

1. Purpose

Under section 170AA of the Queensland *Local Government Act 2009* (the LGA), the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may establish guidelines regarding the provision of administrative support by local government employees to a Councillor.

To ensure transparency, accountability and alignment with community expectations, these guidelines aim to:

- Promote accountability and integrity in the use of administrative support;
- Establish appropriate standards for interactions between Councillors and Councillor Administrative Support Staff; and
- Reflect the community's expectations regarding the ethical and effective use of support resources.

2. Scope

These Guidelines apply to all elected representatives of Council, including the Mayor and Councillors, as well as Council employees who provide administrative or other support functions, including but not limited to staff within the Office of the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer. . They govern the nature, boundaries, and expectations of administrative support provided to Councillors, ensuring that such support is delivered in a manner consistent with the LGA, the Councillor Code of Conduct, and Council's operational policies.

The Guidelines are intended to:

- Define the roles and responsibilities of Councillor Administrative Support Staff;
- Clarify appropriate interactions between Councillors and support staff;
- Ensure consistent and equitable support across all Councillors;
- Promote ethical conduct, transparency, and accountability in the use of Council resources.

3. Responsibility

Under Section 170AA of the LGA, the CEO is empowered to establish guidelines governing the provision of administrative support by local government employees to Councillors. These guidelines are intended to ensure that such support is delivered in a manner that is consistent with legislative requirements, ethical standards, and community expectations.

The CEO is responsible for:

- Defining the scope and nature of administrative support tasks;
- Ensuring that support provided does not extend into operational or managerial functions;
- Promoting transparency, fairness, and consistency in the allocation of support resources;
- Reviewing and updating the guidelines periodically to reflect changes in legislation, governance practices, or Council needs; and
- Ensuring Councillors and support staff are informed of and comply with the guidelines.

These responsibilities reinforce the CEO's role in maintaining good governance and upholding the Local Government Principles, including ethical conduct, effective service delivery, and democratic representation.

4. Definitions

Chief Executive Officer shall mean the person appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer under the LGA and anyone acting in that position.

Councillors shall mean all elected members of Council including the Mayor.

Councillor Administrative Support Staff shall mean the Executive Officer, Executive Support Officers and Governance Officer within the Office of the Mayor and Chief Executive Office who are charged with the responsibility of delivering specific administrative type duties to assist the Mayor and Councillors to meet the responsibilities of their roles.

Council shall mean the Hinchinbrook Shire Council.

LGA shall mean the *Queensland Local Government Act 2009*.

5. Guidelines

5.1 Interactions between Councillors and Councillor Administrative Support Staff

Support available to Councillors

- Councillors are entitled to receive administrative support from designated staff during standard business hours. Any assistance required outside these hours may be provided at the discretion and with the approval of the CEO.
- Councillors may request support via telephone, email, or in person, in accordance with these Guidelines. Reasonable requests made under this framework are not considered directions to staff and must be treated as service requests.
- Councillor Administrative Support Staff will prioritise their responsibilities to accommodate Councillor support needs and will make every effort to respond within the timeframes outlined in Council's Customer Service Charter.
- Where a request falls outside the scope of these Guidelines, or cannot be fulfilled due to capacity or compliance concerns, staff will escalate the matter to their Manager or the Chief Executive Officer for further direction.

Role of Administrative Support Staff

Councillor Administrative Support Staff are local government employees assigned to assist the Mayor and Councillors in fulfilling their official responsibilities. Their role is strictly administrative and supports the delivery of services and infrastructure to the community.

The following tasks are considered appropriate administrative support activities:

- Relaying telephone calls and messages;
- Managing email inboxes, calendars, and reminders;
- Scheduling meetings with departmental representatives, residents, and stakeholders;



- Filing and recording documentation in Council's electronic content management system;
- Scanning, photocopying, printing, and ordering stationery;
- Booking meeting rooms and Council vehicles;
- Logging Customer Requests for Management (CRMs) on behalf of Councillors or residents, and providing updates;
- Locating information such as legislation or Council resources;
- Preparing monthly Councillor Activity Reports;
- Managing the Register of Interests for Councillors;
- Coordinating registration, travel, and accommodation for conferences, training, or workshops;
- Monitoring and managing Councillor expenses and entitlements under the Councillor Expenses Reimbursement Policy;
- Assisting with matters related to Councillor remuneration.

Additional Support for the Mayor

In recognition of the Mayor's expanded responsibilities under the LGA, the following additional administrative support may be provided:

- Managing correspondence and follow-up actions;
- Drafting or typing responses to correspondence, speeches, and letters of support;
- Assisting with community communications such as emails, newsletters, and informational flyers, provided the content is objective, factual, and consistent with Council's operational messaging; and
- Coordinating Citizenship Ceremonies and associated documentation.

Compliance

Councillors are expected to uphold the standards outlines in the Councillor Code of Conduct at all times and treat administrative staff with courtesy, honesty and respect.

Any concerns regarding the performance or conduct of Councillor Administrative Support Staff must be directed to the CEO. Councillors must refrain from expressing criticism directly to the employee themselves, as it is not within their role to manage or evaluate staff performance. Failure to adhere to these Guidelines constitutes a breach of the behavioural standards prescribed in the Councillor Code of Conduct and may be deemed inappropriate conduct under the LGA.

6. Legal Parameters

- *Local Government Act 2009 QLD*; and

7. Associated Documents

- Investigation Policy;
- Councillor Code of Conduct Policy;
- Councillor Contact with Employees Advice Guidelines;
- Councillor Expenses Reimbursement Policy;

- Chief Executive Officer Performance Appraisal Policy; and
- Administrative Action Complaints Management Policy.

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