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 8 October 2024 or at this Meeting up to the time that the Returning Officer announces that nominations are closed.

The Returning Officer will call for the final lodgment of nominations at the meeting. After the final call for nominations the Returning Officer will announce the names of the nominee(s).

If more than one (1) Nomination is received, then Councillors will be required to decide the method of Voting i.e. Ordinary Ballot, Open Voting or Preferential Ballot method. When elected the incoming Mayor will Chair the Meeting.

(c) Options

If more than one (1) nomination is received the method of electing the Mayor will be by:

1. Ordinary Ballot - **This is the recommended option.**
2. Open Voting Method
3. Preferential Ballot

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

Nil

(b) Policy

Code of Meeting Practice (see **Attachment 3 from Item 6.1.1**)

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Schedule 7 Election of Mayor by Councillors - Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (**Attachment 1**)

Division 2 The Mayor - Local Government Act 1993 (**Attachment 4**)

(d) Risk

Nil

CONSULTATION

(a) External

NSW Government - Factsheet Election Mayor and Deputy by Councillors (**Attachment 3**)

(b) Internal

General Manager

[LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN \(DPOP\)](#)

9. Governance and Administration

9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy

This is in accordance with the Councilor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines and Committee Terms of Reference

9.3.3 Implement training and development programs for Councillors in accordance with the Councilor induction and Professional Development Guidelines

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1- Schedule 7 Part 1 – Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – NSW

Attachment 2 - Nomination Form for Mayor

Attachment 3 - NSW Government Factsheet Election Mayor and Deputy by Councillors

Attachment 4 – Division 2 The Mayor – Local Government Act 1993 No 30 – NSW Legislation



NSW legislation

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

Current version for 2 September 2024 to date (accessed 25 September 2024 at 10:26)

Schedule 7

Schedule 7 Election of mayor by councillors

(Section 394)

Part 1 Preliminary

1 Returning officer

The general manager (or a person appointed by the general manager) is the returning officer.

2 Nomination

- (1) A councillor may be nominated without notice for election as mayor or deputy mayor.
- (2) The nomination is to be made in writing by 2 or more councillors (one of whom may be the nominee). The nomination is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing.
- (3) The nomination is to be delivered or sent to the returning officer.
- (4) The returning officer is to announce the names of the nominees at the council meeting at which the election is to be held.

3 Election

- (1) If only one councillor is nominated, that councillor is elected.
- (2) If more than one councillor is nominated, the council is to resolve whether the election is to proceed by preferential ballot, by ordinary ballot or by open voting.
- (3) The election is to be held at the council meeting at which the council resolves on the method of voting.
- (4) In this section—
ballot has its normal meaning of secret ballot.
open voting means voting by a show of hands or similar means.

Part 2 Ordinary ballot or open voting

4 Application of Part

This Part applies if the election proceeds by ordinary ballot or by open voting.

5 Marking of ballot-papers

- (1) If the election proceeds by ordinary ballot, the returning officer is to decide the manner in which votes are to be marked on the ballot-papers.

- (2) The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part must be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
- (3) An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

6 Count—2 candidates

- (1) If there are only 2 candidates, the candidate with the higher number of votes is elected.
- (2) If there are only 2 candidates and they are tied, the one elected is to be chosen by lot.

7 Count—3 or more candidates

- (1) If there are 3 or more candidates, the one with the lowest number of votes is to be excluded.
- (2) If 3 or more candidates then remain, a further vote is to be taken of those candidates and the one with the lowest number of votes from that further vote is to be excluded.
- (3) If, after that, 3 or more candidates still remain, the procedure set out in subsection (2) is to be repeated until only 2 candidates remain.
- (4) A further vote is to be taken of the 2 remaining candidates.
- (5) Section 6 of this Schedule then applies to the determination of the election as if the 2 remaining candidates had been the only candidates.
- (6) If at any stage during a count under subsection (1) or (2), 2 or more candidates are tied on the lowest number of votes, the one excluded is to be chosen by lot.

Part 3 Preferential ballot

8 Application of Part

This Part applies if the election proceeds by preferential ballot.

9 Ballot-papers and voting

- (1) The ballot-papers are to contain the names of all the candidates. The councillors are to mark their votes by placing the numbers “1”, “2” and so on against the various names so as to indicate the order of their preference for all the candidates.
- (2) The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part is to be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
- (3) An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

10 Count

- (1) If a candidate has an absolute majority of first preference votes, that candidate is elected.
- (2) If not, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is excluded and the votes on the unexhausted ballot-papers counted to him or her are transferred to the candidates with second preferences on those ballot-papers.
- (3) A candidate who then has an absolute majority of votes is elected, but, if no candidate then has an absolute majority of votes, the process of excluding the candidate who has the lowest number of votes and counting each of his or her unexhausted ballot-papers to the candidates remaining in the election next in order of the voter’s preference is repeated until one candidate has received an absolute majority of votes. The latter is elected.
- (4) In this section, *absolute majority*, in relation to votes, means a number that is more than one-half of the number of unexhausted formal ballot-papers.

11 Tied candidates

- (1) If, on any count of votes, there are 2 candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for the 2 candidates are equal—the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have received an absolute majority of votes and is therefore taken to be elected.
- (2) If, on any count of votes, there are 3 or more candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for 2 or more candidates are equal and those candidates are the ones with the lowest number of votes on the count of the votes—the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have the lowest number of votes and is therefore excluded.

Part 4 General

12 Choosing by lot

To choose a candidate by lot, the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes are written on similar slips of paper by the returning officer, the slips are folded by the returning officer so as to prevent the names being seen, the slips are mixed and one is drawn at random by the returning officer and the candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is chosen.

13 Result

The result of the election (including the name of the candidate elected as mayor or deputy mayor) is—

- (a) to be declared to the councillors at the council meeting at which the election is held by the returning officer, and
- (b) to be delivered or sent to the Secretary and the Chief Executive Officer of Local Government NSW.



ELECTION OF MAYOR

For the period 8 October 2024 to September 2026

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, Sections 282 and 290, and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Part 11 Division 12 Clause 394 and Schedule 7

Nomination

We, the undersigned Councillors hereby nominate

Councillor _____
(Please print name)

Who is a duly elected Councillor of Leeton Shire Council to the office of **Mayor**

Proposer: _____ Proposer: _____

Signature: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____

Consent to Nomination

I, (Please print name) _____ hereby
consent to my nomination as set out above.

Signature _____ Date _____

Fact Sheet

ELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR BY COUNCILLORS



Summary

Councillors must elect a mayor from among their number every two years unless they have a popularly elected mayor.

Councillors may also elect a deputy mayor. The deputy mayor may be elected for the mayoral term or a shorter term.

The election of the mayor and the deputy mayor must be conducted in accordance with section 394 and Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation).

The purpose of this document is to assist councils to conduct mayoral and deputy mayoral elections in accordance with these requirements. It includes scripts for key activities to help returning officers exercise their functions. These scripts are provided in the text boxes inserted in the relevant parts of this document.

How can councils use this document?

Electing a mayor is an important activity. It is vital that the process is smooth, open and easy to follow and not rushed or confusing. Where necessary, it may be appropriate to stop and provide clarification for the benefit of councillors, staff or the gallery.

Returning officers can circulate this document prior to the meeting to help councillors understand the election process.

Election of a mayor after an ordinary election of councillors

An election for mayor must be held within three weeks of the declaration of the ordinary election at a meeting of the council.

The returning officer is to be the general manager or a person appointed by the general manager.

As no mayor or deputy mayor will be present at the start of the meeting, the first business of the meeting should be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting. Alternatively, the returning officer may assume the chair for the purpose of conducting the election.

Mid-term election of a mayor

A mayor elected by councillors holds office for two years. A mid-term mayoral election must be held in the September two years after the ordinary election of councillors or the first election of a new council following its establishment.

Procedures

Prior to the meeting

Before the council meeting at which the election is to be conducted, the returning officer will give notice of the election to the councillors.

The notice is to set out how a person may be nominated as a candidate for election as chairperson.

As returning officer, I now invite nominations for the position of mayor/deputy mayor for [name of council] for a two year period.

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, two or more councillors may nominate a councillor (one of whom may be the nominee) for the position of mayor/deputy mayor. Nominations must be in writing and the nominee must consent to their nomination in writing.

A councillor may be nominated without notice for election as mayor or deputy mayor. The nomination is to be made in writing by two or more councillors (one of whom may be the nominee). The nomination is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing.

The returning officer checks the nomination forms and writes the nominees' names on a candidates' sheet.

At the meeting

At the start of the first meeting after an ordinary election, in the absence of a chairperson, the returning officer assumes the chair and announces that the first item of business is to be the election of a mayor.

If a chairperson is present, they announce that the first item of business is the election of the mayor then vacates the chair for the returning officer who will then conduct the election.

The returning officer reads out the names of the nominees and seeks confirmation that the nominee has accepted the nomination.

If only one councillor has been nominated for the position of mayor/deputy mayor, the nominee is elected.

As there is only one nominee for the role of mayor/deputy mayor, I declare that [name of successful candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

If more than one candidate has been nominated, the council must determine by resolution, the method of voting for the position of mayor/deputy mayor, by way of one of the following methods:

- Open voting – i.e. by show of hands
- Ordinary ballot – i.e. a secret ballot (place an "X" against the candidate of their choice)
- Preferential ballot – i.e. place 1, 2, 3 etc. against each candidate.

The returning officer must ask for a motion to be put to the meeting by one of the councillors on the preferred method of voting for the election of a chairperson. This must then be seconded and voted on by the councillors.

Note: In the event of a tie, if there is a chairperson, they may use their casting vote. If there is a tie and no chairperson, an election for the role of chairperson should be conducted. Then the election for mayor resumes.

Open voting (show of hands)

Open voting is the most transparent method of voting. It is also the least bureaucratic method and reflects normal council voting methods.

The returning officer will advise the meeting of the method of voting and explains the process.

It has been resolved that the method of voting for the position of mayor/deputy mayor will be by show of hands.

Each councillor is entitled to vote for only one candidate in each round of voting.

I will now write each candidate's name on a slip of paper and deposit it in a barrel. The first name out of the barrel will be written first on the tally sheet, with second name out being written second on the tally sheet, etc.

When all candidates' names have been written on the tally sheet, the returning officer announces the names of the candidates and, commencing with the first candidate, states the following:

Would those councillors voting for [name of candidate] please raise your hand.

The returning officer records the number of votes for each successive candidate on the tally sheet and announces the number of votes received for each candidate.

The minute taker records the vote of each councillor.

The returning officer should check with the minute taker that each councillor has voted. If a councillor has not voted it should be confirmed that they are abstaining (an informal vote).

Two candidates

If there are only two candidates for the position of mayor/deputy mayor and the voting is higher for one candidate than another (number of formal votes recorded on the tally sheet), the returning officer then announces the result.

[Name of candidate] has the higher number of formal votes and as a result I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

In the event of a **tied vote**, the returning officer will advise the meeting of the following process.

In accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the

names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be declared as mayor/deputy mayor.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests a staff member to shake the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

Three or more candidates

If there are three or more candidates, the candidate with the lowest number of votes for the position of mayor/deputy mayor is excluded.

[Name of candidate], having the lowest number of votes, is excluded.

The voting continues as above until there are only two candidates remaining (see voting for **two candidates** above).

In the event that the **lowest number of votes are tied**, the returning officer advises the meeting of the following process:

In accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be excluded.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests a staff member to shake the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows it to the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is excluded.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

Ordinary ballot – (secret ballot)

The returning officer advises the meeting of the method of voting and explains the process.

It has been resolved that the method for voting for the position of mayor/deputy mayor will be by ordinary ballot, in other words by placing an "X" against the candidate of the councillor's choice.

The returning officer announces the names of the candidates for mayor/deputy mayor and writes each name on a slip of paper and deposits it in a barrel.

The returning officer requests that a staff member shakes the barrel and advises that the order in which the names will appear on the ballot paper will be determined by a draw out of the barrel, i.e. first name out of the barrel is written first on the ballot papers and so on.

It will be necessary to have a number of blank papers as this process may require more than one round of voting.

The returning officer writes the names on one set of the ballot papers and initials the front of each ballot paper.

A staff member distributes the ballot papers and collects them into the ballot box when completed and gives it to the returning officer who counts the votes and records them on the tally sheet.

The returning officer announces the results.

[Name of candidate], having the lowest number of votes, is excluded.

In the event that the **lowest number of votes are tied**, the returning officer advises the meeting of the following process:

In accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be excluded.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests a staff member to shake the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows it to the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is excluded.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

The returning officer writes the names of the remaining candidates on a further set of the ballot papers and initials the front of each ballot paper.

The staff member distributes ballot papers listing the remaining candidates and collects them into the ballot box when completed and gives it to the returning officer who again counts the votes and records them on the tally sheet and announces the results.

The process continues until two candidates remain, where a final vote takes place.

[Name of candidate] has the higher number of votes and I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

In the event of a **tied vote** between the two remaining candidates, the returning officer makes the following statement and announces the process.

The votes are tied between [name of candidate 1] and [name of candidate 2] having received [number] votes each, and, in accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel.

Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be declared as mayor/deputy mayor.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests that a staff member shakes the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

Preferential ballot

The returning officer explains the process.

It has been resolved that the method for voting for the position of mayor/deputy mayor will be by preferential ballot, i.e. placing 1, 2 and so on against the candidate of the councillor's choice in order of preference for all candidates.

The returning officer announces the names of the candidates for mayor/deputy mayor and writes each candidate's name on a slip of paper and deposits it in a barrel.

The returning officer requests that a staff member shakes the barrel and advises that the order in which the names will appear on the ballot paper will be determined by a draw out of the barrel, i.e. first name out of the barrel is written first on the ballot papers and so on.

The returning officer writes the names on the ballot papers and initials the front of each ballot paper. This method of voting requires only one set of ballot papers.

A staff member distributes the ballot papers and collects them when completed and gives them to the returning officer who counts the first preference votes and records them on the tally sheet.

If a candidate has an absolute majority of first preference votes (more than half), the returning officer declares the outcome.

[Name of candidate], having an absolute majority of first preference votes, is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

If no candidate has the absolute majority of first preference votes, the returning officer excludes the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes.

[Name of candidate], having the lowest number of first preference votes, is excluded.

The preferences from the excluded candidate are distributed. This process continues until one candidate has received an absolute majority of votes, at which time the returning officer announces the result.

[Name of candidate], having an absolute majority of votes, is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

In the event of a **tied vote** where there are only two candidates remaining in the election, the returning officer explains the process.

The votes are tied between [name of candidate 1] and [name of candidate 2] having received [number] votes each, and, in accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be declared as mayor/deputy mayor.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests a staff member to shake the barrel. The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

In the event that the **lowest number of votes are tied** and where there are three or more candidates remaining in the election, the returning officer advises the meeting of the process.

In accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be excluded and their preferences distributed.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests that a staff member shakes the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is excluded and any votes cast for them will be distributed by preference.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

Schedule 7 - Election of Mayor by Councillors

Part 1 Preliminary

1 Returning officer

The general manager (or a person appointed by the general manager) is the returning officer.

2 Nomination

- (1) A councillor may be nominated without notice for election as mayor or deputy mayor
- (2) The nomination is to be made in writing by 2 or more councillors (one of whom may be the nominee). The nomination is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing.
- (3) The nomination is to be delivered or sent to the returning officer.
- (4) The returning officer is to announce the names of the nominees at the council meeting at which the election is to be held.

3 Election

- (1) If only one councillor is nominated, that councillor is elected.
- (2) If more than one councillor is nominated, the council is to resolve whether the election is to proceed by preferential ballot, by ordinary ballot or by open voting.
- (3) The election is to be held at the council meeting at which the council resolves on the method of voting.
- (4) In this section:
ballot has its normal meaning of secret ballot.
open voting means voting by a show of hands or similar means.

Part 2 Ordinary ballot or open voting

4 Application of Part

This Part applies if the election proceeds by ordinary ballot or by open voting.

5 Marking of ballot-papers

- (1) If the election proceeds by ordinary ballot, the returning officer is to decide the manner in which votes are to be marked on the ballot-papers.
- (2) The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part must be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
- (3) An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

6 Count—2 candidates

- (1) If there are only 2 candidates, the candidate with the higher number of votes is elected.
- (2) If there are only 2 candidates and they are tied, the one elected is to be chosen by lot.

7 Count—3 or more candidates

- (1) If there are 3 or more candidates, the one with the lowest number of votes is to be excluded.
- (2) If 3 or more candidates then remain, a further vote is to be taken of those candidates and the one with the lowest number of votes from that further vote is to be excluded.
- (3) If, after that, 3 or more candidates still remain, the procedure set out in subsection (2) is to be repeated until only 2 candidates remain.
- (4) A further vote is to be taken of the 2 remaining candidates.
- (5) Section 6 of this Schedule then applies to the determination of the election as if the 2 remaining candidates had been the only candidates.
- (6) If at any stage during a count under subsection (1) or (2), 2 or more candidates are tied on the lowest number of votes, the one excluded is to be chosen by lot.

Part 3 Preferential ballot

8 Application of Part

This Part applies if the election proceeds by preferential ballot.

9 Ballot-papers and voting

- (1) The ballot-papers are to contain the names of all the candidates. The Councillors are to mark their votes by placing the numbers “1”, “2” and so on against the various names so as to indicate the order of their preference for all the candidates.
- (2) The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part is to be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
- (3) An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

10 Count

- (1) If a candidate has an absolute majority of first preference votes, that candidate is elected.
- (2) If not, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is excluded and the votes on the unexhausted ballot-papers counted to him or her are transferred to the candidates with second preferences on those ballot-papers.
- (3) A candidate who then has an absolute majority of votes is elected, but, if no candidate then has an absolute majority of votes, the process of excluding the candidate who has the lowest number of votes and counting each of his or her unexhausted ballot-papers to the candidates remaining in the election next in order of the voter’s preference is repeated until one candidate has received an absolute majority of votes. The latter is elected.
- (4) In this section, “**absolute majority**”, in relation to votes, means a number that is more than one-half of the number of unexhausted formal ballot-papers.

11 Tied candidates

- (1) If, on any count of votes, there are 2 candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for the 2 candidates are equal—the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have received an absolute majority of votes and is therefore taken to be elected.
- (2) If, on any count of votes, there are 3 or more candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for 2 or more candidates are equal and those candidates are the ones with the lowest number of votes on the count of the votes—the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have the lowest number of votes and is therefore excluded.

Part 4 General

12 Choosing by lot

To choose a candidate by lot, the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes are written on similar slips of paper by the returning officer, the slips are folded by the returning officer so as to prevent the names being seen, the slips are mixed and one is drawn at random by the returning officer and the candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is chosen.

13 Result

The result of the election (including the name of the candidate elected as mayor or deputy mayor) is:

- a) to be declared to the councillors at the council meeting at which the election is held by the returning officer, and
- b) to be delivered or sent to the Secretary and to the Chief Executive of Local Government NSW.



NSW legislation

Local Government Act 1993 No 30

Current version for 1 September 2024 to date (accessed 25 September 2024 at 9:59)

[Chapter 9](#) > [Part 2](#) > Division 2

Division 2 The mayor

225 The mayor

An area must have a mayor who is elected in accordance with this Division.

226 Role of mayor

The role of the mayor is as follows—

- (a) to be the leader of the council and a leader in the local community,
- (b) to advance community cohesion and promote civic awareness,
- (c) to be the principal member and spokesperson of the governing body, including representing the views of the council as to its local priorities,
- (d) to exercise, in cases of necessity, the policy-making functions of the governing body of the council between meetings of the council,
- (e) to preside at meetings of the council,
- (f) to ensure that meetings of the council are conducted efficiently, effectively and in accordance with this Act,
- (g) to ensure the timely development and adoption of the strategic plans, programs and policies of the council,
- (h) to promote the effective and consistent implementation of the strategic plans, programs and policies of the council,
- (i) to promote partnerships between the council and key stakeholders,
- (j) to advise, consult with and provide strategic direction to the general manager in relation to the implementation of the strategic plans and policies of the council,
- (k) in conjunction with the general manager, to ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between the council and the local community,
- (l) to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office,
- (m) to represent the council on regional organisations and at inter-governmental forums at regional, State and Commonwealth level,
- (n) in consultation with the councillors, to lead performance appraisals of the general manager,
- (o) to exercise any other functions of the council that the council determines.

227 Who elects the mayor?

The mayor of an area is the person elected to the office of mayor by—

- (a) the councillors from among their number, unless there is a decision in force under this Division which provides for the election of the mayor by the electors, or
- (b) the electors, if such a decision is in force.

Note—

As to the election of the mayor, see also section 282.

228 How is it decided that the mayor be elected by the electors?

- (1) It may be decided at a constitutional referendum that the mayor be elected by the electors.
- (2) A decision that the mayor be elected by the electors takes effect in relation to the next ordinary election after the decision is made.

229 Can the decision be changed?

- (1) A decision that the mayor be elected by the electors is rescinded only if a constitutional referendum decides in favour of discontinuing that means of election.
- (2) The rescission takes effect in relation to the next ordinary election after the rescission occurs.

230 For what period is a mayor elected?

- (1) A mayor elected by the councillors holds the office of mayor for 2 years, subject to this Act.
- (2) A mayor elected by the electors holds the office of mayor for 4 years, subject to this Act.
- (3) The office of mayor—
 - (a) commences on the day the person elected to the office is declared to be so elected, and
 - (b) becomes vacant when the person's successor is declared to be elected to the office, or on the occurrence of a casual vacancy in the office.
- (4) A person elected to fill a casual vacancy in the office of mayor holds the office for the balance of the predecessor's term.

231 Deputy mayor

- (1) The councillors may elect a person from among their number to be the deputy mayor.
- (2) The person may be elected for the mayoral term or a shorter term.
- (3) The deputy mayor may exercise any function of the mayor at the request of the mayor or if the mayor is prevented by illness, absence or otherwise from exercising the function or if there is a casual vacancy in the office of mayor.
- (4) The councillors may elect a person from among their number to act as deputy mayor if the deputy mayor is prevented by illness, absence or otherwise from exercising a function under this section, or if no deputy mayor has been elected.

ITEM 8.1.3. ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR

AUTHOR/S: Manager Governance, Corporate & Customer Service

APPROVER/S: Director of Corporate/CFO

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

Section 231 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) states that Councillors may elect a person among their number to be the Deputy Mayor from the 8 October 2024 to September 2026.

This report outlines the procedure for the election of a Deputy Mayor by the Councillors.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. The Returning Officer proceeds with the election of the Deputy Mayor in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* for the Mayoral term of office from 8 October 2024 to September 2026.
 2. If there is only (1) nomination for Deputy Mayor, authorise the Returning Officer to declare the nominated Councillor to be duly elected Deputy Mayor for the term of office.
 3. If there is more than one (1) valid nomination for Deputy Mayor:
 - a. determine the method of voting by the Voting Method. (Select Ordinary Ballot, Open Voting or Preferential Voting method).
 - b. Once the election result is known, authorise the Returning Officer to read publicly the final vote count and declare the candidate with the majority votes the duly elected Deputy Mayor for the term of office.
 4. The Secretary and the Chief Executive of the Local Government NSW be advised of the result of the election of the Deputy Mayor for the period from the 8 October 2024 to September 2026.
-

REPORT

(a) Background

The Deputy Mayor's role is to exercise any function and delegation of the Mayor:

- i. At the request of the Mayor; or
- ii. If the Mayor is prevented by illness, absence or otherwise from exercising the function; or
- iii. If there is a casual vacancy in the Office of Mayor.

In accordance with section 231 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) states that Councillors may elect a person among their number to be the Deputy Mayor for the Mayoral term of office.

The election of the Deputy Mayor must be conducted in accordance with Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General Regulation) 2021* (the Regulation) (**Attachment 1**) and Council's Code of Meeting Practice (see **Attachment 3 from Item 6.1.1**)

Councillors need to be present at the meeting in person to participate in voting by means other than an open ballot.

The election is to be conducted by the General Manager, a Council employee designated (the Returning Officer) by the General Manager.

Ballot papers will be issued if a decision is made to hold the election by Ballot. If a decision is made for "Open Voting" then this will be by a show of hands.

(b) Discussion

Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* outlines the following procedures for the election of Mayor.

Returning Officer

The General Manager has nominated and appointed the Manager Governance, Corporate and Customer Service as the Returning Officer.

Prior to Election

Before this Council meeting at which the election will be conducted, the Returning Officer has given notice of the election to the Councillors.

Nomination Process

1. A Councillor may be nominated without notice for election as Deputy Mayor.
2. The nomination is to be made in writing by two (2) or more Councillors (one (1) of whom may be the nominee). The nomination is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing.
3. The nomination form (**Attachment 2**) is to be sent via email (sarahg@leeton.nsw.gov.au) prior or delivered in person to the Returning Officer at the meeting. Staff would appreciate notice prior to the meeting, if possible, as this assists with preparations for the election (if relevant).
4. The Returning Officer is to announce the names of the nominees at the Council meeting at which the election is to be held.

Election

If only one (1) Councillor is nominated for the position of Deputy Mayor, that Councillor is elected.

If more than one (1) Councillor has been nominated, Council must determine by resolution, the method of voting for the position of Deputy Mayor, by way of one (1) of the following methods:

- Open voting – i.e. by show of hands,

- Ordinary ballot – i.e. a secret ballot (place an “X” against the candidate of their choice),
- Preferential ballot – i.e. place 1, 2, 3 etc. against each candidate.

The Returning Officer must ask for a motion to be put to the meeting by one (1) of the Councillors on the preferred method of voting for the election of a Chairperson. This must then be seconded and voted on by the Councillors.

The elections of Mayor and Deputy Mayor are the only times Council can choose to vote by way of secret ballot. In all other matters open voting must be used. The election is to be held at the Council meeting at which the Council resolves on the method of voting.

Leeton Shire Council has traditionally held the vote by the ‘Ordinary Ballot’ method.

Ordinary Ballot or Open Voting

This Part applies if the election proceeds by Ordinary Ballot or by Open Voting (i.e. show of hands).

Marking of Ballot-Papers

1. If the election proceeds by ordinary ballot, the Returning Officer is to decide the manner in which votes are to be marked on the ballot-papers.
2. The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part must be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
3. An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

Count— Two (2) Candidates

1. If there are only two (2) candidates, the candidate with the higher number of votes is elected.
2. If there are only two (2) candidates and they are tied, the one elected is to be chosen by lot.

Count— Three (3) or more Candidates

1. If there are three (3) or more candidates, the one with the lowest number of votes is to be excluded.
2. If three (3) or more candidates then remain, a further vote is to be taken of those candidates and the one with the lowest number of votes from that further vote is to be excluded.
3. If, after that, three (3) or more candidates still remain, the procedure set out in subsection (2) is to be repeated until only two (2) candidates remain.
4. A further vote is to be taken of the two (2) remaining candidates.
5. Section 6 of this Schedule then applies to the determination of the election as if the two (2) remaining candidates had been the only candidates.
6. If at any stage during a count under subsection (1) or (2), 2 or more candidates are tied on the lowest number of votes, the one excluded is to be chosen by lot.

Preferential Ballot

1. This part applies if the election proceeds by preferential ballot.
2. The ballot papers are to contain the names of all the candidates. The Councillors are to mark their votes by placing the numbers "1", "2" and so on against the various names so as to indicate the order of their preference for all the candidates.

Count for Preferential Ballot

1. If a candidate has an absolute majority of first preference votes, that candidate is elected.
2. If not, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is excluded and the votes on the un-exhausted ballot papers counted to him or her are transferred to the candidates with second preferences on those ballot papers.
3. A candidate who then has an absolute majority of votes is elected, but, if no candidate then has an absolute majority of votes, the process of excluding the candidate who has the lowest number of votes and counting each of his or her un-exhausted ballot papers to the candidates remaining in the election next in order of the voter's preference is repeated until one candidate has received an absolute majority of votes. The latter is elected.
4. In the clause "absolute majority" in relation to votes means a number which is more than one half of the number of formal un-exhausted ballot papers.

Preferential Voting - Tied Candidates

1. If, on any count of votes, there are two (2) candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for the two (2) candidates are equal the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have received an absolute majority of votes and is therefore taken to be elected.
2. If, on any count of votes, there are 3 or more candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for two (2) or more candidates are equal and those candidates are the ones with the lowest number of votes on the count of the votes the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have the lowest number of votes and is therefore excluded.

To choose a candidate by lot, the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes are written on similar slips of paper by the Returning Officer, the slips are folded by the Returning Officer so as to prevent the names being seen, the slips are mixed and one is drawn at random by the Returning Officer and the candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is chosen.

Result

The result of the election including the name of the candidate elected as Deputy Mayor is:

- a. to be declared to the Councillors at the Council meeting at which the election is held by the Returning Officer, and
- b. to be delivered or sent to the Chief Executive Officer of Local Government NSW and other relevant organisations.

Summary

Nomination forms for the position of Deputy Mayor are attached (**Attachment 2**).

These may be completed and returned to the Returning Officer (Manager Governance, Corporate and Customer Service) at any time before the Council Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 8 October 2024 or at this Meeting up to the time that the Returning Officer announces that nominations are closed.

The Returning Officer will call for the final lodgment of nominations at the meeting. After the final call for nominations the Returning Officer will announce the names of the nominee(s).

If more than one (1) Nomination is received, then Councillors will be required to decide the method of Voting i.e. Ordinary Ballot, Open Voting or Preferential Ballot method.

(c) Options

If more than one (1) nomination is received the method of electing the Deputy Mayor will be by:

1. Ordinary Ballot - ***This is the recommended option.***
2. Open Voting Method
3. Preferential Ballot

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

Nil

(b) Policy

Code of Meeting Practice (see ***Attachment 3 from Item 6.1.1***)

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Division 2 The Mayor - *Local Government Act 1993* (***Attachment 4***)

Schedule 7 Election of Mayor by Councillors - Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (***Attachment 1***)

Section 345 Informal Ballot Papers - Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (***Attachment 5***)

(d) Risk

Nil

CONSULTATION

(a) External

NSW Government - Factsheet Election Mayor and Deputy by Councillors (***Attachment 3***)

(b) Internal

General Manager

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

9. Governance and Administration

9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy

This is in accordance with the Councilor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines and Committee Terms of Reference

9.3.3 Implement training and development programs for Councillors in accordance with the Councilor induction and Professional Development Guidelines

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Schedule 7 Part 1 – Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – NSW Legislation

Attachment 2 – Nomination For Deputy Mayor

Attachment 3 – NSW Government Factsheet Election Mayor and Deputy Mayor by Councillors

Attachment 4 – Division 2 The Mayor – Local Government Act 1993 No 30 – NSW Legislation

Attachment 5 – Informal Ballot Papers – Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – NSW Legislation



NSW legislation

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

Current version for 2 September 2024 to date (accessed 25 September 2024 at 10:26)

Schedule 7

Schedule 7 Election of mayor by councillors

(Section 394)

Part 1 Preliminary

1 Returning officer

The general manager (or a person appointed by the general manager) is the returning officer.

2 Nomination

- (1) A councillor may be nominated without notice for election as mayor or deputy mayor.
- (2) The nomination is to be made in writing by 2 or more councillors (one of whom may be the nominee). The nomination is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing.
- (3) The nomination is to be delivered or sent to the returning officer.
- (4) The returning officer is to announce the names of the nominees at the council meeting at which the election is to be held.

3 Election

- (1) If only one councillor is nominated, that councillor is elected.
- (2) If more than one councillor is nominated, the council is to resolve whether the election is to proceed by preferential ballot, by ordinary ballot or by open voting.
- (3) The election is to be held at the council meeting at which the council resolves on the method of voting.
- (4) In this section—
ballot has its normal meaning of secret ballot.
open voting means voting by a show of hands or similar means.

Part 2 Ordinary ballot or open voting

4 Application of Part

This Part applies if the election proceeds by ordinary ballot or by open voting.

5 Marking of ballot-papers

- (1) If the election proceeds by ordinary ballot, the returning officer is to decide the manner in which votes are to be marked on the ballot-papers.

- (2) The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part must be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
- (3) An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

6 Count—2 candidates

- (1) If there are only 2 candidates, the candidate with the higher number of votes is elected.
- (2) If there are only 2 candidates and they are tied, the one elected is to be chosen by lot.

7 Count—3 or more candidates

- (1) If there are 3 or more candidates, the one with the lowest number of votes is to be excluded.
- (2) If 3 or more candidates then remain, a further vote is to be taken of those candidates and the one with the lowest number of votes from that further vote is to be excluded.
- (3) If, after that, 3 or more candidates still remain, the procedure set out in subsection (2) is to be repeated until only 2 candidates remain.
- (4) A further vote is to be taken of the 2 remaining candidates.
- (5) Section 6 of this Schedule then applies to the determination of the election as if the 2 remaining candidates had been the only candidates.
- (6) If at any stage during a count under subsection (1) or (2), 2 or more candidates are tied on the lowest number of votes, the one excluded is to be chosen by lot.

Part 3 Preferential ballot

8 Application of Part

This Part applies if the election proceeds by preferential ballot.

9 Ballot-papers and voting

- (1) The ballot-papers are to contain the names of all the candidates. The councillors are to mark their votes by placing the numbers “1”, “2” and so on against the various names so as to indicate the order of their preference for all the candidates.
- (2) The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part is to be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
- (3) An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

10 Count

- (1) If a candidate has an absolute majority of first preference votes, that candidate is elected.
- (2) If not, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is excluded and the votes on the unexhausted ballot-papers counted to him or her are transferred to the candidates with second preferences on those ballot-papers.
- (3) A candidate who then has an absolute majority of votes is elected, but, if no candidate then has an absolute majority of votes, the process of excluding the candidate who has the lowest number of votes and counting each of his or her unexhausted ballot-papers to the candidates remaining in the election next in order of the voter’s preference is repeated until one candidate has received an absolute majority of votes. The latter is elected.
- (4) In this section, *absolute majority*, in relation to votes, means a number that is more than one-half of the number of unexhausted formal ballot-papers.

11 Tied candidates

- (1) If, on any count of votes, there are 2 candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for the 2 candidates are equal—the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have received an absolute majority of votes and is therefore taken to be elected.
- (2) If, on any count of votes, there are 3 or more candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for 2 or more candidates are equal and those candidates are the ones with the lowest number of votes on the count of the votes—the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have the lowest number of votes and is therefore excluded.

Part 4 General

12 Choosing by lot

To choose a candidate by lot, the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes are written on similar slips of paper by the returning officer, the slips are folded by the returning officer so as to prevent the names being seen, the slips are mixed and one is drawn at random by the returning officer and the candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is chosen.

13 Result

The result of the election (including the name of the candidate elected as mayor or deputy mayor) is—

- (a) to be declared to the councillors at the council meeting at which the election is held by the returning officer, and
- (b) to be delivered or sent to the Secretary and the Chief Executive Officer of Local Government NSW.



Election of Deputy Mayor

ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

For the period 8 October 2024 to September 2026

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, Section 231, and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, Part 11 Division 12 Clause 394 and Schedule 7.

Nomination

We, the undersigned Councillors hereby nominate

Councillor _____
(Please print name)

Who is a duly elected Councillor of Leeton Shire Council to the office of **Deputy Mayor**

Proposer: _____ Proposer: _____

Signature: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____

Consent to Nomination

I, (Please print name) _____ hereby
consent to my nomination as set out above.

Signature _____ Date _____

Fact Sheet

ELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR BY COUNCILLORS



Summary

Councillors must elect a mayor from among their number every two years unless they have a popularly elected mayor.

Councillors may also elect a deputy mayor. The deputy mayor may be elected for the mayoral term or a shorter term.

The election of the mayor and the deputy mayor must be conducted in accordance with section 394 and Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation).

The purpose of this document is to assist councils to conduct mayoral and deputy mayoral elections in accordance with these requirements. It includes scripts for key activities to help returning officers exercise their functions. These scripts are provided in the text boxes inserted in the relevant parts of this document.

How can councils use this document?

Electing a mayor is an important activity. It is vital that the process is smooth, open and easy to follow and not rushed or confusing. Where necessary, it may be appropriate to stop and provide clarification for the benefit of councillors, staff or the gallery.

Returning officers can circulate this document prior to the meeting to help councillors understand the election process.

Election of a mayor after an ordinary election of councillors

An election for mayor must be held within three weeks of the declaration of the ordinary election at a meeting of the council.

The returning officer is to be the general manager or a person appointed by the general manager.

As no mayor or deputy mayor will be present at the start of the meeting, the first business of the meeting should be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting. Alternatively, the returning officer may assume the chair for the purpose of conducting the election.

Mid-term election of a mayor

A mayor elected by councillors holds office for two years. A mid-term mayoral election must be held in the September two years after the ordinary election of councillors or the first election of a new council following its establishment.

Procedures

Prior to the meeting

Before the council meeting at which the election is to be conducted, the returning officer will give notice of the election to the councillors.

The notice is to set out how a person may be nominated as a candidate for election as chairperson.

As returning officer, I now invite nominations for the position of mayor/deputy mayor for [name of council] for a two year period.

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, two or more councillors may nominate a councillor (one of whom may be the nominee) for the position of mayor/deputy mayor. Nominations must be in writing and the nominee must consent to their nomination in writing.

A councillor may be nominated without notice for election as mayor or deputy mayor. The nomination is to be made in writing by two or more councillors (one of whom may be the nominee). The nomination is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing.

The returning officer checks the nomination forms and writes the nominees' names on a candidates' sheet.

At the meeting

At the start of the first meeting after an ordinary election, in the absence of a chairperson, the returning officer assumes the chair and announces that the first item of business is to be the election of a mayor.

If a chairperson is present, they announce that the first item of business is the election of the mayor then vacates the chair for the returning officer who will then conduct the election.

The returning officer reads out the names of the nominees and seeks confirmation that the nominee has accepted the nomination.

If only one councillor has been nominated for the position of mayor/deputy mayor, the nominee is elected.

As there is only one nominee for the role of mayor/deputy mayor, I declare that [name of successful candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

If more than one candidate has been nominated, the council must determine by resolution, the method of voting for the position of mayor/deputy mayor, by way of one of the following methods:

- Open voting – i.e. by show of hands
- Ordinary ballot – i.e. a secret ballot (place an "X" against the candidate of their choice)
- Preferential ballot – i.e. place 1, 2, 3 etc. against each candidate.

The returning officer must ask for a motion to be put to the meeting by one of the councillors on the preferred method of voting for the election of a chairperson. This must then be seconded and voted on by the councillors.

Note: In the event of a tie, if there is a chairperson, they may use their casting vote. If there is a tie and no chairperson, an election for the role of chairperson should be conducted. Then the election for mayor resumes.

Open voting (show of hands)

Open voting is the most transparent method of voting. It is also the least bureaucratic method and reflects normal council voting methods.

The returning officer will advise the meeting of the method of voting and explains the process.

It has been resolved that the method of voting for the position of mayor/deputy mayor will be by show of hands.

Each councillor is entitled to vote for only one candidate in each round of voting.

I will now write each candidate's name on a slip of paper and deposit it in a barrel. The first name out of the barrel will be written first on the tally sheet, with second name out being written second on the tally sheet, etc.

When all candidates' names have been written on the tally sheet, the returning officer announces the names of the candidates and, commencing with the first candidate, states the following:

Would those councillors voting for [name of candidate] please raise your hand.

The returning officer records the number of votes for each successive candidate on the tally sheet and announces the number of votes received for each candidate.

The minute taker records the vote of each councillor.

The returning officer should check with the minute taker that each councillor has voted. If a councillor has not voted it should be confirmed that they are abstaining (an informal vote).

Two candidates

If there are only two candidates for the position of mayor/deputy mayor and the voting is higher for one candidate than another (number of formal votes recorded on the tally sheet), the returning officer then announces the result.

[Name of candidate] has the higher number of formal votes and as a result I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

In the event of a **tied vote**, the returning officer will advise the meeting of the following process.

In accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the

names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be declared as mayor/deputy mayor.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests a staff member to shake the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

Three or more candidates

If there are three or more candidates, the candidate with the lowest number of votes for the position of mayor/deputy mayor is excluded.

[Name of candidate], having the lowest number of votes, is excluded.

The voting continues as above until there are only two candidates remaining (see voting for **two candidates** above).

In the event that the **lowest number of votes are tied**, the returning officer advises the meeting of the following process:

In accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be excluded.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests a staff member to shake the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows it to the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is excluded.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

Ordinary ballot – (secret ballot)

The returning officer advises the meeting of the method of voting and explains the process.

It has been resolved that the method for voting for the position of mayor/deputy mayor will be by ordinary ballot, in other words by placing an "X" against the candidate of the councillor's choice.

The returning officer announces the names of the candidates for mayor/deputy mayor and writes each name on a slip of paper and deposits it in a barrel.

The returning officer requests that a staff member shakes the barrel and advises that the order in which the names will appear on the ballot paper will be determined by a draw out of the barrel, i.e. first name out of the barrel is written first on the ballot papers and so on.

It will be necessary to have a number of blank papers as this process may require more than one round of voting.

The returning officer writes the names on one set of the ballot papers and initials the front of each ballot paper.

A staff member distributes the ballot papers and collects them into the ballot box when completed and gives it to the returning officer who counts the votes and records them on the tally sheet.

The returning officer announces the results.

[Name of candidate], having the lowest number of votes, is excluded.

In the event that the **lowest number of votes are tied**, the returning officer advises the meeting of the following process:

In accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be excluded.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests a staff member to shake the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows it to the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is excluded.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

The returning officer writes the names of the remaining candidates on a further set of the ballot papers and initials the front of each ballot paper.

The staff member distributes ballot papers listing the remaining candidates and collects them into the ballot box when completed and gives it to the returning officer who again counts the votes and records them on the tally sheet and announces the results.

The process continues until two candidates remain, where a final vote takes place.

[Name of candidate] has the higher number of votes and I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

In the event of a **tied vote** between the two remaining candidates, the returning officer makes the following statement and announces the process.

The votes are tied between [name of candidate 1] and [name of candidate 2] having received [number] votes each, and, in accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel.

Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be declared as mayor/deputy mayor.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests that a staff member shakes the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

Preferential ballot

The returning officer explains the process.

It has been resolved that the method for voting for the position of mayor/deputy mayor will be by preferential ballot, i.e. placing 1, 2 and so on against the candidate of the councillor's choice in order of preference for all candidates.

The returning officer announces the names of the candidates for mayor/deputy mayor and writes each candidate's name on a slip of paper and deposits it in a barrel.

The returning officer requests that a staff member shakes the barrel and advises that the order in which the names will appear on the ballot paper will be determined by a draw out of the barrel, i.e. first name out of the barrel is written first on the ballot papers and so on.

The returning officer writes the names on the ballot papers and initials the front of each ballot paper. This method of voting requires only one set of ballot papers.

A staff member distributes the ballot papers and collects them when completed and gives them to the returning officer who counts the first preference votes and records them on the tally sheet.

If a candidate has an absolute majority of first preference votes (more than half), the returning officer declares the outcome.

[Name of candidate], having an absolute majority of first preference votes, is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

If no candidate has the absolute majority of first preference votes, the returning officer excludes the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes.

[Name of candidate], having the lowest number of first preference votes, is excluded.

The preferences from the excluded candidate are distributed. This process continues until one candidate has received an absolute majority of votes, at which time the returning officer announces the result.

[Name of candidate], having an absolute majority of votes, is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

In the event of a **tied vote** where there are only two candidates remaining in the election, the returning officer explains the process.

The votes are tied between [name of candidate 1] and [name of candidate 2] having received [number] votes each, and, in accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be declared as mayor/deputy mayor.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests a staff member to shake the barrel. The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is elected as mayor/deputy mayor for the ensuing two years.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

In the event that the **lowest number of votes are tied** and where there are three or more candidates remaining in the election, the returning officer advises the meeting of the process.

In accordance with section 12 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, I will now write the names of the candidates on similar slips of paper, fold them and place them in the barrel. Please note that the candidate whose name is drawn out will be excluded and their preferences distributed.

It is appropriate to show the meeting the names and the barrel. Councillors may inspect but not touch the items.

The returning officer places the names of the candidates into the barrel and requests that a staff member shakes the barrel.

The returning officer then draws a name out of the barrel and shows the meeting.

I declare that [name of candidate] is excluded and any votes cast for them will be distributed by preference.

The returning officer then draws out the remaining name and reads it for completeness. The second name should be shown to the meeting.

Schedule 7 - Election of Mayor by Councillors

Part 1 Preliminary

1 Returning officer

The general manager (or a person appointed by the general manager) is the returning officer.

2 Nomination

- (1) A councillor may be nominated without notice for election as mayor or deputy mayor
- (2) The nomination is to be made in writing by 2 or more councillors (one of whom may be the nominee). The nomination is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing.
- (3) The nomination is to be delivered or sent to the returning officer.
- (4) The returning officer is to announce the names of the nominees at the council meeting at which the election is to be held.

3 Election

- (1) If only one councillor is nominated, that councillor is elected.
- (2) If more than one councillor is nominated, the council is to resolve whether the election is to proceed by preferential ballot, by ordinary ballot or by open voting.
- (3) The election is to be held at the council meeting at which the council resolves on the method of voting.
- (4) In this section:
ballot has its normal meaning of secret ballot.
open voting means voting by a show of hands or similar means.

Part 2 Ordinary ballot or open voting

4 Application of Part

This Part applies if the election proceeds by ordinary ballot or by open voting.

5 Marking of ballot-papers

- (1) If the election proceeds by ordinary ballot, the returning officer is to decide the manner in which votes are to be marked on the ballot-papers.
- (2) The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part must be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
- (3) An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

6 Count—2 candidates

- (1) If there are only 2 candidates, the candidate with the higher number of votes is elected.
- (2) If there are only 2 candidates and they are tied, the one elected is to be chosen by lot.

7 Count—3 or more candidates

- (1) If there are 3 or more candidates, the one with the lowest number of votes is to be excluded.
- (2) If 3 or more candidates then remain, a further vote is to be taken of those candidates and the one with the lowest number of votes from that further vote is to be excluded.
- (3) If, after that, 3 or more candidates still remain, the procedure set out in subsection (2) is to be repeated until only 2 candidates remain.
- (4) A further vote is to be taken of the 2 remaining candidates.
- (5) Section 6 of this Schedule then applies to the determination of the election as if the 2 remaining candidates had been the only candidates.
- (6) If at any stage during a count under subsection (1) or (2), 2 or more candidates are tied on the lowest number of votes, the one excluded is to be chosen by lot.

Part 3 Preferential ballot

8 Application of Part

This Part applies if the election proceeds by preferential ballot.

9 Ballot-papers and voting

- (1) The ballot-papers are to contain the names of all the candidates. The Councillors are to mark their votes by placing the numbers “1”, “2” and so on against the various names so as to indicate the order of their preference for all the candidates.
- (2) The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part is to be determined in accordance with section 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that section.
- (3) An informal ballot-paper must be rejected at the count.

10 Count

- (1) If a candidate has an absolute majority of first preference votes, that candidate is elected.
- (2) If not, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is excluded and the votes on the unexhausted ballot-papers counted to him or her are transferred to the candidates with second preferences on those ballot-papers.
- (3) A candidate who then has an absolute majority of votes is elected, but, if no candidate then has an absolute majority of votes, the process of excluding the candidate who has the lowest number of votes and counting each of his or her unexhausted ballot-papers to the candidates remaining in the election next in order of the voter’s preference is repeated until one candidate has received an absolute majority of votes. The latter is elected.
- (4) In this section, “**absolute majority**”, in relation to votes, means a number that is more than one-half of the number of unexhausted formal ballot-papers.

11 Tied candidates

- (1) If, on any count of votes, there are 2 candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for the 2 candidates are equal—the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have received an absolute majority of votes and is therefore taken to be elected.
- (2) If, on any count of votes, there are 3 or more candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for 2 or more candidates are equal and those candidates are the ones with the lowest number of votes on the count of the votes—the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have the lowest number of votes and is therefore excluded.

Part 4 General

12 Choosing by lot

To choose a candidate by lot, the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes are written on similar slips of paper by the returning officer, the slips are folded by the returning officer so as to prevent the names being seen, the slips are mixed and one is drawn at random by the returning officer and the candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is chosen.

13 Result

The result of the election (including the name of the candidate elected as mayor or deputy mayor) is:

- a) to be declared to the councillors at the council meeting at which the election is held by the returning officer, and
- b) to be delivered or sent to the Secretary and to the Chief Executive of Local Government NSW.



NSW legislation

Local Government Act 1993 No 30

Current version for 1 September 2024 to date (accessed 25 September 2024 at 9:59)

[Chapter 9](#) > [Part 2](#) > Division 2

Division 2 The mayor

225 The mayor

An area must have a mayor who is elected in accordance with this Division.

226 Role of mayor

The role of the mayor is as follows—

- (a) to be the leader of the council and a leader in the local community,
- (b) to advance community cohesion and promote civic awareness,
- (c) to be the principal member and spokesperson of the governing body, including representing the views of the council as to its local priorities,
- (d) to exercise, in cases of necessity, the policy-making functions of the governing body of the council between meetings of the council,
- (e) to preside at meetings of the council,
- (f) to ensure that meetings of the council are conducted efficiently, effectively and in accordance with this Act,
- (g) to ensure the timely development and adoption of the strategic plans, programs and policies of the council,
- (h) to promote the effective and consistent implementation of the strategic plans, programs and policies of the council,
- (i) to promote partnerships between the council and key stakeholders,
- (j) to advise, consult with and provide strategic direction to the general manager in relation to the implementation of the strategic plans and policies of the council,
- (k) in conjunction with the general manager, to ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between the council and the local community,
- (l) to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office,
- (m) to represent the council on regional organisations and at inter-governmental forums at regional, State and Commonwealth level,
- (n) in consultation with the councillors, to lead performance appraisals of the general manager,
- (o) to exercise any other functions of the council that the council determines.

227 Who elects the mayor?

The mayor of an area is the person elected to the office of mayor by—

- (a) the councillors from among their number, unless there is a decision in force under this Division which provides for the election of the mayor by the electors, or
- (b) the electors, if such a decision is in force.

Note—

As to the election of the mayor, see also section 282.

228 How is it decided that the mayor be elected by the electors?

- (1) It may be decided at a constitutional referendum that the mayor be elected by the electors.
- (2) A decision that the mayor be elected by the electors takes effect in relation to the next ordinary election after the decision is made.

229 Can the decision be changed?

- (1) A decision that the mayor be elected by the electors is rescinded only if a constitutional referendum decides in favour of discontinuing that means of election.
- (2) The rescission takes effect in relation to the next ordinary election after the rescission occurs.

230 For what period is a mayor elected?

- (1) A mayor elected by the councillors holds the office of mayor for 2 years, subject to this Act.
- (2) A mayor elected by the electors holds the office of mayor for 4 years, subject to this Act.
- (3) The office of mayor—
 - (a) commences on the day the person elected to the office is declared to be so elected, and
 - (b) becomes vacant when the person's successor is declared to be elected to the office, or on the occurrence of a casual vacancy in the office.
- (4) A person elected to fill a casual vacancy in the office of mayor holds the office for the balance of the predecessor's term.

231 Deputy mayor

- (1) The councillors may elect a person from among their number to be the deputy mayor.
- (2) The person may be elected for the mayoral term or a shorter term.
- (3) The deputy mayor may exercise any function of the mayor at the request of the mayor or if the mayor is prevented by illness, absence or otherwise from exercising the function or if there is a casual vacancy in the office of mayor.
- (4) The councillors may elect a person from among their number to act as deputy mayor if the deputy mayor is prevented by illness, absence or otherwise from exercising a function under this section, or if no deputy mayor has been elected.



Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

Current version for 2 September 2024 to date (accessed 25 September 2024 at 15:33)

[Part 11](#) > [Division 9](#) > Section 345

345 Informal ballot-papers

- (1) A ballot-paper of an elector at an election is informal if—
 - (a) the elector has failed to record a vote on it in the manner directed on it, or
 - (b) it has not been initialled on the front by an election official, or
 - (c) it contains a mark or writing that, in the returning officer's opinion, would enable the elector to be identified.
- (2) However, a ballot-paper is not informal in the following circumstances—
 - (a) in relation to an election in which only 1 or 2 candidates are to be elected, by reason only of the elector having placed a tick or cross in one square and left the other square or squares blank, but the tick or cross is to be treated as a first preference,
 - (b) in relation to a ballot-paper on which the elector has recorded a vote by placing in one square the number "1"—
 - (i) by reason only that the elector has recorded the same preference (other than the elector's first preference) on the ballot-paper for more than 1 candidate, but the ballot-paper is to be treated as if those preferences and any subsequent preferences had not been recorded on the ballot-paper, or
 - (ii) by reason only of there being a break in the order of preferences recorded on the ballot-paper, but the ballot-paper is to be treated as if any subsequent preference had not been recorded on the ballot-paper,
 - (c) by reason only that it is not initialled on the front by an election official if it bears the mark referred to in section 305(2),
 - (d) by reason only of having any unnecessary mark or writing on the ballot-paper if, in the opinion of the returning officer, the elector's intention is clearly indicated on the ballot-paper,
 - (e) by reason only that the elector has recorded a vote by placing the number "1" or a tick in a square and placing a cross in (or a line through) all or some of the other squares on the ballot-paper, but the ballot-paper is to be treated as if the marks in those other squares did not appear on the ballot-paper and any tick were the number "1",
 - (f) by reason only that the elector has placed one or more numbers, a tick or one or more crosses adjacent to but outside a square or squares if, in the opinion of the returning officer, the elector's intention is clearly indicated on the ballot-paper, but each number, tick or cross is taken to have been placed within the relevant square,
 - (g) in relation to any ballot-paper written by hand—by reason of the inclusion only of a candidate's surname (if no other candidate with the same surname is on the ballot-paper) or by reason of any mistake in spelling, if the elector has made clear the elector's intention.

- (3) Nothing in subsection (2) authorises any person to encourage an elector to place a tick or cross in a square on a ballot-paper.

Note—

Section 308C of the Act makes provision concerning the formality of ballot-papers where the voter marks, crosses or ticks a group voting square, or where the ballot papers contain the name of a candidate whom a court has declared to be incapable of being elected.

ITEM 8.1.4. POTENTIAL MOTIONS FOR SUBMISSION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

AUTHOR/S: IP&R Coordinator

APPROVER/S: General Manager

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the opportunity to nominate motions, voting delegates, and remote attendance for the upcoming Local Government NSW (LGNSW) Annual Conference, which will be held on 17 to 19 November 2024 at the Tamworth Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Notes the registration of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and General Manager for the 2024 LGNSW Annual Conference.
2. Confirms the two (2) voting delegates at the LGNSW Conference to be the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and the substitute voting delegate, should one be required, to be the General Manager.
3. Approves the following proposed motions for submission to the 2024 LGNSW Business Paper:

MOTION 1: Increased Support for Housing Initiatives in Rural and Regional Australia

THAT LGNSW calls on the Australian Government and NSW Government to work collaboratively with Councils, key bodies and interest groups to – as a matter of priority – provide direct financial and infrastructure support for affordable housing in rural NSW growth areas.

MOTION 2: Protect Communities from Water Buybacks

THAT LGNSW calls on the Australian Government to recognize the socio-economic impacts of water buybacks and to implement measures to safeguard rural and regional communities in the Murray-Darling Basin.

LGNSW also urges the NSW Government to take a proactive approach in conducting comprehensive assessments of these impacts and to implement targeted actions to support affected areas. This is crucial for achieving balanced social, economic, and environmental outcomes from water use while protecting long-established regional communities and water-related industries that contribute significantly to the nation's economy, food security, and social fabric.

MOTION 3: Smarter Process to Support Immigrant Doctors to Work in Rural and Regional Communities

THAT LGNSW calls on the NSW and Federal Government to streamline the assessment and registration process for doctors with foreign qualifications. This process should be optimised to facilitate the quicker integration of qualified international doctors into the Australian medical workforce, particularly in regional and rural areas.

MOTION 4: Enhanced Incentives to Attract Police Workforce to Rural Locations

THAT LGNSW calls on the NSW Government to introduce and enhance incentives for rural locations that are not currently covered by the Special Remote Incentive System, in order to address the pressing issues related to recruitment and retention of police staff in these areas.

4. Affords the Mayor delegated authority to submit any further motions after consulting with Councillors prior to the deadline for submitting motions.

REPORT

(a) Background

Local Government NSW (LGNSW) is the peak body that represents the interests of its members, which include General Purpose Councils, a number of Special Purpose Councils and the NSW Aboriginal Land Council.

LGNSW members may put forward motions for consideration of the Annual Conference. The Annual Conference is the supreme policy-making body of LGNSW and an opportunity for Councillors to come together to share ideas and debate issues that shape the way LGNSW is governed. LGNSW also advocates on behalf of the local government sector.

Where a majority of voting delegates at the Annual Conference vote in support of the motion, it is adopted as a resolution of LGNSW.

Motions adopted at the LGNSW Annual Conference become part of the Policy Platform that guides LGNSW in its advocacy on behalf of the local government sector.

(b) Discussion

Registration and Voting

Registrations for voting and non-voting delegates to attend the 2024 Annual Conference opened on Wednesday 17 July 2024, with early bird registrations available until Wednesday 25 September 2024. Standard registrations open on **Thursday 26 September 2024** and close on **Wednesday 6 November 2024**. Voting delegates must register to attend the Conference as well as register as nominated voting delegates.

Leeton Shire Council's voting entitlement for the 2024 Conference is two (2) voting delegates.

In recent years, Council has been represented at the LGNSW Annual Conference by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the General Manager. Other Councillors have attended the event as observers if they were interested in doing so.

It is proposed that Council nominates the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as Voting Delegates in 2024.

The deadline to provide LGNSW with the names of voting delegates is 5pm (AEDT) on **Wednesday 6 November**. Additional nominations received after the closing date will not be accepted. However, the names of voting delegates may be substituted at any time, in line with Rule 34 of the LGNSW Rules.

Voting delegates may not appoint a proxy to attend or vote at formal business sessions on their behalf.

Motions for Submission

Council has been invited to submit motions to the Annual Conference to advance the sector wide policy agenda. Motions are to be strategic local government issues which affect members state-wide and introduce new or emerging policy issues and actions.

Motions will be included in the Business Paper for the Annual Conference only if they:

- are consistent with the objects of the Association,
- relate to or concern local government as a sector in NSW and/or across Australia,
- seek to establish or change policy positions of LGNSW and/or improve governance of the Association (noting that the LGNSW Board is responsible for decisions around resourcing any campaigns or operational activities, and any necessary resource allocations will be subject to the LGNSW budgetary process),
- have a lawful purpose (a motion does not have a lawful purpose if its implementation would require or encourage non-compliance with prevailing laws),
- are clearly worded and unambiguous in nature, and
- do not express preference for one or several members over one or several other members.

The closing date for motions to be submitted is **Sunday 20 October 2024**.

Four draft motions have been prepared for Council's endorsement, following ideas put forward by the previous Council. The previous Council wished for adoption of the motions to come to the new Council.

PROPOSED MOTION 1: Increased Support for Housing Initiatives in Rural and Regional Australia

THAT LGNSW calls on the Australian and NSW Governments to work collaboratively with Councils, key bodies and interest groups to – as a matter of priority – provide direct financial and infrastructure support for affordable housing in rural NSW areas that face having shortages.

Motion Background

The objective of this motion is to prioritise financial and infrastructure support for housing initiatives in rural Australia to enable Local Government to strategically plan and develop infrastructure to address housing affordability and supply. Access to adequate and appropriate housing also promotes economic development.

There is a significant and growing demand for housing in rural and regional Australia. The national vacancy rate remains at a record low of 0.8%, highlighting the competitiveness of Australia's rental market and historically high rent prices. Local governments play a crucial role in facilitating and developing affordable housing. However, due to budget constraints and increasing, unexpected costs, financial assistance is needed to develop the initial infrastructure required for new housing projects, such as roads, power, water supply, and utilities. These aspects are prohibitively expensive for most rural councils where economies of scale are difficult to achieve.

Rural areas are disadvantaged in attracting developers due to their smaller scale, which leads private developers to focus on major regional centres where there is a better return on investment. Consequently, rural communities are left to address housing shortages on their own. It is vital for councils and all levels of government to collaborate to address the housing shortage. Councils can contribute land for housing developments, while the other tiers of federal government should provide funds for planning and essential infrastructure.

PROPOSED MOTION 2: Protect Communities from Water Buybacks

THAT LGNSW calls on the Australian Government to recognize the socio-economic impacts of water buybacks and to implement measures to safeguard rural and regional communities in the Murray-Darling Basin.

LGNSW also urges the NSW Government to take a proactive approach in conducting comprehensive assessments of these impacts and to implement targeted actions to support affected areas. This is crucial for achieving balanced social, economic, and environmental outcomes from water use while protecting long-established regional communities and water-related industries that contribute significantly to the nation's economy, food security, and social fabric.

Motion Background

The objective of this motion is to urgently seek both federal recognition and state-level action to ensure that the socio-economic effects of water buybacks are properly acknowledged and managed. The goal is to support rural and regional communities and enable them to thrive despite the challenges posed by water buybacks.

Preserving and optimizing the irrigation schemes and communities established over a century ago is crucial for the nation's interests. These systems are integral to producing diverse, safe, reliable, and affordable food, contributing significantly to agricultural strength and community resilience. Water availability directly influences the health and prosperity of communities.

The socio-economic impacts of water buybacks are already evident. Reducing irrigation water availability threatens local economies, raises water prices, and increases food costs, placing additional pressure on families, especially in high inflation periods. Future actions must be carefully managed to mitigate these effects.

The NSW Government needs to enhance its efforts beyond mere verbal support to assess and address the socio-economic impacts of water buybacks through improved modelling, tracking, and analysis. This will help communities, councils and government to understand how buybacks affect local economies, society, and businesses. Comprehensive assessments and targeted actions are essential for supporting affected areas.

Commitment to genuine socio-economic neutrality testing is necessary to understand the impacts both locally and regionally. The Government should fund each potentially impacted Council to conduct a socio-economic condition analysis of their Local Government Area (LGA), creating a baseline for measuring impacts.

Engaging with communities is crucial for building trust and ensuring water management decisions align with local needs. Implementing measures that safeguard these communities' futures is a priority. Governments should allocate resources to councils to facilitate meaningful engagement, including funding for expert advice and local-level assessments.

Through its advocacy LGNSW will aim to ensure that water management policies are balanced and supportive of the communities they affect. Further, LGNSW will emphasize that water recovery initiatives must not harm the social or economic well-being of regional communities

PROPOSED MOTION 3: Smarter Process to Support Immigrant Doctors to Work in Rural and Regional Communities

THAT LGNSW calls on the Federal Government to streamline the assessment and registration process for doctors with foreign qualifications. This process should be optimised to facilitate the quicker integration of qualified international doctors into the Australian medical workforce, particularly in regional and rural areas.

Motion Background

The objective of this motion is to address the critical shortage of GPs in rural and regional areas, improve access to timely and quality medical care, and make better use of the international medical workforce. According to the AMA, Australia is facing a shortage of more than 10,600 GPs by 2031, with the supply of GPs not keeping pace with growing community demand.

The extended wait times to access GP services in rural areas are a significant concern. Regional patients are likely to wait longer than they felt acceptable for a GP appointment, and more likely to wait 24 hours or more for a GP appointment for urgent care. In many cases, individuals experiencing illness may face delays of several days before receiving medical attention. This situation highlights the need for urgent improvements in the accessibility and timeliness of healthcare services in these regions.

The 'Best for the Bush 2023' analysis lays bare the 'alarming' crisis facing rural communities, saying 'where the health need is greatest, there is the lowest supply of health professionals.

The need for a strong and well-equipped rural general practice workforce is more important than ever before, and government needs to create meaningful change to keep practices afloat.

We need long-term solutions to improve access to GP led care for patients, in rural and remote areas that have been hardest hit by workforce shortages. Patients deserve to have access to quality care no matter what their postcode is.

There are suitably qualified doctors with international qualifications who are not currently practicing due to the complex registration processes. For example, in one regional area, there are three doctors with overseas qualifications that are unable to operate as a GP despite being qualified and there being a massive shortage of GP's in town.

Hospitalisations could be avoided through appropriate preventive health interventions and early disease management within primary healthcare, including basing more GPs in regional towns.

Communities need all levels of government to work together with the health sector to resolve the GP workforce issues

PROPOSED MOTION 4: Enhanced Incentives to Attract Police Workforce to Rural Locations

THAT LGNSW calls on the NSW Government to introduce and enhance incentives for rural locations that are not currently covered by the Special Remote and Remote Incentive System, in order to address the pressing issues related to recruitment and retention of police staff in these areas.

Motion Background

The lack of targeted incentives has a severe impact on the ability of rural and regional areas to maintain adequate police staffing levels.

These areas are struggling to maintain operational capacity, particularly in smaller locations where staffing issues are exacerbated by long-term absences, such as those due to illness, maternity leave, and other extended leave.

The Government should develop a new incentive framework that specifically includes rural locations outside of the existing Special Remote Location incentives which is only available in certain locations.

This framework should aim to attract and retain staff by offering competitive benefits and support, similar to those provided under the Special Remote Location incentives. The proposed incentives should help to alleviate these challenges and ensure that rural and regional NSW can continue to deliver essential services effectively.

Council commends initiatives such as the 'Be a Cop in Your Hometown' initiative which aims to make it easier for regional residents to join the police force while

staying connected to their families, lifestyle and community, however, more needs to be done.

(c) Options

In respect of the draft motions, THAT Council:

1. Approves motions as presented. ***This is the recommended option.***
2. Amends or removes motions as presented.
3. Adds new motions.

In respect of attendance at the Conference, THAT Council:

1. Endorses the attendance of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and General Manager. ***This is the recommended option.***
2. Nominates additional Councillors to attend.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

Council's budget for Members of Council to attend Seminars and Conferences for 2024/25 is \$7,786.

The cost for members to attend the event is approximately \$1,767 per person plus travel and accommodation.

The General Manager's costs are being met from a separate budget allocation for travel and accommodation. This year no registration fees apply as the General Manager will also represent Statewide Mutual (Insurer) at the Conference.

(b) Policy

Code of Conduct

Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Local Government Act 1993

(d) Risk

If Council chooses not to submit Motions to the LGNSW Conference 2024 it risks failing to advocate on issues of importance to the community. If it chooses not to send delegates to the conference Council won't have the ability to speak in support of its Motions, nor will Council have the benefit of learning new ideas and building new networks.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

Local Government NSW

(b) Internal

Councillors

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

9. Governance and Administration

9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy

9.3.1 Continue advocacy with Federal and Local MPs and government agencies on key issues for the region, including but not limited to water security, health services, housing, migration, job creation and policing

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report