

Terms of Reference – Portfolios

1. Introduction

Portfolios complement the formal Council and Committee structure and ensure that the Council considers the impact of decisions on:

- particular population groups; or
- a strategic issue which span Council activities

Portfolios enable Councillors to be the champion for these matters and help ensure that these are considered in Council's decision-making.

2. Definition

A **Portfolio Councillor** is a Councillor who is formally assigned a portfolio by the Council. A Portfolio has one Councillor assigned to it.

3. Role

In addition to their responsibilities as a Councillor under the Local Government Act 2002, Councillors as portfolio holders are required to:

- 3.1 Champion the advancement of Council's key priorities and decisions relevant to their portfolio responsibilities
- 3.2 Keep abreast of Council proposals, issues and activities which are relevant to their portfolio;
- 3.3 Act as the official Council spokesperson or representative on portfolio relevant matters; and
- 3.4 Provide an elected representative's viewpoint and act as a sounding board for Council Officers on issues relating to the portfolio.

In discharging their responsibilities as Portfolio Councillors and consistent with their role under the Local Government Act 2002, Councillors should maintain a focus on strategic issues relevant to their portfolio, rather than the day to day operational matters.

4. Portfolio objective

To enable the appointed Councillor to champion portfolio matters, retain strategic oversight, and help ensure that the Council appropriately considers related matters in Council's planning and decision-making.

5. Responsibilities

Portfolio Councillors should:

- 5.1 Provide advice and guidance to the Council on portfolio matters through participation, discussion and debate at Council meetings
- 5.2 Keep the Mayor fully informed on portfolio matters and emerging issues
- 5.3 Ensure there is consistent communication and messaging on portfolio matters, including an annual report to Council on portfolio matters
- 5.4 Collaborate with Committee Chairs and other Portfolio Leaders where objectives are shared
- 5.5 Contribute to issues which cut across Portfolios or collective issues of responsibility
- 5.6 Raise issues of Council performance with assigned Executive Leadership staff member in the first instance, following up with the Chair, Mayor and Chief Executive if necessary.
- 5.7 Enhance relationships with key stakeholders and attend events or participate in external meetings in their portfolio area
- 5.8 Act as the Council's spokesperson and point of contact for those activities within their portfolio responsibility, unless deemed otherwise by the Mayor
- 5.9 Work effectively with the assigned Executive Leadership staff member.
- 5.10 Exercise any delegated powers and make decisions in respect of the relevant portfolio area to the extent authorised or delegated to do so by the Council.

6. Term

The Portfolio responsibility is for the period determined by the Council. Revocation, alteration of terms of reference or addition of new portfolios requires a decision by Council.

7. Delegations / Limitations

Portfolio Councillors do not hold any specific statutory or governance responsibilities related to their portfolio beyond those which they ordinarily hold as an elected Councillor.

A Portfolio Councillor does not assume any of the roles, powers and functions assigned to the Mayor under the Local Government Act 2002 unless delegated by the Mayor.

A Portfolio does not have the authority to make Council decisions, nor commit Council to any course of action or unbudgeted expenditure.

8. Relationship with Council officers

The assigned Executive Leadership staff member (or Head of Service if more appropriate) will be the key point of contact and advisor to the Portfolio Councillor

9. Reporting and accountability

Portfolio Councillors will report six monthly to Council on portfolio matters, regarding the previous year's progress and achievements, current matters underway and outstanding issues.

Portfolio Councillors will engage regularly with the Mayor to ensure current awareness.

They can also seek time for informal discussion with other Councillors, collectively or individually, if and when required to progress portfolio interests and ensure information-sharing that will support informed and effective decision-making.

10. External communication protocol

The Mayor has first right of refusal as the Council's principal spokesperson on significant issues.

Notwithstanding this, it is the role of Portfolio Councillors to act as the principal political spokesperson in communicating to the media and public the official policy of the Council, or in the absence of official policy, commenting in a manner consistent with the Council's strategic direction, on items relating to their portfolio are of responsibility.