

Elected Member and Staff Interaction Policy

Council Policy



Policy Name	Elected Member and Staff Interaction Policy		
Type	Operational Policy		
Owner	Chief Executive Officer		
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer		
Decision Number	22763	Approval Date	26/09/2023
Records Number	D2023/015059	Next Review Date	26/09/2027

1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework of appropriate interaction between Elected Members and employees of the Alice Springs Town Council to follow, to allow for the efficient and effective transaction of business to occur where high standards of good governance and transparency principles are achieved.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- recognise the respective roles and responsibilities of Elected Members and Council staff
- assist Elected Members and Council staff in respecting the roles and responsibilities of others in the organisation
- maintain transparent decision making and good governance arrangements
- support compliance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2019
- acknowledge that we are all part of the community and will interact outside our formal roles

2 Scope

This policy is applicable to all Elected Members and employees of the Alice Springs Town Council.

3 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of the Alice Springs Town Council appointed in accordance with the Local Government Act
Council	Alice Springs Town Council
Mayor	The principal member of the Alice Springs Town Council as defined by section 58 of the Act
Elected Member	Alice Springs Town Council Elected Members
Director	A senior staff member appointed as Director and who has overall responsibility for specified functions as per the organisational structure
Employee / staff	Any employee, contractor, volunteer etc. of Alice Springs Town Council
Local Government Act	Northern Territory of Australia, Local Government Act 2019

Elected Member and Staff Interaction Policy

Council Policy



4 Policy Statement

This policy outlines how effective communication and flow of information can be achieved between Elected Members and staff.

The CEO is responsible for the administrative management of the Council and is the conduit between Council's administration and Elected Members. Wherever practicable, interaction between staff and Elected Members should take place through the CEO.

Section 44 (2) of the Local Government Act 2019 on the Role of elected members states: *However, a member of the council has no power to direct or control staff of the council, or to interfere with the management of staff of the council.*

The following provides guidance for elected members on interaction with staff:

- a. Asking a question, requesting information required to carry out a member's role, or making a suggestion, is not directing or controlling and does not contravene this section of the Act, providing such interaction is done in a professional and non-confrontational manner. It is not practical or efficient for all questions or requests for information etc to be channelled through the Chief Executive Officer. This includes recorded Elected Members' queries.
- b. Elected Members can have direct contact with Directors on matters within the respective Director's portfolio of responsibilities. The Director will determine whether the Chief Executive Officer needs to be made aware of the matter. If the matter is one which the Chief Executive Officer has been dealing with directly, the contact should be made with the Chief Executive Officer, at least in the first instance.
- c. While Elected Member queries and outstanding Council resolutions are reviewed monthly at a Council forum, it would be advantageous for questions in relation to either of these to be asked of Directors or the Chief Executive Officer (depending on the responsible officer) in advance of the Council forum to either avoid the need for the question to be asked at a forum or to at least provide advanced notice that the question will be asked. This will hopefully avoid the Director or Chief Executive Officer having to take the question on notice.
- d. Elected Members are permitted to ask questions of, or make comments in relation to an agenda item to any staff member who, with the approval of a Director or the Chief Executive Officer, are in-attendance at a Council meeting, Council forum or any other official meeting.
- e. Elected Members should only speak to Managers or other staff about work related matters in the presence of a Director or the Chief Executive Officer, or with the direct approval of a Director or the Chief Executive Officer.
- f. Emails to Elected Members will come from the Chief Executive Officer or a Director, unless a Manager has the direct approval of the Chief Executive Officer or a Director.
- g. Elected Members can speak to any staff member about non-work-related matters, either in or outside the work environment.
- h. All interaction between Elected Members and staff should be professional and respectful at all times, regardless of the subject matter.

Elected Member and Staff Interaction Policy

Council Policy



5 Responsibilities

The Mayor and CEO will work together to foster a culture which supports the application of this policy and its principles.

The Mayor and the CEO will be responsible for informing Elected Members about the policy, and for supporting policy compliance by Elected Members.

The CEO will be responsible for ensuring that the policy is incorporated into relevant administrative procedures and processes. Directors, Managers, Coordinators and Team Leaders will be responsible for informing their staff about the guidelines, and for supporting compliance by their staff.

6 Related Documents

- *Code of Conduct*
- *Alice Springs Town Council Code of Conduct for Employees*
- *Local Government Act 2019 (NT)*

7 Version History

Version	Date	Action/Description of changes made	By
V1.0	26/09/2023	New Policy	Acting Director Corporate Services

8 Communication and Training

Will this policy be communicated through internal communications?	Yes
Where will this policy be available?	Alice Springs Town Council website
Will training needs arise from this policy? If yes, who will be responsible.	CEO