



AGENDA

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

FRIDAY 31 MAY 2024

The Special Council Meeting of the MacDonnell Regional Council will be held at the Council Chambers, Alice Springs on Friday 31 May 2024 at 10:00 am.

Belinda Urquhart
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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3 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

ITEM NUMBER: 3.1
TITLE: Attendance and Apologies

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to acknowledge the attendance and to table, for Council's record, any apologies received from Elected Members for this Special Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- a) **notes the Elected Members' attendance at this meeting;**
- b) **tables apologies received for this meeting; and**
- c) **records the Elected Members' absences, without notice, for this meeting.**

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

Council can choose to accept the apologies as presented, or not accept them. Apologies that are not accepted by Council will be recorded as absent without notice.

4 COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

ITEM NUMBER: 4.1
TITLE: MacDonnell Council Code of Conduct

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains all of the details about the MacDonnell Council Code of Conduct Policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the Council Code of Conduct.

MacDonnell Regional Council Code of Conduct

Interests of the Council and Community come first

A member must act in the best interests of the community, its outstations and the Council.

Honesty

A member must be honest and act the right way (with integrity) when performing official duties.

Taking care

A member must be careful to make good decisions (diligence) and must not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, when performing official duties.

Respect/Courtesy

A member must be respectful to other members, council staff, constituents and members of the public.

Conduct towards council staff

A member must not direct, reprimand, or interfere in the management of council staff.

Respect for culture

A member must respect different cultures, families and language groups (cultural diversity) and not be unfair towards others, or the opinions of others, because of their background.

Conflict of interest

A member must, if possible, avoid conflict of interest between the member's private interests (family, other job, business, etc.) and duties.

Where a conflict exists, the member must inform the Council, Local Authority or Council Committee and not take part in the discussion or vote.

Respect for private business

A member must not share private (confidential) information that they heard as a member, outside of meetings.

A member must not make improper use of confidential information to gain a benefit or to cause harm to another.

Gifts

A member must not ask for or encourage gifts or private benefits from anyone who might want to do business with or obtain a benefit from Council.

Accountable

A member must be able to show that they have made good decisions for the community and have allocated the Council's resources carefully and to benefit the region.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.

ISSUES/OPTIONS/CONSEQUENCES

The Code of Conduct Policy helps Council to ensure that the:

- MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC) exercises strong and accountable governance; and
- Constituents of MRC are aware of the behaviour they can expect from members.

5 ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

ITEM NUMBER: 5.1
TITLE: Acceptance of Agenda

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Agenda papers are submitted for acceptance by Council for this Special Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the agenda papers for this Special Council meeting as presented, be received for consideration at this meeting.

6 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

ITEM NUMBER: 6.1
TITLE: Conflict of Interest

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the minimum standard of behaviour expected of the Elected Members in relation to declaring personal or family financial interests that may impact on the performance of their roles and ability to make objective decisions.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- a) **notes the Conflict of Interest Policy; and**
- b) **Elected Members declare any conflict of interest with the meeting Agenda.**

BACKGROUND

Conflicts of interest arise when members are influenced, or appear to be influenced, by personal interests when doing their jobs. The perception of a conflict of interest – the way it seems to the public - can be as damaging as an actual conflict, because it undermines public confidence in the integrity and fairness of MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC).

Under the *Local Government Act*, not declaring a conflict of interest or improperly disclosing information can lead to imprisonment.

Examples of conflicts of interest and improper disclosure of information:

Tendering and Purchasing – financial conflict of interest

- Example: Council has advertised for a contractor for irrigation of a football oval. A member is employed by a company which has tendered for the contract. This may affect, or it may reasonably be suspected that it could affect, their ability to make an unbiased or fair decision when the contract choice is considered by Council.

Tendering and Purchasing – non-financial conflict of interest

- Example: A contractor tendering for a Council contract for road works offers to seal the road to a member's house. The member would not be seen as impartial or fair when choosing the contractor for the job.

Information and Opportunities

- Example: a member may know a lot of information about tenders for contracts coming up in the MRC area before the tenders are made public. Conflicts can arise if the member gives this information to a friend or relative working for a company so they can have a better chance of winning the contract.

Undue Influence

- Example: a member tries to pressure a hotel in Alice Springs into providing free accommodation, because they are a member of Council.

Declaring a Conflict of Interest

As soon as practical after a member becomes aware of a conflict of interest in a matter that has come up or is about to come up before or during a meeting (council, local authority or

council committee), the member must disclose or tell the relevant interest to the meeting and to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of MRC.

Details of members' interests and the nature of those interests will be recorded in the relevant Register of Interests published on the Council's website and to be available for any member of the public to look over at the Council's public office.

In addition, if a member enters into a personal or business relationship with another member or Council employee that could result in a conflict of interest, then this relationship must be reported to the President and CEO. A file note will be made and recorded on the relevant Register of Interests.

Uncertainty about whether a conflict of interest exists or not

If a member is unsure whether or not they have a conflict of interest, they should give full details to the CEO or seek independent legal advice.

The CEO does not have a responsibility to decide whether or not a member has a conflict of interest in a matter. The responsibility for determining whether a member has a conflict of interest is up to the individual member.

If you do have a Conflict of Interest

After a member has disclosed the nature of the interest, the member must not, without approval from the Minister:

- be present during any discussion of the meeting when the matter is being discussed.
- take part in any decision related to the matter.
- Influence another member in their decision.

Members will not become involved in the promotion or endorsement of products and/or services unless this has been approved in line with Council's policies and Code of Conduct.

Complaints Regarding Failure to Disclose an Interest

Any person may make a complaint that a member has or may have failed to disclose or tell of a conflict of interest. All complaints should be directed to the MRC CEO.

ISSUES/OPTIONS/CONSEQUENCES

The Disclosure of Interests Policy helps Council to ensure that:

- the business of Council is conducted with efficiency, fairness, and integrity; and
- members act in the best interests of Council and do not seek personal or family gain when performing their duties or use their public office for personal gain.

7 OFFICERS REPORTS

ITEM NUMBER: 7.1
TITLE: Proposed Name Change for Directorate from "Service Centre Delivery" to "Council Services"
AUTHOR: Keith Hassett, Director Service Centre Delivery

LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 01: Developing Communities
Goal 02: Healthy Communities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for the proposed name change of the directorate from "Service Centre Delivery" to "Council Services."

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the proposed name change of the directorate from "Service Centre Delivery" to "Council Services."

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The directorate currently known as "Service Centre Delivery" is responsible for providing a wide range of municipal, essential and commercial services to our communities. Over time, it has become apparent that the current name does not fully capture the scope and essence of the directorate's functions and responsibilities. In response to this, the CEO has provisionally accepted a proposal to rename the directorate to "Council Services." This report outlines the rationale behind the proposed change and its anticipated benefits.

Rationale for the Name Change:

- Clarity and Relevance:** The term "Council Services" provides a clearer and more accurate description of the directorate's role. It encompasses all the services provided by the Council, ensuring that the name aligns with the actual functions performed.
- Alignment with Mission:** The new name aligns more closely with our mission to serve and improve our communities. It highlights our commitment to delivering services that enhance residents' quality of life, directly reflecting our organisational goals.
- Professional Identity:** Adopting a more descriptive and professional name like "Council Services" enhances the directorate's identity both within the Council and in the public eye. It clearly communicates our purpose and responsibilities to stakeholders, partners, and the community.
- Simplicity and Recognition:** "Council Services" is straightforward and easy to understand, facilitating better communication and public recognition of the directorate's role. It avoids the potential confusion associated with the term "Service Centre Delivery."

5. **Consistency with Industry Standards:** Many local governments use similar terminology to describe their service-oriented departments. The change to "Council Services" aligns our terminology with industry standards, fostering consistency and familiarity within the sector.

Benefits of the Name Change:

6. **Enhanced Communication:** A clear and relevant name improves internal and external communication. Stakeholders and community members will better understand the directorate's role, leading to more effective engagement and collaboration.
7. **Increased Public Awareness:** The new name will help raise awareness of the services provided by the directorate. This can lead to greater community involvement and support for Council initiatives.
8. **Improved Professional Image:** The name "Council Services" presents a more professional image, which can enhance the directorate's reputation and credibility. This is particularly important when interacting with external partners and stakeholders.
9. **Strategic Alignment:** The change supports the strategic alignment of the directorate with the Council's overall mission and vision. It reinforces our commitment to delivering high-quality services and improving community well-being.

Conclusion: The proposed name change from "Service Centre Delivery" to "Council Services" offers numerous advantages, including clearer communication, increased public awareness, and a stronger professional identity. It aligns the directorate's name with its mission and functions, providing a more accurate representation of its role within the MacDonnell Regional Council.

Next Steps: Upon Council approval, the name change will be implemented across all relevant platforms, including official documents, the Council website, and communication materials. An internal and external communication plan will be developed to inform all stakeholders of the change.

ISSUES/OPTIONS/CONSEQUENCES

As discussed above.

FINANCIAL IMPACT AND TIMING

As this change transitions over the next 12 months costs may be incurred in the rebranding which will have to be initiated.

CONSULTATION

Council
Chief Executive Officer
Director Service Centre Delivery

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Communication Plan Outline [7.1.1 - 2 pages]

Draft Communication Plan Outline

1. Objective:

To effectively communicate the name change of the directorate from "Service Centre Delivery" to "Council Services" to all relevant stakeholders, ensuring a smooth transition and widespread understanding of the new name.

2. Key Messages:

- Introduction of the new directorate name: "Council Services."
- Rationale behind the name change, emphasising clarity, alignment with mission, professional identity, simplicity, and industry standards.
- Expected benefits of the name change for stakeholders and the community.

3. Audience:

- Internal Stakeholders:
 - Council Members
 - Employees of the MacDonnell Regional Council
 - Department Heads and Managers
- External Stakeholders:
 - Community Members
 - Partner Organisations
 - Local Businesses
 - Government Agencies

4. Communication Channels:

- Internal Communication:
 - Staff Meetings
 - Internal Memos
 - Email Announcements
 - Intranet Updates
 - Staff Newsletters
- External Communication:
 - Official Website Updates
 - Social Media Posts
 - Community Newsletters
 - Public Meetings and Forums

5. Timeline:

Date	Activity	Audience	Channel
Week 1	Initial Announcement to Council Members	Internal	Council Meeting
Week 2	Email Announcement to All Employees	Internal	Email
Week 2	Staff Meetings with Department Heads to Discuss the Change	Internal	Meetings
Week 3	Update on Intranet and Internal Newsletters	Internal	Intranet, Newsletter
Week 3	Public Announcement via Website Update	External	Website
Week 4	Social Media Posts to Announce the Name Change	External	Social Media

Week 4	Update External Stakeholders through Emails and Letters	External	Email, Letters
Week 5	MacNews Announcement	External	Newsletter
Week 6	Public Meetings and Forums to Discuss the Change and Its Benefits	External	Public Meetings
Ongoing	Monitor Feedback and Address Questions or Concerns	All	Various

6. Key Actions:

- Develop and distribute an internal memo to all employees explaining the name change.
- Schedule and conduct staff meetings to discuss the change and address any questions.
- Update the MacDonnell Regional Council website and intranet with the new directorate name and relevant information.
- Send formal letters and emails to partner organisations, local businesses, and government agencies.
- Include an announcement in the MacNews newsletter with details about the change.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Track the reach and engagement of internal communications through employee feedback and meeting participation.
- Gather feedback from external stakeholders through surveys or direct communication.
- Evaluate the overall effectiveness of the communication plan and make adjustments as needed.

8. Responsibility:

- MRC CEO Belinda Urquhart, will oversee the implementation of this communication plan.
- MRC CEO Belinda Urquhart, will handle internal communications and staff engagement.
- MRC Brand and Media person, will manage external communications, including media relations and community outreach.
- MRC Brand and Media person, will update digital platforms (website, intranet, and social media).

Conclusion: This communication plan outlines the steps necessary to ensure all stakeholders are informed about the name change from "Service Centre Delivery" to "Council Services." By following this plan, we aim to achieve a smooth transition and ensure widespread understanding and acceptance of the new name.

7 OFFICERS REPORTS

ITEM NUMBER: 7.2
TITLE: Draft Regional Plan 2024-25
AUTHOR: Sheree Sherry, Acting Executive Manager Finance and Governance

LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 01: Developing Communities
Goal 02: Healthy Communities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Further to section 35(3) of the *Local Government Act 2019* (the Act), the Council needs to approve a Draft Regional Plan for the 2024/25 year, prior to the plan being released to the public for comment. After the plan is made publicly available for a period of at least 21 days, the Council will need to review any comments, finalise and adopt the 2024/25 Regional Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- a) **reviews and approves the proposed Draft 2024/25 Regional Plan; and**
- b) **puts the Draft 2024/25 Regional Plan on display for public comment for a period of at least 21 days.**

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The contents of the Draft Regional Plan 2023/24 have been prepared in accordance with s34(1) of the Act and has incorporated the discussions held with Council in April and input from Local Authority members and staff.

The Draft Regional Plan includes Council's Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan, the budgets for the Local Authority Areas, the Capital Expenditure Budget and Planned Major Capital Works, the proposed Council Member Allowances and the draft Rates and Charges for 2024/25.

The Council's CEO and Directors have reviewed the key performance indicators and incorporated the revisions suggested by Council at its April workshop.

The Council now needs to review the draft, release this for comment and adopt the plan. The adoption is scheduled for the June Ordinary Council meeting.

Copies of the plan will be tabled at the meeting.

ISSUES/OPTIONS/CONSEQUENCES

The Council needs to review and make any desired changes at the meeting today so that the 21 day consultation period has sufficient time to be completed prior to the intended adoption at June's Ordinary Council Meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPACT AND TIMING

The annual budget is incorporated in the Regional Plan 2023/24. The initiatives included in the budget are noted within the plan and are few as Council's budget is extremely tight.

CONSULTATION

Elected Members
Local Authorities
Executive Leadership Team
Management

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

8 CLOSURE TO THE PUBLIC FOR THE DISCUSSION OF CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

ITEM NUMBER: 8.1
TITLE: Closure to the Public for the Discussion of Confidential Items
AUTHOR: Barbara Newland, Governance Manager

LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 01: Developing Communities
Goal 02: Healthy Communities
Goal 03: Empowered Communities
Goal 04: A Supportive Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pursuant to section 99(2) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and clauses 51 and 52 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*, the meeting is to be closed to the public to consider confidential matters.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the closure of the meeting to the public as confidential items are about to be discussed. The meeting is closed in accordance with clause 51(1)(c)(iv) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 as the matters to be discussed include information that, if publicly disclosed, would be likely to prejudice the interests of the council or some other person.

9 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

ITEM NUMBER: 9.1
TITLE: Confidential Reports
AUTHOR: Barbara Newland, Governance Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Council with the CEO's recommendation regarding the findings of the Tender Panel.

RECOMMENDATION

This Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and Regulation 51 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021. i.e. (51(1)(c)), it contains information that would be likely to cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person.

- 10 DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS AND RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC**
- 11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 28 JUNE 2024**
- 12 MEETING CLOSURE**