

Title:	Portfolio Councillor Policy
Type:	Council
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Attachments:	

1. Purpose

Murrindindi Shire Council has established the Portfolio Councillor system. The purpose of the Portfolio Councillor Policy (Policy) is to articulate the role and support to be provided to Portfolio Councillors.

2. Rationale

With the appointment of Portfolio Councillors, it is desirable that the objectives of establishing these roles and the support that will be provided to Councillors is articulated.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to Portfolio Councillors and Council officers who have a responsibility in ensuring that the Portfolio Councillor is kept informed on key matters relating to their area of portfolio responsibility.

Portfolios and the representative Councillor will be appointed annually by Council resolution. In order to enable Councillors to gain a broader experience of portfolio roles, Councillors will represent a portfolio area of focus for a maximum of two years per term.

The role of the Portfolio Councillor recognises that the Director is responsible for the day to day management and direction of staff in implementing Council policy and strategy. Good governance identifies that the authority of Councillors can only be exercised when they meet formally as Council at a properly constituted Council meeting. Outside the Council meeting, individual Councillors have no authority.

4. Definitions

Portfolio means an area/s of focus relating to key functions and services of Council.

5. Policy

5.1 Objectives of the Portfolio Councillor System

The objectives of establishing a Portfolio Councillor system are:

- to enable Councillors to have a greater understanding and input to strategic and policy development on portfolio issues. This facilitates the active and regular engagement of Councillors in major planning, projects and services related to the portfolio
- to enable Councillors to advocate and champion strategic and policy issues to Council and the community
- to enable the briefing of other Councillors on specialist areas by the Portfolio Councillor
- to assist Councillors in developing the fullest possible understanding of matters being put to the Council..

5.2 Portfolio Councillor's Duties

The role of the Portfolio Councillor will include:

- advocating on strategic and policy issues to Council and the community
- briefing of other Councillors on strategic areas through specific workshops or presentation of reports
- represent Council on local, regional or state bodies of relevance to the portfolio
- act as the spokesperson of Council on matters relating to the portfolio, including, quotes in media releases and speaking on radio and television as required
- where there is a relevant Council committee, to be the nominated chair for that committee unless legislative provisions require otherwise.

5.3 Support Provided to Portfolio Councillors

Support to Portfolio Councillors to enable them to fulfil this role will be provided through:

- a designated Director being appointed as the primary contact for the Portfolio Councillor
- induction by the Director, and other relevant staff or organisations, in relation to the key issues affecting the portfolio
- the designated Director will initiate regular meetings with the Portfolio Councillor, and other Council officers where relevant, to keep them briefed on issues (not less than bimonthly) and at other times necessary for the Portfolio Councillor to fulfil their role
- facilitating the participation of the Portfolio Councillor in relevant committees
- the provision of memberships, publications, training and/or conference attendance where appropriate to enable the Portfolio Councillor to be informed on issues relevant to their portfolio.

5.4 Reporting of Portfolio Councillors

Council will enable the Portfolio Councillor to report on matters that are relevant to their portfolio by:

- reporting on the strategic/policy activities of within the Councillors Portfolio at the Scheduled Meeting of Council as part of Councillor Reports.
- leading discussion at Councillor Briefing Sessions on matters relevant to their portfolio
- leading discussion in the development and annual review of the Council Plan.

6. Related Policies, Strategies and Legislation

- *Local Government Act, 2020*
- *Governance Rules 2020*
- *Councillor Code of Conduct 2021*

7. Council Plan

This Policy supports the Council Plan 2017-2021 strategy under the Our Promise strategic objective to 'represent and advocate for our community in a transparent and equitable way'.

8. Management and Review

This Policy will be implemented by members of the Executive Management Team and monitored by the Chief Executive Officer.

This Policy will be reviewed by Council in June 2025.

9. Consultation

Review of this Policy has been conducted by the Executive Management Team and Councillors.

10. Human Rights Charter

This Policy has been developed with consideration of the requirements under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.