



WAGAIT SHIRE COUNCIL

AGENDA

AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

LOT 62, WAGAIT TOWER ROAD 9.30AM

WEDNESDAY 27 May 2026

I hereby give notice that a Wagait Shire Council Audit Committee Meeting will be held on:

Date: Monday 20 May 2026
Time: 9:30am
Location: Council Chambers
142 Wagait Tower Road, Wagait Beach NT 0822
and via video-conference as required

CEO
Virginia Boon

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1. PRESENT

Committee members:

Committee Member (Chair)	Ian Swan
Committee Member	Alan Amezdroz
Council President	Neil White
Councillor	Sarah Smith

Council staff:

Chief Executive Officer	Virginya Boon
Finance Officer	Matt Pettit

2. OPENING OF MEETING

The Chair Ian Swan declares the meeting open at and welcomes all to the first meeting of the new term of council.

The Chair advises that the meeting will be audio taped for minute taking purposes as authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

2.1. APOLOGIES

PURPOSE

This report is to table for Council's record any apologies received from Members of the Audit Committee for this meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit Committee receives and notes the apologies from

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:

3. ELECTRONIC MEETING ATTENDANCE

PURPOSE

This report is to table, for the Committee's record, any requests and permissions for Electronic Attendance.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit Committee acknowledges and accepts attendance to the meeting of 16 February 2026 via electronic means.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

PURPOSE

This report is to ask the Audit Committee members if they:

1. Have read the agenda papers; and
2. Wish to declare any conflicts of interest regarding any item in the agenda for this Audit Committee meeting.

5. MOVEMENT OF CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

PURPOSE

This report is to ask the Audit Committee members if there are:

1. Items on the Agenda that they feel should be moved into Confidential Business; and
2. Items in Confidential Business that they feel should be moved to the general Agenda?

6. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES FOR THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

The draft Minutes of the previous Audit Committee Meeting held Monday 11 February 2025 are submitted to the committee for confirmation to approve them as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on Monday 16 February 2026 are confirmed by Committee Members as a true and correct record.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:

Background

As per section 101 of the *Local Government Act 2019* the CEO must ensure that proper minutes of meetings of an audit committee, a council, a council committee and a local authority are kept, tabled, and confirmed at the next meeting.

Comments / Recommendation

Nil

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation of this report.

Attachments

A copy of the minutes is attached with this report.

6.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 1.



WAGAIT SHIRE COUNCIL

**MINUTES
AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
LOT 62, WAGAIT TOWER ROAD 9.00AM**

Monday 16 February 2026

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1. PRESENT

Committee members:

Committee Member (Chair)	Ian Swan
Committee Member	Alan Amezdroz
Council President	Neil White
Councillor	Sarah Smith

Council staff:

Chief Executive Officer	Virginya Boon
Finance Officer	Matt Pettit

Public Present: Deputy President Sarah Manning

2. OPENING OF MEETING

The Chair Ian Swan declares the meeting open at 9:33am and welcomes all to the first meeting of the new term of council.

The Chair advises that the meeting will be audio taped for minute taking purposes as authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

2.1. APOLOGIES

Nil

3. ELECTRONIC MEETING ATTENDANCE

PURPOSE

This report is to table, for the Committee's record, any requests and permissions for Electronic Attendance.

RESOLUTION No: 2026/

That the Audit Committee acknowledges and accepts Ian Swan's and Cr Sarah Smith's attendance to the meeting of 16 February 2026 via electronic means.

Moved: President N White

Seconded: A Amezdroz

Vote: AIF

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

PURPOSE

This report is to ask the Audit Committee members if they:

1. Have read the agenda papers; and
2. Wish to declare any conflicts of interest regarding any item in the agenda for this Audit Committee meeting.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

5. MOVEMENT OF CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

PURPOSE

This report is to ask the Audit Committee members if there are:

1. Items on the Agenda that they feel should be moved into Confidential Business; and
2. Items in Confidential Business that they feel should be moved to the general Agenda?

No items were recommended to be moved to or from Confidential Business.

6. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES FOR THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

The draft Minutes of the previous Audit Committee Meeting held Monday 11 February 2025 are submitted to the committee for confirmation to approve them as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

RESOLUTION No: 2026/

That the Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on Thursday 22 May 2025 are confirmed by Committee Members as a true and correct record.

Moved: President N White

Seconded: A Amezdroz

Vote: AIF

6.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Nil

7. FINANCE REPORTS

7.1. FINANCE REPORT TO 31 JANUARY 2026

PURPOSE

To provide the Audit Committee with a review of Council's financial position to the 31 January 2026.

RESOLUTION No: 2026/

That the Audit Committee receives and notes the Financial Reports provided to 31 January 2026.

Moved: Cr S Smith

Seconded: A Amezdroz

Vote: AIF

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FINANCE COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

This report has been prepared to seek the Audit Committee's recommendation to approve the draft Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee.

RESOLUTION No: 2026/

That the Audit Committee:

- a) receives and notes the report entitled Draft Terms of Reference for Finance Committee: and**
- b) does recommend the draft Terms of Reference be approved by Council.**

Moved: President N White

Seconded: Cr S Smith

Vote: AIF

8.2 REVIEWED TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PLAN FOR AUDIT COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

This report has been prepared to seek the Audit Committee's recommendation for Council to approve the revised Audit Committee Terms of Reference and Work Plan to ensure compliance with the *Local Government Act 2019*, the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*, and contemporary governance and audit practice.

RESOLUTION No: 2026/

That the Audit Committee:

- a) receives and notes the report entitled Reviewed Terms of Reference and Work Plan for Audit Committee:**
- b) does recommend the draft Terms of Reference and Work Plan be approved by Council; and**

c) recommends Council rescinds the previous Audit Committee Terms of Reference and Work Plans inconsistent with the adopted documents.

Moved: President N White

Seconded: A Amezdroz

Vote: AIF

9. IN-CAMERA ITEMS

RESOLUTION No: 2026/

That the Audit Committee close the meeting to the general public in accordance with section 99(2) of the Local Government Act to enable Council to discuss in a Confidential Session an item described under Local Government (General) regulation Division 2;

51 (1) (a) information about the employment of a particular individual as a member of staff or possible member of the staff of the Council that could, if publicly disclosed, cause prejudice to the individual;

51 (1) (b) information about the personal circumstances of a resident or ratepayer;

51 (1) (c) information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to:

(i) cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person; or (ii) prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law; or

(iii) prejudice the security of the council, its members, or staff; or

(iv) subject to subregulation (3) – prejudice the interests of the council or some other person;

51 (1) (d) information subject to an obligation of confidentiality at law, or in equity;

51 (1) (e) subject to subregulation (3) – information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest;

51 (1) (f) subject to subregulation (2) – information in relation to a complaint of a contravention of the code of conduct.

Moved: President N White

Seconded: Cr S Smith

Vote: AIF

At 10:03am Council closed the meeting to the general public.

9.1 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS TO BE RAISED IN-CAMERA

9.1.1 Confirmation of Previous IN-CAMERA Minutes

9.1.2 Audit Completion Letter

Confidential: Regulation 51(1)(c)(iv) subject to subregulation (3) – prejudice the interests of the council or some other person.

9.1.3 Code of Conduct Complaint

Confidential: Regulation 51(1)(f) subject to subregulation (2) – information in relation to a complaint of a contravention of the code of conduct.

9. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The next meeting of the Wagait Shire Council Audit Committee will be held in the Wagait Shire Council Chambers TBC.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 10:22am.

DRAFT

7. FINANCE REPORTS

7.1. FINANCE REPORT TO 31 JANUARY 2026

PURPOSE

To provide the Audit Committee with a review of Council's financial position to the 30 April 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit Committee receives and notes the Financial Reports provided to 30 April 2026.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:

Background

The Audit Committee is an advisory committee of Council established to provide independent oversight and advice on Council's financial management, governance, and internal control environment.

In accordance with the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference, the Committee has a responsibility to review Council's financial performance and reporting to assess the accuracy, completeness, and integrity of financial information, and to identify any emerging risks or issues requiring Council's attention.

The monthly financial reports to the end of April 2026 provide information on Council's year-to-date financial performance, budget position, and variances. Review of these reports by the Audit Committee supports effective financial oversight and assists Council in meeting its legislative and governance obligations.

Following its review, the Audit Committee will consider providing advice and any recommendations to Council for consideration.

Comments / Recommendation

Financial Report - Comments

Income:

- The Sport & Recreation grant is higher than forecast as last year's underspend has been approved and rolled over.

Expenses:

- Jetty Maintenance expenses are higher than forecast due to watering and cleaning the new marina area.
- Election Expenses were lower than initially quoted by the NTEC
- R&M Community Centre and Office are higher due to the replacement of the guttering on both buildings (CAPEX)
- Unexpected replacement of control circuit card for irrigation system at Cloppenburg park, plus Removal of trees hanging over the power lines at Cloppenburg Park entrance, repair and replace the shade sail of the children's playground after cyclone damage. (\$14,200)

Balance Sheet:

- Prepayments are higher than the 30th June, 2025 results due to prepayment of Insurance, Councilwise and LGANT amounts all paid fully until the end of the 2025-26 Financial Year.
- Sundry Debtors figures include the March Marina Cleaning work which was not billed until April.

Operating Performance Ratios:

- Operating Revenue has fallen below operating expenses
- Year to date Net Result Ratio has fallen below the deficit for the Year Ending 2024/25
- The Employee Costs Ratio is well below the 5 year average

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation of this report.

Attachments

A copy of the Financial Reports is attached with the agenda.



Certification by the CEO to the Council

Council Name:	WAGAIT SHIRE COUNCIL
Reporting Period:	1 April 2026 to 30 April 2026

That, to the best of the CEO's knowledge, information and belief:

- (1) The internal controls implemented by the council are appropriate; and
- (2) The council's financial report best reflects the financial affairs of the council.

CEO Signed

Date Signed

14/05/2026

Note: The monthly financial report to council must either be accompanied by a written certification by the CEO to the council, as set out above, or the CEO is to provide written reasons for not providing the certification. (Regulation 17(5) of the General Regulations)

Monthly Financial Reports

- 1.1 Report of Income and Expenditure
- 1.2 Income and Expenditure (Detailed)
- 1.3 Capital Expenditure and Funding Report
- 1.4 Special Purpose Grants
- 1.5 Balance Sheet
- 1.6 Member and CEO Council Credit Card Transactions
- 1.7 Statement of Cash Flows
- 1.8 Notes on Cash, Debtors & Creditors

1.1 Summary Income and Expenditure Report

Period: Year to Date April 2026

For the 10 months ended 30 April 2026

Account	July 2025-Apr 2026	July 2025-Apr 2026 Overall Budget	Variance	Variance %	2026 Overall Budget
Income					
Total Contracts, Fees & Charges	221,810.66	243,788.00	(21,977.34)	-9.01%	292,068.00
Total Interest/Investment Income	73,844.62	70,833.00	3,011.62	4.25%	85,000.00
Total Operating Grant Revenue	271,101.00	332,836.00	(61,735.00)	-18.55%	399,405.00
Total Other Income	2,003.31	2,000.00	3.31	0.17%	2,400.00
Total Rates Income	294,405.30	289,597.00	4,808.30	1.66%	290,364.00
Total Rental Income	4,318.20	5,583.00	(1,264.80)	-22.65%	6,700.00
Total Waste Management Income	151,398.29	151,804.00	(405.71)	-0.27%	152,521.00
Total Income	1,126,810.42	1,097,041.00	29,769.42	2.71%	1,229,058.00
Gross Profit	1,126,810.42	1,097,041.00	29,769.42	2.71%	1,229,058.00
Less Operating Expenses					
Sundry & prior year adjustment	18,500.00	18,500.00	0.00	0.00%	18,500.00
Total Administration - Bank Charges	1,923.12	1,833.00	90.12	4.92%	2,200.00
Total Administration - Memberships & Subscriptions	2,327.06	3,917.00	(1,589.94)	-40.59%	4,700.00
Total Administration - Telephones & Communications	4,685.82	5,100.00	(414.18)	-8.12%	5,900.00
Total Contracts & Material Expenses	40,035.52	4,168.00	35,867.52	860.55%	5,000.00
Total Depreciation Expense	314,894.73	330,000.00	(15,105.27)	-4.58%	396,000.00
Total Elected Member Allowances	34,156.79	50,259.00	(16,102.21)	-32.04%	60,310.00
Total Elected Member Expenses and Professional Development	9,215.99	23,333.00	(14,117.01)	-60.50%	28,000.00
Total Employment Expenses	466,255.11	547,198.00	(80,942.89)	-14.79%	676,701.00
Total Other Expenses - Election	12,920.49	20,000.00	(7,079.51)	-35.40%	20,000.00
Total Projects & Activities - WSC Contributions	2,257.63	12,417.00	(10,159.37)	-81.82%	14,500.00
Total Repairs & Maintenance	48,176.68	34,582.00	13,594.68	39.31%	41,500.00
Total Services	9,443.93	13,350.00	(3,906.07)	-29.26%	15,900.00
Total Vehicle & Plant Expenses	40,864.77	38,586.00	2,278.77	5.91%	46,304.00
Total Waste Management Expenses	126,356.04	134,584.00	(8,227.96)	-6.11%	159,500.00
Total Less Operating Expenses	1,247,551.47	1,419,094.00	(171,542.53)	-12.09%	1,711,315.00
Operating Profit	(120,741.05)	(322,053.00)	201,311.95	62.51%	(482,257.00)

1.2 Detailed Income and Expenditure Report

Period: Year to Date April 2026

For the 10 months ended 30 April 2026

Account	July 2025-Apr 2026	2026 Overall Budget	Variance	Variance %	2026 Overall Budget
Income					
Contracts, Fees & Charges					
Contracts - Jetty Management	169,016.80	165,000.00	4,016.80	2.43%	198,000.00
Contracts - Other (DIP)	0.00	26,874.00	(26,874.00)	-100.00%	32,250.00
Contracts - Other (Power & Water)	0.00	833.00	(833.00)	-100.00%	1,000.00
Contracts - Water Management	49,381.00	48,681.00	700.00	1.44%	58,418.00
Dog Registrations	3,412.86	2,400.00	1,012.86	42.20%	2,400.00
Total Contracts, Fees & Charges	221,810.66	243,788.00	(21,977.34)	-9.01%	292,068.00
Interest/Investment Income					
Bank Interest Income	73,844.62	70,833.00	3,011.62	4.25%	85,000.00
Total Interest/Investment Income	73,844.62	70,833.00	3,011.62	4.25%	85,000.00
Operating Grant Revenue					
Grants - FAA General Purpose	11,915.00	11,163.00	752.00	6.74%	13,396.00
Grants - FAA Roads	65,018.00	61,848.00	3,170.00	5.13%	74,218.00
Grants - NT Operational	194,168.00	194,166.00	2.00	0.00%	233,000.00
Grants - Sport & Rec Operational	0.00	65,659.00	(65,659.00)	-100.00%	78,791.00
Total Operating Grant Revenue	271,101.00	332,836.00	(61,735.00)	-18.55%	399,405.00
Other Income					
Misc income	2,003.31	2,000.00	3.31	0.17%	2,400.00
Total Other Income	2,003.31	2,000.00	3.31	0.17%	2,400.00
Rates Income					
Rates - Income	286,964.37	286,964.00	0.37	0.00%	286,964.00
Rates - Interest Income	5,235.93	1,800.00	3,435.93	190.89%	2,400.00
Rates - Less Pensioner Concession	(11,200.00)	0.00	(11,200.00)	0.00%	0.00
Rates - Pensioner Rebate	11,200.00	0.00	11,200.00	0.00%	0.00
Rates - Search income	2,205.00	833.00	1,372.00	164.71%	1,000.00
Total Rates Income	294,405.30	289,597.00	4,808.30	1.66%	290,364.00
Rental Income					
Rent - CEO House	4,000.02	4,333.00	(332.98)	-7.68%	5,200.00
Rent - Community Centre Income	318.18	1,250.00	(931.82)	-74.55%	1,500.00
Total Rental Income	4,318.20	5,583.00	(1,264.80)	-22.65%	6,700.00
Waste Management Income					
Waste Management - Additional Bin	2,027.26	1,500.00	527.26	35.15%	1,800.00
Waste Management - Hard Waste	1,150.03	2,083.00	(932.97)	-44.79%	2,500.00
Waste Management - Less Pensioner Concession	(8,400.00)	0.00	(8,400.00)	0.00%	0.00
Waste Management Levy	148,221.00	148,221.00	0.00	0.00%	148,221.00
Waste Management Pensioner Rebate	8,400.00	0.00	8,400.00	0.00%	0.00
Total Waste Management Income	151,398.29	151,804.00	(405.71)	-0.27%	152,521.00
Dog impound Fees	507.27	600.00	(92.73)	-15.46%	600.00
Grants - Special Purpose	107,421.77	0.00	107,421.77	0.00%	0.00
Total Income	1,126,810.42	1,097,041.00	29,769.42	2.71%	1,229,058.00
Gross Profit	1,126,810.42	1,097,041.00	29,769.42	2.71%	1,229,058.00
Less Operating Expenses					
Sundry & prior year adjustment	18,500.00	18,500.00	0.00	0.00%	18,500.00
Administration - Bank Charges					
Bank Fees	586.54	833.00	(246.46)	-29.59%	1,000.00
Merchant Fees	1,336.58	1,000.00	336.58	33.66%	1,200.00
Total Administration - Bank Charges	1,923.12	1,833.00	90.12	4.92%	2,200.00
Administration - Memberships & Subscriptions					
LGANT/Membership	1,739.80	1,667.00	72.80	4.37%	2,000.00
Subscriptions & Publications	587.26	2,250.00	(1,662.74)	-73.90%	2,700.00
Total Administration - Memberships & Subscriptions	2,327.06	3,917.00	(1,589.94)	-40.59%	4,700.00
Administration - Office Expenses					
Advertising	1,930.58	3,500.00	(1,569.42)	-44.84%	4,200.00
Auditing	10,587.03	10,000.00	587.03	5.87%	10,000.00
Bad Debt expense	171.87	0.00	171.87	0.00%	0.00
Cleaning	1,242.80	1,667.00	(424.20)	-25.45%	2,000.00
Consultant fees	4,722.73	12,500.00	(7,777.27)	-62.22%	15,000.00
Donations [61110]	500.00	500.00	0.00	0.00%	500.00
Fees, Licences & Charges	693.70	1,250.00	(556.30)	-44.50%	1,500.00
Insurance	61,862.77	66,667.00	(4,804.23)	-7.21%	80,000.00
Interest Expense	3,152.52	4,167.00	(1,014.48)	-24.35%	5,000.00
IT Equipt, Maint & Support	3,327.49	12,500.00	(9,172.51)	-73.38%	15,000.00
IT Subscriptions & Licenses	12,483.67	15,000.00	(2,516.33)	-16.78%	18,000.00
Meeting expenses	770.48	1,833.00	(1,062.52)	-57.97%	2,200.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	(81.82)	0.00	(81.82)	0.00%	0.00
Postage	1,040.32	1,000.00	40.32	4.03%	1,000.00
Printing & Stationery	3,597.56	7,500.00	(3,902.44)	-52.03%	9,000.00
Safety Supplies & Equipment	313.02	2,833.00	(2,519.98)	-88.95%	3,400.00
Staff Amenities	1,094.63	1,250.00	(155.37)	-12.43%	1,500.00
Travel & Accommodation	1,018.33	4,100.00	(3,081.67)	-75.16%	7,000.00
Total Administration - Office Expenses	108,427.68	146,267.00	(37,839.32)	-25.87%	175,300.00
Administration - Telephones & Communications					
Mobiles	2,757.52	3,000.00	(242.48)	-8.08%	3,600.00
Office phone/fax/internet	869.06	1,000.00	(130.94)	-13.09%	1,200.00
Satellite	1,059.24	1,100.00	(40.76)	-3.71%	1,100.00
Total Administration - Telephones & Communications	4,685.82	5,100.00	(414.18)	-8.12%	5,900.00
Contracts & Material Expenses					
Animal Management Charges [64600]	0.00	1,667.00	(1,667.00)	-100.00%	2,000.00
Contracts - Jetty Maintenance	38,179.17	1,667.00	36,512.17	2190.29%	2,000.00
Contracts - Water Management/Maintenance	0.00	417.00	(417.00)	-100.00%	500.00
Contracts - Weeds & Fire Management	376.35	417.00	(40.65)	-9.75%	500.00
Other Contract expense	1,480.00	0.00	1,480.00	0.00%	0.00
Total Contracts & Material Expenses	40,035.52	4,168.00	35,867.52	860.55%	5,000.00
Depreciation Expense					
Depreciation expense	303,228.03	330,000.00	(26,771.97)	-8.11%	396,000.00
Depreciation expense - ROU	11,666.70	0.00	11,666.70	0.00%	0.00

Total Depreciation Expense	314,894.73	330,000.00	(15,105.27)	-4.58%	396,000.00
Elected Member Allowances					
Councillor Allowances	34,156.79	50,259.00	(16,102.21)	-32.04%	60,310.00
Total Elected Member Allowances	34,156.79	50,259.00	(16,102.21)	-32.04%	60,310.00
Elected Member Expenses and Professional Development					
Councillor Professional Development	7,981.22	20,833.00	(12,851.78)	-61.69%	25,000.00
Councillor Expenses	1,234.77	2,500.00	(1,265.23)	-50.61%	3,000.00
Total Elected Member Expenses and Professional Development	9,215.99	23,333.00	(14,117.01)	-60.50%	28,000.00
Employment Expenses					
Staff Recruitment Expenses	4,333.00	959.00	3,374.00	351.82%	1,150.00
Staff Relocation	0.00	2,500.00	(2,500.00)	-100.00%	3,000.00
Staff Training	2,834.82	4,167.00	(1,332.18)	-31.97%	5,000.00
Staff Uniforms & Safety	757.23	1,667.00	(909.77)	-54.58%	2,000.00
Superannuation	51,403.71	50,279.00	1,124.71	2.24%	62,251.00
Wages - Allowances - First aid	0.00	1,596.00	(1,596.00)	-100.00%	1,976.00
Wages - Allowances - Travel	1,085.35	1,667.00	(581.65)	-34.89%	2,000.00
Wages - Annual Leave expense	0.00	25,108.00	(25,108.00)	-100.00%	31,088.00
Wages - Long Service leave expense	0.00	9,840.00	(9,840.00)	-100.00%	11,809.00
Wages - Sports & Rec	6,017.83	40,386.00	(34,368.17)	-85.10%	50,000.00
Wages & Salaries	399,823.17	409,029.00	(9,205.83)	-2.25%	506,427.00
Total Employment Expenses	466,255.11	547,198.00	(80,942.89)	-14.79%	676,701.00
Other Expenses - Election					
Election Expenses	12,920.49	20,000.00	(7,079.51)	-35.40%	20,000.00
Total Other Expenses - Election	12,920.49	20,000.00	(7,079.51)	-35.40%	20,000.00
Projects & Activities - WSC Contributions					
Activities - ANZAC Day WSC contribution	406.65	1,000.00	(593.35)	-59.34%	1,000.00
Activities - Aust Day WSC contribution	0.00	1,000.00	(1,000.00)	-100.00%	1,000.00
Activities - Community	698.74	3,750.00	(3,051.26)	-81.37%	4,500.00
Activities - Community Fund	0.00	4,167.00	(4,167.00)	-100.00%	5,000.00
Activities - Seniors WSC contribution	1,130.42	1,667.00	(536.58)	-32.19%	2,000.00
Activities - Sport & Rec WSC Contribution	0.00	833.00	(833.00)	-100.00%	1,000.00
Sports & Rec Equipment [69201]	21.82	0.00	21.82	0.00%	0.00
Total Projects & Activities - WSC Contributions	2,257.63	12,417.00	(10,159.37)	-81.82%	14,500.00
Repairs & Maintenance					
R&M CEO House	1,141.82	2,083.00	(941.18)	-45.18%	2,500.00
R&M Community Centre	8,644.89	2,500.00	6,144.89	245.80%	3,000.00
R&M Garden & Ground	4,031.39	3,333.00	698.39	20.95%	4,000.00
R&M Office	7,134.42	2,500.00	4,634.42	185.38%	3,000.00
R&M Office equipment	630.91	1,250.00	(619.09)	-49.53%	1,500.00
R&M Road Repair & Maintenance	661.00	10,000.00	(9,339.00)	-93.39%	12,000.00
R&M Sports Equipment	16.34	0.00	16.34	0.00%	0.00
R&M Sports Ground	20,693.03	1,667.00	19,026.03	1141.33%	2,000.00
R&M Townsite	4,041.76	5,833.00	(1,791.24)	-30.71%	7,000.00
R&M Workshop	784.42	2,500.00	(1,715.58)	-68.62%	3,000.00
Road Signage	0.00	833.00	(833.00)	-100.00%	1,000.00
Stores Materials & Loose Tools	396.70	2,083.00	(1,686.30)	-80.96%	2,500.00
Total Repairs & Maintenance	48,176.68	34,582.00	13,594.68	39.31%	41,500.00
Services					
Services - Animal Management	0.00	417.00	(417.00)	-100.00%	500.00
Services - Electricity	3,859.67	5,516.00	(1,656.33)	-30.03%	6,500.00
Services - Gas Supplies	0.00	417.00	(417.00)	-100.00%	500.00
Services - Pest Control	1,660.00	2,000.00	(340.00)	-17.00%	2,400.00
Services - Water & Sewerage	3,924.26	5,000.00	(1,075.74)	-21.51%	6,000.00
Total Services	9,443.93	13,350.00	(3,906.07)	-29.26%	15,900.00
Vehicle & Plant Expenses					
Fuel CEO	3,825.14	3,750.00	75.14	2.00%	4,500.00
Fuel Plant and Machinery	4,253.51	3,750.00	503.51	13.43%	4,500.00
Fuel Works Truck	443.84	1,667.00	(1,223.16)	-73.37%	2,000.00
Fuel Works Ute	3,991.79	3,750.00	241.79	6.45%	4,500.00
Assets < \$5000 P&E F&F	3,930.95	0.00	3,930.95	0.00%	0.00
R&M Plant & Machinery	5,431.90	6,000.00	(568.10)	-9.47%	7,200.00
R&M Vehicles	2,872.62	4,166.00	(1,293.38)	-31.05%	5,000.00
Registrations - Plant & Machinery	2,603.00	1,833.00	770.00	42.01%	2,200.00
Registrations - Vehicles	966.82	1,125.00	(158.18)	-14.06%	1,350.00
Vehicle Leasing Costs	12,545.20	12,545.00	0.20	0.00%	15,054.00
Total Vehicle & Plant Expenses	40,864.77	38,586.00	2,278.77	5.91%	46,304.00
Waste Management Expenses					
Hard Waste Collection	34,660.25	36,667.00	(2,006.75)	-5.47%	44,000.00
R&M Green Waste Compound	1,360.00	4,167.00	(2,807.00)	-67.36%	5,000.00
R&M Hard Waste Compound	21.60	417.00	(395.40)	-94.82%	500.00
Regular Bin Collection	90,314.19	93,333.00	(3,018.81)	-3.23%	110,000.00
Total Waste Management Expenses	126,356.04	134,584.00	(8,227.96)	-6.11%	159,500.00
SP Travel Expenses	1,289.84	0.00	1,289.84	0.00%	0.00
Audit Committee Expenses	727.27	3,000.00	(2,272.73)	-75.76%	4,000.00
Wages - Rostered Day Office Expense	5,093.00	7,000.00	(1,907.00)	-27.24%	7,000.00
Councillor Extra Meeting or Activity	0.00	25,000.00	(25,000.00)	-100.00%	30,000.00
Total Less Operating Expenses	1,247,551.47	1,419,094.00	(171,542.53)	-12.09%	1,711,315.00
Operating Profit	(120,741.05)	(322,053.00)	201,311.95	62.51%	(482,257.00)
Non-operating Expenses					
Special Purpose Grant Expenses					
SP Catering	5,306.91	0.00	5,306.91	0.00%	0.00
SP Contractors	120,409.90	0.00	120,409.90	0.00%	0.00
SP Equipment	14,943.15	0.00	14,943.15	0.00%	0.00
SP General Expenses	181.82	0.00	181.82	0.00%	0.00
SP Materials	1,368.40	0.00	1,368.40	0.00%	0.00
SP Prizes	996.60	0.00	996.60	0.00%	0.00
Total Special Purpose Grant Expenses	143,206.78	0.00	143,206.78	0.00%	0.00
Total Non-operating Expenses	143,206.78	0.00	143,206.78	0.00%	0.00
Net Profit	(263,947.83)	(322,053.00)	58,105.17	18.04%	(482,257.00)

1.3 Capital Expenditure and Funding Report to April 2026

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE		Actuals	
Class of Assets	Project Name / Description		WSC contribution
Buildings	Hard Waste Facility	30,603	
Buildings	Office and Community Centre Gutter Replacements	12,952	12,952
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE		43,555	12,952

Total capital expenditure funded by:		YTD Actuals	WSC contribution
Buildings	WRM #5 24-25	30,603	0
Buildings	Wagait Shire Council	12,952	12,952
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDING		43,555	12,952

1.4 Operational & Capital Grants Report to April 2026

Capital Grants

Funding Body	Grant	Project Name	Due date	Previous Grant Funding \$	Amounts Spent Prior Years \$	Grants Brought forward from Prior Year \$	Grants received in FY26 \$	Total Grant Funding \$	Total Exp to Date \$	Balance Available	Further Funding Expected FY2026
Capital Grants											
DCMC - CPP	CPP 2023-24	Covered Sports Court	30/06/2025	415,000	273	415,000	0	415,000	273	414,727	0
Federal Gov	LRCI Phase 4	Repairs to sports fencing, drainage wks	30/06/2025	23,762	27,600	6,067	0	23,762	37,600	-13,838	15,841
DCMG-LG	WRM #3 22-23	ReDiscovery Centre	30/06/2025	75,000	0	75,000	0	75,000	48,736	26,264	0
DCMG-LG	WRM #4 23-24	ReDiscovery Centre	30/06/2025	75,000	69,167	75,000	0	75,000	69,167	5,833	0
DCMG-LG	WRM #5 24-25	Hard Waste Facility Upgrade	30/06/2026	75,000	22,950	52,050	0	75,000	53,553	21,447	0
DCMG-LG	WRM #6 25-26	To Be Determined	30/06/2027	75,000	0	0	75,000	75,000	0	75,000	0
DTFHC	IT Infrastructure - Critical Upgrades	IT Infrastructure Upgrades	31/08/2026	16,000	0	0	16,000	16,000	12,952	3,048	0
			Sub-total	0	0	55,000	55,000	10,230	44,770	0	#REF!
Operational Grants											
Funding Body	Operational Grants	Project Name	Due date	Total Grant Funding \$	Amounts Spent Prior Years \$	Grants Brought forward from Prior Year \$	Grants received in FY26 \$	Total Grant Funding \$	Total Exp to Date \$	Balance Available	Further Funding Expected FY2026
Core Lithium Ltd	Core Lithium	Equipment	30/06/2025	2,000	1,636	364	0	2,000	1,636	364	0
DTF	NT Men's Places Grants 2023-25	Wagait Men's Program	30/06/2025	8,115	2,595	5,520	0	8,115	2,595	5,520	0
Australia Day	Australia Day	Australia Day 2026	31/03/2026	2,000	0	0	2,000	2,000	1,816	184	0
DTF	Sports and Recreation Grant	Sports Activities Program	30/06/2026	55,000	0	0	55,000	55,000	14,854	40,146	0
DCSC	Youth Week 2026	Youth Week 2026	30/06/2026	2,000	0	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	0
				68,383	37,764	30,619	0	68,383	63,327	5,056	0
			TOTAL	68,383	37,764	85,619	55,000	78,613	108,097	5,056	#REF!

1.5 Balance Sheet as at 30th April 2026

Account	30-Apr-26	30 June 2025
Assets		
Bank		
Bendigo Investment Acc	500,000.00	500,000.00
CBA Cheque Account - Operational	236,714.40	14,811.36
CBA Cheque Account - SP Grants	468,817.82	528,921.81
CBA Fixed Term Deposits	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00
CBA Transaction Account	27,234.25	160,023.45
Total Bank	2,232,766.47	2,203,756.62
Current Assets		
Accrued interest	19,056.30	21,029.18
Councillor Payment control account	(416.66)	(3,437.50)
Dog Resistrations Control Account	(1,547.90)	0.00
Less Prov'n for Doubtful Debts	(3,270.00)	(3,270.00)
Prepayments	23,812.76	9,278.70
Rates Debtors Account	41,367.35	16,266.56
Rates Payment Control Account	(3,031.79)	5,648.87
Sundry Debtors	35,051.00	0.00
Trade Debtors [11405]	32,890.27	25,438.89
Total Current Assets	143,911.33	70,954.70
Fixed Assets		
Buildings Accum Dep	(228,253.83)	(117,174.45)
Buildings at Cost	1,735,951.18	1,735,951.18
Motor Vehicles Accum Dep	(74,392.31)	(41,303.17)
Motor Vehicles at Cost	324,156.19	324,156.19
Office Equip & Furn at Cost	27,803.74	27,869.74
Office Equip Furn Accum Depn.	(15,184.03)	(9,863.29)
Plant & Equipment at Cost	284,976.59	282,076.59
Plant & Equipment Accum Dep	(156,464.19)	(89,662.19)
Sports Ground Accum Dep	(103,956.31)	(54,302.24)
Sports Ground at Cost	364,631.77	364,631.77
Total Fixed Assets	2,159,268.80	2,422,380.13
Non-current Assets		
Accrued interest		
Expenses Recognised in Advance	6,319.16	9,471.63
Inf Roads & Paths at Cost	1,065,123.08	1,065,123.08
Infr Roads & Path Accum Depn.	(662,387.69)	(625,720.99)
Land at Cost	745,000.00	745,000.00
Leased Vehicle Accum Depreciation	(81,155.79)	(69,489.09)
Right Use of Assets	115,303.00	115,303.00
Work in Progress	123,737.36	180,725.72
Total Non-current Assets	1,311,939.12	1,420,413.35
Total Assets	5,847,885.72	6,117,504.80
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accrued Expenses	12,000.00	0.00
CBA CC- Neil White	0.00	0.00
CBA CC- Rowan Roberts	1,596.31	0.00
CBA CC- Virginia Boon	201.19	0.00
CBA Credit Card Main	3,420.28	3,459.00
CBA Transaction Account	0.00	0.00
Creditors Retention Account	0.00	6,997.69
Current Lease Liabilities	15,742.00	15,742.00
Error Suspense - Pensioner Rebates	0.00	0.00
Grants in advance	477,132.71	459,854.00
GST	(43,719.26)	(38,445.50)
PAYG Withholding Payable	18,962.00	16,270.00
Provision for Annual Leave	50,804.25	91,804.25
Provision for Long Service Leave	36,729.73	36,729.73
Provision for Rostered Days Off	5,993.00	0.00
Rates in Advance	8,674.99	8,674.99
Rounding	(0.24)	0.01
Super Payable	6,177.36	14,799.10
Trade Creditors	25,020.93	24,360.82
Unexpended Grant Liability	116,193.26	93,994.49
Wages Payable - Payroll	5,349.30	1,687.49
Total Current Liabilities	740,277.81	735,928.07
Non-current Liabilities		
Bank Loans	52,678.50	65,221.00
Non-current Lease Liabilities	45,283.00	45,283.00
Rates/Waste Charges Received in Advance	2,100.00	0.00
Total Non-current Liabilities	100,061.50	110,504.00
Total Liabilities	840,339.31	846,432.07
Net Assets	5,007,546.41	5,271,072.73
Equity		
Asset Revaluation Reserve	2,508,769.27	2,508,769.27
Current Year Earnings	(263,947.83)	(179,994.94)
Other Asset Renewal Reserve	270,000.00	270,000.00
Prior Year's Surplus/Deficit	1,832,286.03	1,832,286.03
Retained Earnings	210,438.94	390,433.88
Roads Renewal Project Reserve	450,000.00	450,000.00
Total Equity	5,007,546.41	5,271,494.24

1.6 Member and CEO Council Credit Card Transactions

For the period 1 April 2026 to 30 April 2026

Date	Description	Debit	Credit	Running Balance	Supplier Location
CBA CC - Neil White					
16 Apr 2026	Payment: Hotels.com	0.00	8.00	(8.00)	NT
16 Apr 2026	Payment: Hotels.com	0.00	8.00	(16.00)	NT
29 Apr 2026	Bank Transfer from CBA Credit Card Main to CBA CC - Neil White	34.30	0.00	18.30	
Total CBA CC - Neil White		34.30	16.00	18.30	
CBA CC - Rowan Roberts					
02 Apr 2026	Payment: Officeworks	0.00	54.50	(54.50)	NT
07 Apr 2026	Payment: Battery Power Centre	0.00	189.85	(244.35)	NT
14 Apr 2026	Payment: Middy's Electrical	0.00	102.42	(346.77)	NT
15 Apr 2026	Payment: mister Minit	0.00	44.75	(391.52)	NT
15 Apr 2026	Payment: Viva Water Pty Ltd	0.00	44.99	(436.51)	NT
15 Apr 2026	Payment: Woolworths	0.00	89.41	(525.92)	Interstate/Overseas
15 Apr 2026	Payment: RDO Equipment	0.00	99.64	(625.56)	NT
15 Apr 2026	Payment: Bunnings	0.00	100.97	(726.53)	NT
15 Apr 2026	Payment: Sydney Tools	0.00	295.00	(1,021.53)	NT
16 Apr 2026	Payment: Supercheap Auto	0.00	164.95	(1,186.48)	NT
21 Apr 2026	Payment: National College of Management	0.00	395.00	(1,581.48)	NT
29 Apr 2026	Payment: Battery Power Centre	0.00	163.44	(1,744.92)	NT
29 Apr 2026	Payment: Accesshardware	0.00	182.07	(1,926.99)	NT
29 Apr 2026	Payment: EG Fuel Co	0.00	251.90	(2,178.89)	NT
29 Apr 2026	Payment: NGA Canberra	0.00	999.00	(3,177.89)	NT
29 Apr 2026	Bank Transfer from CBA Credit Card Main to CBA CC - Rowan Roberts	1,581.58	0.00	(1,596.31)	
Total CBA CC - Rowan Roberts		1,581.58	3,177.89	(1,596.31)	
CBA CC - Virginia Boon					
02 Apr 2026	Payment: Hotels.com	0.00	400.80	(400.80)	NT
07 Apr 2026	Payment: Pivotel	0.00	180.00	(580.80)	NT
07 Apr 2026	Payment: Microsoft	0.00	151.23	(732.03)	
07 Apr 2026	Payment: Australia Post	0.00	30.00	(762.03)	NT
07 Apr 2026	Payment: MOGAS REGIONAL	0.00	60.00	(822.03)	NT

1.7 Statement of Cash Flows

For the 10 months ended 30 April 2026

Account	July 2025-Apr 2026
Operating Activities	
Receipts from customers	1,137,372.78
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,282,303.34)
Cash receipts from other operating activities	20,957.79
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities	(123,972.77)
Investing Activities	
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	122,500.00
Payment for property, plant and equipment	(3,450.00)
Other cash items from investing activities	34,990.23
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities	154,040.23
Financing Activities	
Other cash items from financing activities	(3,237.90)
Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities	(3,237.90)
Net Cash Flows	26,829.56
Cash and Cash Equivalents	
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	2,200,719.13
Net change in cash for period	26,829.56
Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	2,227,548.69

1.8 Notes on Cash, Debtors & Creditors as at 30th April 2026

Note 1. Details of Cash and Investments Held

Financial Institution	Date Invested	Invested Amount \$	Interest Rate	Maturity Date
1 (a) Bendigo	11/09/2025	500,000	3.85%	11/09/2026
1 (b) CBA	12/03/2026	1,000,000	5.12%	12/03/2027
Total Investments		1,500,000		

Note 2. Statement of Trade Debtors

Contact	Current	1 Month	2 Months	3 Months	Older	Total
Banyan Contracting	\$ 95.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 95.00
Belyuen Community Government Council	\$ 2,157.96	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 856.50	\$ 3,014.46
Cox Country Club	\$ -	\$ 285.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,080.00	\$ 1,365.00
Department of Logistics and Infrastructure	\$ 4,488.76	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,620.40	\$ 24,109.16
Power Water	\$ 3,949.00	\$ 3,949.00	\$ 3,949.00	\$ 880.00	\$ -	\$ 12,727.00
Territory Image	\$ -	\$ 95.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 95.00	\$ 190.00
						0.00
Total	\$ 10,690.72	\$ 4,329.00	\$ 3,949.00	\$ 880.00	\$ 21,651.90	\$ 41,500.62
Percentage of total	25.76%	10.43%	9.52%	2.12%	52.17%	100.00%
						41,500.62
						Check

Note 3. Statement of Trade Creditors

Contact	Current	1 Month	2 Months	3 Months	Older	Total
Berry Springs Mechanical	0.00	1,212.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,212.00
Central Business Equipment	524.56	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	524.56
Depot Katherine	0.00	168.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	168.86
Dream Impact Inspire Pty Ltd	1,650.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,650.00
Fire Maintenance Services (NT)	1,628.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,628.00
Fleetcare	1,379.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,379.97
GROW Services	0.00	2,794.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,794.00
Harvey Distributors	208.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	208.45
Litchfeild Rego Inspections	150.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	150.00
Nexia Edwards Marshall NT	1,430.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,430.00
Optus	375.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	375.55
Perks People Solutions	4,766.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,766.30
Pivotel	180.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	180.00
Power Water	17.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	17.85
RapidClean N.T	292.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	292.53
SandS Australia	1,347.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,347.50
Veolia Environmental Services	2,138.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,138.53
Wagait Beach Supermarket	0.00	2,139.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,139.83
West Arnhem Ground Maintenance	0.00	1,980.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,980.00
Yuyang Yoga	637.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	637.00
						0.00
Total	16,726.24	8,294.69	0.00	0.00	0.00	25,020.93
	66.8%	33.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	\$ 25,020.93
						Check

Operating Performance Ratios

	Apr-26	Jan-26	Dec-25	Nov-25	Oct-25	Sep-25	Aug-25	Jul-25
Current Assets	\$ 2,376,678	\$ 2,468,116	\$ 2,510,619	\$ 2,555,546	\$ 2,545,641	\$ 2,528,423	2,616,543.30	\$ 2,260,777
Current Liabilities	\$ 740,278	\$ 754,657	\$ 763,251	\$ 734,441	\$ 685,359	\$ 703,492	\$ 766,425	\$ 735,083
Current Assets Ratio	\$ 3.21	\$ 3.27	\$ 3.29	\$ 3.48	\$ 3.71	\$ 3.59	\$ 3.41	\$ 3.08

	Apr-26	Dec-25	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Operating Revenue	\$ 1,126,810	\$ 843,862	\$ 1,252,870	\$ 1,210,023	\$ 1,052,700	\$ 1,394,486
Operating Expenses	\$ 1,247,551	\$ 764,515	\$ 1,159,314	\$ 1,155,929	\$ 1,012,525	\$ 877,978
Operating Surplus Ratio	-11%	9%	7%	4.47%	3.82%	37%

	Apr-26	Dec-25	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Total Income	\$ 1,126,810	\$ 843,862	\$ 1,357,239	\$ 1,359,283	\$ 1,116,134	\$ 1,398,552
Total Expenses	\$ 1,390,758	\$ 810,225	\$ 1,434,007	\$ 1,270,186	\$ 1,012,525	\$ 1,047,337
Net Result Ratio	-18.9787%	4.1515%	-5.3534%	7.0145%	10.2327%	33.5341%

Revenue Ratios

	Apr-26	Dec-25	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Rates + Fees + Charges	\$ 672,440	\$ 583,656	\$ 587,948	\$ 550,703	\$ 550,690	\$ 585,926
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 1,126,810	\$ 843,862	\$ 1,252,870	\$ 1,210,023	\$ 1,116,134	\$ 1,394,486
Own Source Revenue Ratio	60%	69%	47%	46%	49%	42%

	Apr-26	Dec-25	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Rates Revenue	\$ 294,405	\$ 291,624	\$ 278,844	\$ 264,498	\$ 253,909	\$ 248,195
Operating Expenses	\$ 1,247,551	\$ 764,515	\$ 1,159,314	\$ 1,155,929	\$ 1,012,525	\$ 877,978
Rates Coverage Ratio	24%	38%	24%	23%	25%	28%

	Apr-26	Dec-25	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Operating Grants	\$ 271,101	\$ 152,837	\$ 300,486	\$ 320,583	\$ 502,010	\$ 252,030
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 1,126,810	\$ 843,862	\$ 1,252,870	\$ 1,210,023	\$ 1,116,134	\$ 1,394,486
Grants Dependency Ratio	24.06%	18.11%	23.98%	26.49%	44.98%	18.07%

Asset Management Ratios

	Apr-26	Dec-25	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Capital Expenditure	\$ 43,555	\$ 30,603	\$ 51,435	\$ 70,781	\$ 205,699	\$ -
Depreciation Expense	\$ 314,895	\$ 189,602	\$ 274,693	\$ 225,585	\$ 188,818	\$ 169,989
Capital Replacement Ratio	13.83%	16.14%	18.72%	31.38%	108.94%	0.00%

Community & Service Delivery Ratios

	Mar-26	Dec-25	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Employee Costs	\$ 466,255	\$ 244,911	\$ 620,702	\$ 524,529	\$ 519,935	\$ 472,249
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 1,247,551	\$ 764,515	\$ 1,446,787	\$ 1,155,929	\$ 1,217,743	\$ 912,509
Employee Costs Ratio	37.37%	32.03%	42.90%	45.38%	42.70%	51.75%

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 GOVERNANCE POLICIES REVIEWED AND UPDATED

PURPOSE

This report has been prepared to seek the Audit Committee's recommendation to approve the all Governance policies that have been reviewed and updated.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit Committee:

- a) receives and notes the report entitled **Governance Policies Reviewed and Updated:**
and
- b) does / does not recommend the reviewed and amended policies be approved by Council.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:

Background

As part of Council's ongoing commitment to sound governance, compliance, and continuous improvement, a review of Council's governance policies has been undertaken to ensure alignment with the requirements of the Northern Territory Local Government Act 2019, the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021, and contemporary local government governance practices.

Under the legislative framework, Council is required to maintain appropriate policies, procedures, and systems that support transparent decision-making, accountability, ethical conduct, risk management, and effective administration. Regular review of governance policies is considered best practice and assists Council in ensuring its policies remain current, legally compliant, operationally effective, and reflective of Council's strategic direction.

The reviewed policies have been assessed and amended where required to:

- align with current legislative and regulatory requirements;
- improve clarity, consistency, and administrative application;
- strengthen governance and accountability frameworks;
- reflect current operational practices and organisational structure; and
- address any identified gaps, risks, or outdated provisions.

Comments / Recommendation

In accordance with the Audit Committee's role in overseeing governance, compliance, and risk management matters, the Committee is required to reviewed the draft amended policies and recommend that Council adopt the policies as presented.

The governance policies to be approved are:

1. Fraud & Corruption Protection Policy
2. Caretaker Policy
3. Audit Committee Terms of Reference
4. Rates and Charges Policy

5. Election of Principal Member Policy
6. Casting Vote of Principal member Policy
7. Procedures for Council and Committee Meetings Policy
8. Code of Conduct – Elected and Committee Members Policy
9. Use of Council Firearms Policy
10. Media Policy
11. Risk Management Policy
12. Casual Vacancy on Council Policy
13. Emergency Management Committee Terms of Reference
14. Gifts and Benefits Policy
15. Emergency Communications Policy
16. Delegations Manual
17. Teleconferencing and Videoconferencing Policy

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation of this report.

Attachments

A copy of all 17 draft amended governance policies are attached.

FRAUD AND CORRUPTION PROTECTION

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT) and NT ICAC Guidelines.



Policy No.	GOV-FCP-01	Version	4.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next term of Council
LG Act 2019 Ref.	General Regulations 2021: Section 6(d)(i)	Applies To	All workplace participants and council members

1. Purpose

Wagait Shire Council is committed to maintaining an organisational culture in which effective fraud and corruption prevention is embedded as an integral part of all council activities. This policy provides clear guidance on actions to be taken when fraud or corrupt conduct is suspected, whether involving employees, council members, contractors or volunteers, and provides assurance to the community that all suspected fraudulent or corrupt activity will be rigorously investigated.

Best practice alignment: This policy is informed by AS 8001-2008 Fraud and Corruption Control, the NT ICAC Corruption Prevention Framework, and the ACLG Good Governance Guide. Councils are encouraged to review this policy at each term of council and following any material change in risk environment.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all workplace participants of Wagait Shire Council, including:

- all council members (elected and appointed);
- all council employees (permanent, casual and contract);
- contractors, consultants and service providers engaged by or on behalf of the council;
- volunteers and committee members; and
- any individual or entity undertaking activities for or on behalf of the council.

This policy applies to activities conducted within council premises and to activities conducted off-site or remotely where those activities relate to council business.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Corruption	Dishonest activity in which a workplace participant or council member acts contrary to the interests of the entity and abuses their position of trust in order to achieve personal gain or advantage for themselves or another person or entity.
Fraud	Dishonest activity causing actual or potential financial loss to any person or entity, including theft of monies or other property by council officers or persons external to the entity, whether or not deception is used. This includes deliberate falsification, concealment, destruction or use of falsified documentation for business purposes, or the improper use of information or position for personal gain.
Workplace Participant	All council members, council employees, contractors, consultants, committee members and any individual or group undertaking activity for or on behalf of the council.
ICAC	Independent Commissioner Against Corruption (NT): the body established under the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT) to receive and investigate corruption complaints.
Whistle-blower	A person who reports suspected fraud, corruption or misconduct in good faith under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2008 (NT) or equivalent legislation.
Risk Register	A documented record of identified risks, their likelihood, consequence rating, and assigned mitigation controls maintained and reviewed by the CEO.
Internal Control	A process designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives in operational effectiveness, financial reporting reliability, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

4. Policy

4.1 Fraud and Corruption Control Framework

The council adopts a risk-based, whole-of-organisation approach to fraud and corruption prevention. The framework consists of four interconnected pillars:

Prevention <i>Stop it happening</i>	Detection <i>Spot it early</i>	Response <i>Act on it</i>	Reporting <i>Tell the right people</i>
<p>What it means</p> <p>Build systems and culture so dishonest activity is structurally difficult to carry out. No one person should be able to commit fraud alone.</p>	<p>What it means</p> <p>Monitor transactions and systems so anomalies surface quickly. Shorten the gap between when fraud occurs and when it is discovered.</p>	<p>What it means</p> <p>Investigate all allegations fairly and decisively. Apply consequences that match the severity, whether criminal, disciplinary, or administrative.</p>	<p>What it means</p> <p>Make it easy and safe for anyone to raise a concern. Protect whistle-blowers and ensure information flows to Council and oversight bodies.</p>
<p>How the policy does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual sign-off on financial transactions • Delegation limits tied to each role • Segregation of duties across all finance functions • Induction and annual refresher training for all staff • CEO communications reinforcing ethical conduct 	<p>How the policy does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly bank account reconciliations • IT audit logs reviewed regularly • Annual external audit of financial statements • Internal audit calibrated to risk level • Risk register reported to Audit Committee twice yearly 	<p>How the policy does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO receives all reports and arranges investigation • Independent, qualified investigator required • Findings documented and reported to Audit Committee • Remediation actions tracked to completion • Referral to ICAC, Ombudsman or NT Police if warranted 	<p>How the policy does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five channels: CEO, President, ICAC, Ombudsman, NT Police • Strict confidentiality on all reports received • Whistle-blower protections under PID Act 2008 (NT) • Anonymous reporting channel recommended • Audit Committee receives outcomes and risk register
<p>Example from this policy</p> <p><i>A council officer cannot raise a purchase order AND approve the same payment. Segregation of duties (s.4.1.2) means a single dishonest actor cannot complete a fraudulent transaction alone.</i></p>	<p>Example from this policy</p> <p><i>The external auditor tests the control environment each year (s.4.1.2.4). Any gaps found are raised in a management letter presented directly to the Audit Committee, and not just to the CEO.</i></p>	<p>Example from this policy</p> <p><i>If a council officer is suspected of falsifying invoices, a formal, impartial investigation by an independent qualified person is required (s.4.2.4). The outcome must be documented, reported to the Audit Committee, and tracked to resolution.</i></p>	<p>Example from this policy</p> <p><i>A contractor who suspects a council employee of falsifying timesheets to claim inflated payments can report directly to the CEO or to ICAC (s.4.2.2) without going through their own supervisor. Their identity will be kept confidential wherever possible, and they are fully protected from detriment, contract termination or retaliation under s.4.2.6 and the PID Act 2008 (NT).</i></p>

4.1.1 Fraud Protection Plan

The council's Fraud Protection Plan comprises the controls, policies and procedures in place for the prevention, detection, management and reporting of fraud and corruption. The plan includes:

- annual external audit of council's financial statements by a registered auditor;
- a Strategic Risk Framework with internal audit activities calibrated to risk level;
- oversight by the Audit Committee, including review of audit findings and recommendations;
- procurement policies and procedures aligned to the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT);
- human resources policies and procedures including staff vetting and conduct standards;

- information technology security protocols, including access controls and audit logging;
- a Privacy Policy consistent with the Information Act 2002 (NT) and the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth);
- an Accounting and Policy Manual reviewed annually by the Finance Manager;
- Codes of Conduct for council members and all workplace participants; and
- an effective internal control framework reviewed annually by the CEO.

The Fraud Protection Plan must be reviewed at least annually and following any material change in the council's risk environment, including new systems, restructures or significant contract arrangements.

4.1.2 Internal Controls

The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that internal controls are in place across the organisation to reduce the likelihood and decrease the detection time of any potential fraud, theft or corrupt act. These controls include, but are not limited to:

- financial delegations and authority limits appropriate to role and responsibility;
- physical security of council assets, including cash handling procedures;
- dual authorisations for financial transactions above prescribed thresholds;
- segregation of duties across financial processing and authorisation functions;
- trained and properly qualified staff with appropriate background checks;
- information technology access controls, including role-based permissions and multi-factor authentication;
- audit logs maintained and reviewed on a regular basis; and
- monthly reconciliations of bank accounts and balance sheet accounts.

Internal controls must be based on a documented risk management approach, where risks are identified, registered and assigned appropriate mitigation controls. The risk register must be maintained and reported to the Audit Committee at least twice per year.

Internal controls are to be reviewed and tested regularly to identify deficiencies or potential improvements. The council may engage an internal auditor to provide specialist advice. All recommendations from internal or external auditors are to be presented to the Audit Committee and tracked to resolution.

Operational tip: The CEO should maintain a controls testing schedule as part of the Fraud Protection Plan, with results tabled at each Audit Committee meeting. Where a control failure is identified, a remediation action must be documented and assigned within 30 days.

4.1.3 Fraud and Corruption Awareness and Ethical Culture

The council is committed to continually promoting an ethical culture and an active awareness of fraud and corruption risks. This commitment is to be demonstrated through:

- induction training for all new workplace participants that includes fraud and corruption awareness;
- annual refresher training for all staff and council members;
- regular communications from the CEO reinforcing ethical conduct expectations;
- a clearly published and accessible process for raising concerns or making disclosures; and
- recognition of ethical behaviour as part of performance management processes.

4.2 Reporting Fraud and Corruption

4.2.1 Obligation to Report

All workplace participants and council members are required to report suspicions or allegations of fraud and corruption. This is a mandatory obligation, not a discretionary one. Workplace participants must familiarise themselves with their reporting obligations under this policy, associated procedures and relevant legislation, including the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2008 (NT).

4.2.2 Reporting Channels

Suspected fraud or corruption may be reported through any of the following channels:

- directly to the Chief Executive Officer;
- to the President of the Council, where the suspected conduct involves the CEO or where the workplace participant deems it necessary;
- directly to the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption (ICAC) via icac.nt.gov.au;
- to the NT Ombudsman; or
- to the Northern Territory Police, where criminal conduct is suspected.

Best practice: Councils are encouraged to establish a dedicated fraud reporting mechanism (such as an independently managed hotline or online portal) to enable anonymous reporting. This reduces the barrier to disclosure and strengthens the detection pillar of the fraud control framework.

4.2.3 CEO Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- receiving and recording all reports of suspected fraud and corruption;
- assessing each report and determining an appropriate investigation or escalation pathway;
- engaging appropriately qualified investigators where a formal investigation is required;
- referring matters to ICAC, the Ombudsman or NT Police as circumstances require;
- reporting investigation outcomes to the Audit Committee and Council as appropriate; and
- ensuring that remediation actions arising from investigations are implemented.

4.2.4 Investigation Process

All allegations and suspicions of fraud and corruption will be assessed and, where warranted, investigated. Investigations will be:

- conducted impartially and in accordance with procedural fairness principles;
- carried out by appropriately qualified persons independent of the matter under investigation;
- documented, with findings recorded and retained in accordance with council's records management obligations; and
- reported to the Audit Committee upon completion, with substantiated findings addressed through criminal, disciplinary or administrative mechanisms appropriate to the circumstances.

4.2.5 Confidentiality

Wherever possible, all instances reported will be treated in the strictest confidence. The council will take all reasonable steps to protect the identity of persons reporting a concern or incident. Workplace participants and council members should note, however, that absolute anonymity cannot be guaranteed, particularly where disciplinary action or prosecution proceedings arise and disclosure is required by law or procedural fairness.

4.2.6 Protection of Whistle-blowers

No workplace participant or council member will be subject to any detriment, retaliation, demotion, harassment or dismissal for making a report in good faith, even where the allegation is subsequently found to be unsubstantiated. Protection applies regardless of the reporting channel used.

The council will not, however, tolerate the making of malicious, vexatious or knowingly false allegations. Disciplinary action may be taken against any person found to have made such a report.

Legislative note: Protections for public interest disclosures are set out in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2008 (NT). Council members and employees should be made aware of these protections as part of annual fraud and ethics training.

4.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Council	Adopt and review this policy; receive Audit Committee reports; support a culture of integrity and accountability.
Audit Committee	Provide independent oversight of the fraud control framework; review internal and external audit findings; recommend policy updates.
Chief Executive Officer	Implement and maintain the Fraud Protection Plan; ensure controls are in place; receive and investigate reports; report outcomes to Council.
Finance Manager	Maintain financial controls and reconciliation procedures; escalate anomalies to the CEO; support audit processes.
HR Manager	Conduct staff vetting and background checks; administer conduct and disciplinary procedures; deliver fraud awareness training.

All Workplace Participants	Comply with this policy; complete mandatory training; report suspected fraud or corruption promptly.
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5. Associated Documents

- P04 Council Member Code of Conduct
- P05 Council Staff Code of Conduct
- P31 Dispute Resolution, Counselling, Disciplining and Dismissal
- GOV-RM-01 Risk Management Policy
- GOV-AC-01 Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- Accounting and Policy Manual (internal)
- Fraud Protection Plan (internal, maintained by CEO)

6. References and Legislation

- Australian Standard AS 8001-2008 Fraud and Corruption Control
- Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT)
- Information Act 2002 (NT)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT)
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT)
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 2008 (NT) (Whistleblowers Legislation)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- NT ICAC Corruption Prevention Framework (current edition)
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government

7. Review History

Date Approved	Approved By	Resolution No.	Next Review
01/12/2009	Council – Res. 2009/101 Moved: Cr Withnall Seconded: Cr Lamont	2009/101	Next Council election
19/11/2019	Council – Res. 2019/548 Moved: Cr M Vaughan Seconded: Cr N White	2019/548	Next term of council
19/04/2022	Council – Res. 2022/072 Moved: Cr Peter Clee Seconded: President Neil White	2022/072	Next term of council
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	Next term of council

CARETAKER POLICY

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT).



Policy No.	GOV-CTP-001	Version	6.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active - Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next term of Council
LG Act 2019 Ref.	LG Act 2019 (NT) - Section 161	Applies To	All workplace participants and council members

1. Purpose

In plain terms: During the lead-up to a local government election, Council and its staff must be careful not to use Council resources or make major decisions that could unfairly influence the election. This policy explains what is and is not allowed during that period.

Section 161 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) requires Wagait Shire Council to maintain a Caretaker Policy governing the conduct of Council, elected members, and Council employees during the caretaker period that applies to each general election. This policy fulfils that statutory requirement and provides clear, practical guidance on what Council and its employees may and may not do during that period.

The caretaker period exists to protect the integrity of the democratic process and to ensure that the power, resources, and decision-making authority of the Council are not used in a way that unfairly advantages any candidate or group of candidates. Council's commitment to impartial and ethical conduct during this period is fundamental to community trust in local government.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Wagait Shire Council as a decision-making body;
- all elected members (Councillors) of Wagait Shire Council;
- the Chief Executive Officer; and
- all Council employees and contractors engaged by Council during the caretaker period.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Advantage	An advantage is conferred when a decision allows the use of Council resources in a way that favours one candidate over another, by providing resources, information, or support that is not equally available to all candidates.
Campaigning	Any campaigning activity, including the wearing or displaying of campaign material and participation in activities intended to influence the outcome of an election.
Caretaker Period	The period commencing on the nomination day for a Council general election and ending when the results of the general election are declared in accordance with the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT).
CEO	The Chief Executive Officer of Wagait Shire Council.
Council Resources	Any asset or information owned or controlled by Council. This includes materials published by Council, facilities and goods, attendance at functions and events, access to Council information, media services, and Council employees and contractors.
Designated Decision	A decision that is prohibited from being made by Council or the CEO during the caretaker period, as set out in Section 5.2 of this policy.
Allowable Decision	A decision that may be made during the caretaker period because it falls within one of the permitted categories set out in Section 5.3 of this policy.

4. Policy Statement

Wagait Shire Council is committed to conducting all activities during the caretaker period in a manner that is responsible, transparent, and legally compliant. Council acknowledges that the caretaker period exists to protect the democratic process and to ensure that Council's resources and decision-making powers are not used to unfairly advantage any candidate or group of candidates.

During the caretaker period, the normal day-to-day operations of Council will continue. Council's service delivery to the community will not be diminished by the operation of this policy. Staff are expected to maintain the same standard of professionalism and impartiality throughout the election period as they would at any other time.

5. Procedures

5.1 CEO's Notice Obligation

5.1.1 Prior to the commencement of the caretaker period, the CEO must provide written notice to all elected members and Council staff advising them that the caretaker period is commencing and that the obligations in this policy apply.

5.1.2 The written notice must set out:

- the commencement date of the caretaker period;
- a plain-English summary of the key restrictions under this policy; and
- the contact details of the person to approach if there is uncertainty about whether a particular activity or decision is permissible.

5.1.3 The CEO will continue to prepare reports and provide information to enable Council members to carry out their responsibilities in relation to the day-to-day business of Council throughout the caretaker period.

5.2 Designated (Prohibited) Decisions

During the caretaker period, the following decisions are prohibited and must not be made by Council or by the CEO:

- A decision relating to the employment or remuneration of the CEO, other than to appoint an acting CEO or to suspend the CEO for serious or wilful misconduct in accordance with Section 321 of the Act.
- A decision to terminate the appointment of the CEO, except as authorized under Section 321 of the Act.
- A decision to enter into a contract, arrangement, or understanding with a total value exceeding \$100,000.
- A decision to spend unbudgeted monies; to conduct public consultation that was not previously announced; to endorse a new policy; to dispose of Council land; to approve financial or in-kind community support; or to progress any matter that is contentious or that has been identified as an election issue.
- A decision allowing the use of Council resources for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates.

Important: If Council or the CEO is uncertain whether a proposed decision is a designated decision or an allowable decision, the CEO must seek written legal advice before the decision is made. No potentially designated decision should proceed without that advice.

5.3 Allowable Decisions

The following decisions are permitted during the caretaker period:

- A decision relating to the carrying out of works in response to an emergency or disaster.
- A decision relating to expenditure or other action required under an existing agreement by which funding is provided to Council by the Commonwealth or Territory Government.

- A decision necessary to maintain Council's lawful obligations to employees, creditors, and service recipients under existing arrangements.

Best Practice: Any allowable decision made during the caretaker period must be documented with a clear explanation of why it fell within a permitted category, to be tabled at the first post-election Council meeting for the information of the incoming Council.

5.4 Elected Member Conduct During the Election

5.4.1 Elected members who are candidates must not use Council branding, letterhead, media, or related Council facilities for their election campaign under any circumstances.

5.4.2 Elected members must not ask or direct Council employees to undertake any task connected, directly or indirectly, to their election campaign.

5.4.3 Council resources provided for the use of elected members must not be used for campaign purposes during the caretaker period.

5.4.4 Expenses will only be reimbursed where the elected member can provide satisfactory evidence that the expense was not related to their election campaign.

5.4.5 Where an elected member is uncertain whether a proposed activity is permissible, they must seek written advice from the CEO before proceeding.

5.5 Council Employee Conduct during the Election

5.5.1 Council employees must not undertake any activity that may influence the outcome of the election, except where the activity relates to the election process itself and has been specifically authorized in writing by the CEO.

5.5.2 Public consultation activities during the caretaker period may only take place where there is a statutory requirement to do so.

5.5.3 Council employees must not assist any candidate with their election campaign at any time, including outside working hours, unless the assistance is equally available to all candidates.

5.5.4 Where a Council employee becomes aware that the use of Council resources may be conferring an advantage on a particular candidate, they must immediately notify the CEO. The CEO must investigate and take prompt remedial action where confirmed.

5.5.5 Council employees who are themselves candidates must ensure their candidacy does not create a conflict with their employment obligations. Any such conflict must be disclosed to the CEO at the earliest opportunity.

5.6 ICAC Reporting Obligations

5.6.1 Where the CEO or any Council employee becomes aware of conduct during the caretaker period that may amount to corrupt conduct as defined in the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT), the CEO must report the matter to the ICAC in accordance with mandatory reporting obligations.

5.6.2 Conduct that may trigger a mandatory ICAC report includes the use of Council resources to advantage a candidate, the making of a designated decision with intent to influence the election outcome, or the misuse of Council information for campaign purposes.

5.7 Post-Election Transition

5.7.1 As soon as the caretaker period ends, the CEO must prepare a transition briefing for the incoming Council, including a summary of any decisions made during the caretaker period and matters requiring early attention.

5.7.2 The CEO must present a report at the first meeting of the incoming Council setting out all actions taken during the caretaker period, including any allowable decisions made, and invite the Council to note the report.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Council (Full Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refrain from making designated decisions during the caretaker period. Ensure all resolutions passed during the caretaker period are lawful and within permitted categories. Support a culture of electoral integrity throughout the caretaker period.
Principal Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model the conduct expected of all elected members during the caretaker period. Decline to preside over or participate in any decision that may constitute a designated decision. Refer any uncertain matters to the CEO for legal advice before proceeding.
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue written notice to all elected members and Council staff prior to the commencement of the caretaker period. Advise Council and staff on the application of this policy throughout the caretaker period. Seek legal advice before any potentially designated decision is made. Ensure Council's day-to-day service delivery continues without interruption during the caretaker period. Manage post-election transition arrangements and ensure continuity of operations. Report any breach of this policy to Council and, where required, to the ICAC.
All Council Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out duties in accordance with this policy throughout the caretaker period.

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refrain from assisting any candidate with their election campaign at any time.• Report any suspected breach of this policy to the CEO immediately. |
|--|---|

7. Compliance and Monitoring

7.1 Policy Compliance

Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all elected members and Council employees during the caretaker period. A breach may constitute a breach of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and may result in disciplinary action, electoral complaints, or referral to the ICAC.

7.2 Monitoring

The CEO is responsible for monitoring compliance throughout the caretaker period. Any suspected breach must be investigated promptly. Where confirmed, the CEO must take immediate remedial action and report the matter to Council at the earliest practicable opportunity.

7.3 Policy Review

This policy must be reviewed by the incoming Council at its first meeting following each general election and whenever there are relevant changes to the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) or to electoral legislation.

8. Associated Documents

- Procedures for Council and Council Committee Meetings Policy (GOV-MTG-001)
- Code of Conduct for Elected and Committee Members (GOV-COC-001)
- Election of Principal Member Policy (GOV-EPM-001)
- Fraud and Corruption Protection Policy (GOV-FCP-001)

9. References and Legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) – Section 161
- Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT)
- Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT)

10. Review History

Date Approved	Approved By	Resolution No.	Next Review
18/10/2016	Council – Res. 2016/091 Moved: VP Irvine; Seconded: Cr Richmond	2016/091	Next Council Election
19/11/2019	Council – Res. 2019/544 Moved: Cr Vaughan; Seconded: Cr White	2019/544	Next Council Term
17/02/2021	Council – Res. 2021/37 Moved: Cr Vaughan; Seconded: VP Dyer	2021/37	Next Council Term
18/01/2022	Council – Res. 2022/013 Moved: VP Dyer; Seconded: Cr McKenzie	2022/013	Next Council Term
23/06/2025	Council – Res.		Prior to end of Next Council Term
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	

AUDIT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT), IIA standards and NT ICAC Guidelines.



Policy No.	GOV-AC-01	Version	4.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next term of Council
LG Act 2019 Ref.	Part 5.2; Accounting Regs s.10	Applies To	Audit Committee members, CEO, Council

1. Purpose

In plain terms: The Audit Committee is a small group of independent people who check that the council is managing public money properly, following the law, and addressing risks before they become problems. They are not there to run the council — they are there to provide an extra set of experienced eyes on behalf of the community.

These Terms of Reference establish the Audit Committee (the Committee) for Wagait Shire Council. The Committee exists to provide independent, objective oversight of the council's financial management, internal controls, risk framework, and compliance obligations, giving both the Council and the community confidence that public resources are managed with integrity and accountability.

Best practice alignment: This policy is informed by the NT Local Government Accounting Regulations, the ACLG Good Governance Guide, and the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) standards for audit committee effectiveness. Councils are encouraged to review these Terms of Reference at each term of council and following any material change in risk or governance arrangements.

2. Establishment

The Committee is established as an advisory committee to the Council pursuant to Part 5.2 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and Section 10(3) of the Local Government (Accounting) Regulations. It

operates as an advisory body only and has no power or authority to override, amend or contradict Council decisions or policies.

3. Scope

The Committee provides independent advice and assistance to the Wagait Shire Council and the Chief Executive Officer on:

- the effectiveness of internal control processes across the council's financial and corporate governance functions;
- compliance with applicable legislative and regulatory requirements;
- the integrity and quality of financial reporting and public accountability documents;
- risk management frameworks and their alignment with the council's Strategic Risk Framework; and
- the performance and independence of internal and external audit functions.

4. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of these Terms of Reference:

Term	Definition
Audit Committee	An advisory committee established by the Council to provide independent oversight of financial management, internal controls, risk, compliance, and governance. It has no power to override Council decisions.
Independent Member	A person appointed to the Committee who is not an elected councillor or council employee, and who brings external expertise in governance, finance, risk management or local government operations.
Internal Audit	A systematic, objective review of the council's internal controls, processes and risk management practices, conducted by qualified personnel independent of the area being reviewed. The internal auditor reports functionally to the Audit Committee.
External Audit	The independent statutory audit of the council's annual financial statements conducted by a registered auditor appointed under the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
Quorum	The minimum number of Committee members required for a meeting to proceed. For this Committee, a quorum is three members.
Conflict of Interest	A situation in which a Committee member's personal, financial or other interests may compromise, or appear to compromise, their ability to act impartially in their Committee role.
Work Plan	A documented schedule of the Committee's planned activities across the short, medium and long term, approved at the first meeting of each year and reviewed annually.

Terms of Reference (ToR)	The governing document that sets out the Committee's purpose, composition, authority, responsibilities, and operating procedures.
Internal Audit Charter	A formal document that defines the internal audit function's purpose, authority, and responsibility. It confirms the internal auditor's functional reporting line to the Audit Committee and independence from management.
Auditor Independence	The freedom of the external or internal auditor from conditions that could compromise their ability to express an objective opinion. The Committee is responsible for monitoring and safeguarding auditor independence.

5. Authority

Having due regard to legal and confidentiality obligations, the Committee is authorised, within the scope of its role and responsibilities, to:

- obtain any information it reasonably requires from any council employee or external party;
- meet with and discuss any matters directly with the external auditor, internal auditor, or other external advisors;
- request, through the Chief Executive Officer, the attendance of any council employee at Committee meetings; and
- obtain independent external legal, financial or other professional advice as considered necessary to carry out its responsibilities.

Important: All requests for information or attendance at meetings must be made in good faith and within the lawful scope of the Committee's role. The Committee does not have executive authority over staff or operations.

6. Membership and Tenure

The Committee comprises five members as set out in the table below. Membership is designed to ensure a balance of independence, relevant expertise, and democratic accountability.

Role	No.	Appointment basis	Key requirements
Chair (Independent)	1	External appointment	Must be independent. Strong governance or financial management background. Chairs all meetings and holds a casting vote in the event of a tie.
Independent Community Members	2	External appointment	Should have local government, accounting, risk management or significant business experience. Independent of council operations.
Councillors	2	Council appointment (1-year term)	Appointed by Council resolution. Cease membership if no longer an elected member of Council.

CEO (non-voting attendee)	1	Ex officio	Attends all meetings. Provides operational information and ensures secretariat support. Not a member; holds no voting rights.
Office Manager (non-voting attendee)	1	Ex officio	Attends meetings to support the CEO and secretariat function. Not a member; holds no voting rights.

6.1 Remuneration

Remuneration and reasonable expense reimbursement for independent members is determined by Council resolution and reviewed at the beginning of each Council term. Independent members serve on this basis and are not council employees. Councillor members serve in a voluntary capacity as part of their elected role.

6.2 Selection criteria for independent members

The selection process for independent member appointments should assess applicants against the following factors:

- demonstrated understanding of local government and the operating environment in which councils function;
- knowledge and practical experience in governance, financial management or risk management practices;
- capacity to dedicate adequate time to Committee activities, including meeting preparation and attendance;
- depth of knowledge of relevant regulatory and legislative requirements; and
- ability to maintain constructive professional relationships with staff, elected members and other stakeholders.

6.3 Tenure and cessation

Independent member appointments are for the term of Council. Councillor member appointments are for a period of one year, renewable by Council resolution. A member ceases to hold their position on the Committee if they are no longer an elected member of the Council, or if the Council resolves to end their appointment.

6.4 Resignation and removal of independent members

An independent member who wishes to resign from the Committee must provide written notice to the Chair and the CEO. The Chair will notify the Council, and the Council will initiate the process for appointing a replacement as soon as practicable to avoid the Committee becoming inquorate.

An independent member may be removed by the Council where they have:

- failed to attend three or more consecutive meetings without an approved leave of absence;

- breached their confidentiality obligations under Section 75 of the LG Act 2019 (NT);
- failed to declare a material conflict of interest; or
- otherwise acted in a manner inconsistent with the responsibilities of the role.

Prior to any removal, the member will be given the opportunity to respond to the Council's concerns. Any vacancy created by a resignation or removal will be filled within 60 days by Council resolution to ensure the Committee remains operational.

7. Voting rights

Each Committee member has an equal voting right on all matters considered by the Committee. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson is entitled to exercise a casting vote.

The Chief Executive Officer and Office Manager attend meetings in a support capacity and are not entitled to vote.

8. Roles and responsibilities

The following table sets out the responsibilities of each key role in supporting the effective operation of the Audit Committee.

Role	Responsibilities
Council	Appoint Committee members; receive and consider Committee reports; approve changes to ToR; support a culture of accountability and independent oversight.
Audit Committee Chair	Lead all Committee meetings; set the agenda with the CEO; cast a deciding vote in the event of a tie; initiate the biennial performance review; escalate unresolved matters to the Council President where necessary.
Independent Members	Provide independent, objective advice on governance, financial management and risk; participate actively; sign the annual declaration; declare conflicts of interest promptly.
Councillor Members	Represent the Council's governance interests; participate actively; sign the annual declaration; declare conflicts of interest promptly; comply with all confidentiality obligations.
Chief Executive Officer	Ensure secretariat support; draft the Work Plan; provide accurate and timely information; implement agreed recommendations within agreed timeframes; report progress to the Committee.
Internal Auditor	Carry out audit activities as directed by the Work Plan; report findings and recommendations functionally to the Committee; maintain independence from operational management.

External Auditor	Conduct the statutory annual audit; meet with the Committee at least once per year; report findings and management letters to the Committee; maintain independence in accordance with APES 110.
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9. Key functions

The Committee carries out the following functions in fulfilling its advisory role to the Council and CEO:

9.1 Internal audit oversight

- Oversee the internal audit function, including the development of audit programs conducted by appropriately qualified personnel.
- Monitor audit outcomes and track the implementation of internal audit recommendations.
- Assess the adequacy of internal audit scope and coverage relative to identified risks.

The internal auditor reports functionally to the Audit Committee to preserve independence from operational management. The Committee will review and approve the Internal Audit Charter annually, confirming the internal auditor's authority, independence, and reporting obligations.

Good practice: Functional reporting means the Audit Committee sets the internal auditor's priorities and receives their reports directly, even if the auditor is administratively managed by the CEO. This separation is fundamental to the independence and credibility of the internal audit function.

9.2 Financial reporting

- Review the quality of annual financial statements and other public accountability documents prior to their adoption by Council.
- Review draft Annual Reports and quarterly budget position reports.
- Provide advice on financial reporting practices and any emerging issues that may affect the reliability or integrity of financial statements.

9.3 External audit

- Review management's responses to external audit recommendations and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
- Meet with the external auditor at least once per year to receive direct feedback on key compliance issues and to provide feedback on the auditor's performance.
- Advise Council on the appointment, reappointment or replacement of external auditors, having regard to independence, quality, and tenure.

The Committee is responsible for monitoring external auditor independence. As part of the annual review of external audit arrangements, the Committee will consider auditor tenure, whether rotation of

the lead auditor is appropriate, and any circumstances that could compromise independence under APES 110 (Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants).

Auditor independence note: Best practice recommends that councils consider rotating the lead external audit partner after five years of continuous service, and the audit firm after ten years. The Committee should document its assessment of auditor independence annually and table the outcome at the next Council meeting.

9.4 Risk and compliance

- Review the effectiveness of the Fraud Protection Plan established by the Chief Executive Officer pursuant to Section 10(2) of the Local Government (Accounting) Regulations.
- Review the council's risk management framework and provide advice on its alignment with legislative requirements and operational risks.
- Review and provide advice on Council's finance, governance and employment policies.

Operational note: The Committee should receive a standing report at each meeting on the status of open audit recommendations and risk register updates. This ensures accountability is maintained between meetings rather than reviewed only annually.

10. Reporting

The Committee reports regularly on its operations and activities to ensure transparency and accountability. Reporting includes:

- a summary of key issues and outcomes arising from each Committee meeting, provided to Council promptly after each meeting;
- an annual assessment of the council's control and compliance framework, together with a summary of the work the Committee performed during the preceding year;
- a governance health assessment statement, signed off by the Committee Chair, included in the council's Annual Report; and
- information in the council's Annual Report covering the number of meetings held, Committee membership, and principal activities including reviews and audits completed.

In accordance with Section 67(4) of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the Council will publish on its website the Committee's membership, these Terms of Reference, and draft minutes of meetings.

Where the Committee considers that agreed recommendations are not being implemented within agreed timeframes, the Chair may escalate the matter directly to the Council President, outside the normal reporting cycle, to ensure timely resolution.

11. Work Plan

The CEO will draft the Work Plan in consultation with the Chair prior to the first meeting of each year. The Committee will formally approve the Work Plan at the first meeting, setting out the activities to be carried out across the short, medium and long term. The Work Plan is reviewed annually as part of the Terms of Reference review.

Timeframe	Frequency	Activities
Short term	<i>Annually</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Audit Committee Work Plan for the coming year at the first meeting. • Review quarterly budget position reports. • Review draft Annual Financial Statements prior to adoption by Council. • Review draft Annual Report and public accountability documents. • Meet with external and internal auditors to receive feedback on compliance issues and performance. • Review management responses to external audit recommendations and monitor implementation. • Review effectiveness of the Fraud Protection Plan (per Accounting Regs s.10(2)). • Review the Internal Audit Charter and confirm internal auditor independence. • Review auditor independence, tenure and rotation considerations.
Medium term	<i>During each term of Council</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and provide advice on Council's finance, governance and employment policies. • Make recommendations on new policies where identified. • Review the Audit Committee Terms of Reference and Work Plan. • Advise Council on appointment, reappointment or replacement of external auditors. • Assess adequacy of audit scope and coverage. • Conduct biennial Committee performance review.
Long term	<i>As required, based on legislative changes, critical incidents or unacceptable risk</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Asset Plans and long-term asset management strategy. • Conduct Critical Risk Analysis and report findings to Council. • Consider emerging legislative or regulatory changes affecting the council's compliance obligations.

12. Meetings

The Committee will meet up to four times per year. A special meeting may also be called to review the Council's Annual Report, including the audited financial statements, outside the regular meeting schedule.

A forward meeting plan, including dates and agenda items, will be agreed by the Committee at the beginning of each year and will address the items listed in the Work Plan. Meeting dates and times will be set to suit the majority of members.

A quorum consists of a majority of Committee members, being three members. Meetings cannot proceed without a quorum.

12.1 Attendance

Members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings. A member who is unable to attend a meeting must notify the Chair and the CEO in advance and seek a leave of absence. A member who is absent from three or more consecutive meetings without an approved leave of absence may be subject to a membership review under Section 6.4.

Members may participate in meetings by teleconference or videoconference where in-person attendance is not practicable, provided a quorum of members physically present or connected remotely is maintained. Remote participation counts toward attendance and quorum.

Operational note: Agenda papers and supporting documentation should be distributed at least three working days before each meeting to allow members adequate time for preparation. Minutes should be provided to all members within three working days of the meeting.

13. Secretariat

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring that adequate secretarial support is provided to the Committee. The Secretariat will:

- prepare and distribute the agenda and supporting documentation at least three working days prior to each meeting;
- record accurate minutes of each meeting and distribute them to all Committee members within three working days of the meeting; and
- maintain a register of Committee decisions, actions and recommendations, and report on their status at each subsequent meeting.

The standard meeting agenda template at Appendix A should be used to ensure consistent meeting structure and coverage of standing items.

14. Conflict of interest

Pursuant to Section 74(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), Committee members must declare any conflict of interest at the start of each meeting or before discussion of the relevant agenda item. All declared conflicts of interest must be recorded in the minutes.

If a member or observer at a Committee meeting is considered to have a real or perceived conflict of interest, they must be excused from Committee discussions on the matter where the conflict exists. This applies equally to non-voting attendees.

Good practice: Members should err on the side of disclosure. Declaring an interest does not imply wrongdoing, and the Committee Chair has authority to determine whether a declared interest requires the member to step out of a discussion.

15. Confidentiality and proper use of information

Committee members will from time to time receive and discuss confidential reports and information. Members are required to treat all such information with care and discretion.

Section 75 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) sets out the penalties applicable to individuals who disclose confidential information acquired as a member of a Council committee. Section 76 of the same Act provides that a person who makes improper use of information acquired as a member of a Council committee is guilty of an offence.

Members should be aware that their obligations of confidentiality continue after their appointment ends.

All members are required to sign a Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Declaration at the time of their appointment, and annually thereafter. The signed declaration is to be retained by the CEO as part of the Committee's governance records. The self-assessment checklist at Appendix B supports this annual declaration process.

16. Due diligence and induction

All proposed and new members of the Committee are entitled to receive relevant background information and briefings prior to, or promptly following, their appointment. The CEO is responsible for coordinating induction arrangements, which should include:

- an overview of the council's governance framework, financial position and key risks;

- a briefing on the Committee's current Work Plan and any outstanding audit recommendations;
- copies of recent Committee minutes, annual financial statements and audit reports;
- a copy of the Internal Audit Charter and an introduction to the internal and external auditors; and
- information on relevant legislative obligations, including conflict of interest, confidentiality requirements, and the annual declaration process.

17. Performance review

The Chair of the Committee and the Chief Executive Officer will initiate a review of the Committee's performance at least once every two years. The review will be conducted on an internal assessment basis with input from the Council, Chief Executive Officer, internal and external auditors, and any other relevant stakeholders.

The review will assess the Committee's performance against the criteria set out in the table below. The findings will be reported to the Council, along with any recommended changes to the Committee's composition, Terms of Reference or operating procedures.

Performance criterion	Target / measure	Accountability
Meeting attendance rate	At least 75% attendance by each member across the year	Chair to review; membership implications if not met
Work Plan completion	All short-term activities completed within the year	Reported in Annual Report
Timeliness of reporting to Council	Meeting summaries provided to Council within 2 weeks of each meeting	Secretariat tracks and reports
Implementation of audit recommendations	80% of agreed recommendations closed within agreed timeframes	Standing agenda item; escalation to President if overdue
Stakeholder satisfaction	Positive feedback from Council, CEO, internal and external auditors	Assessed as part of biennial review

Members are encouraged to complete the annual self-assessment checklist at Appendix B as part of their preparation for the performance review.

18. Review of these Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference and the accompanying Work Plan will be reviewed at least every three years by the Committee. The Committee will recommend any substantive changes to the Council for consideration and adoption. Reviews may also be triggered earlier by a significant change in legislation, governance requirements, or council operations.

19. Associated documents

- GOV-FCP-01 Fraud and Corruption Protection Policy
- GOV-RM-01 Risk Management Policy
- GOV-COC-01 Code of Conduct – Council Members
- GOV-DEL-01 Delegations Manual
- Accounting and Policy Manual (internal)
- Internal Audit Charter (internal, maintained by CEO and reviewed annually by the Committee)
- Internal Audit Work Plan (internal, maintained by CEO)
- Annual Financial Statements
- Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Declaration Form (internal)

20. References and legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT)
- Local Government (Accounting) Regulations (NT)
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT)
- Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT)
- Information Act 2002 (NT)
- APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board)
- Australian Standard AS 8001-2008 Fraud and Corruption Control
- Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) – Audit Committee Guidance and International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government

21. Review history

Date approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Next review
19/05/2015	Council – Res. 2015/185 Moved: Pres P Clee Seconded: Cr A Richmond Vote: AIF	2015/185	Next Council election
26/06/2018	Council – Res. 2018/198 Moved: Cr S Gamble Seconded: VP T McIntyre Vote: AIF	2018/198	26/06/2019
15/10/2019	Council – Res. 2019/503 Moved: Pres P Clee Seconded: Cr N White Vote: Carried	2019/503	October 2022



April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	Next term of Council
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Appendix A: Standard meeting agenda template

The following standard agenda structure should be used for all scheduled meetings of the Audit Committee. The Secretariat may add items to reflect current Work Plan priorities and any matters referred by the Council or CEO.

WAGAIT SHIRE COUNCIL – AUDIT COMMITTEE

Meeting Agenda | [Date] | [Time] | [Location / Videoconference Link]

Item	Agenda item	Presenter	Time
1	Welcome and apologies	Chair	5 min
2	Declarations of conflict of interest	All members	5 min
3	Confirmation of previous minutes	All members	5 min
4	Open audit actions and recommendation register	CEO / Internal Auditor	10 min
5	Financial report and budget position update	CEO / Finance Manager	15 min
6	Internal audit update (including findings and recommendations)	Internal Auditor	20 min
7	External audit update (where applicable)	External Auditor / CEO	15 min
8	Risk register and Fraud Protection Plan update	CEO	10 min
9	Policy and governance matters	CEO	10 min
10	Work Plan review and upcoming activities	Chair / CEO	10 min
11	Other business	All members	5 min
12	Date and time of next meeting	Chair	5 min

Appendix B: Annual member self-assessment checklist

Each Committee member is asked to complete this checklist annually, in the month prior to the biennial performance review, or at the request of the Chair. Completed checklists are treated as confidential and held by the CEO. The purpose is to support individual reflection and strengthen the overall performance of the Committee.

Member name: _____ Role: _____ Year: _____

Self-assessment statement	Yes	Partly	No
Preparation and engagement			
I read all agenda papers and supporting documents before each meeting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I come to meetings with questions or observations prepared.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I complete any actions assigned to me between meetings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Independence and objectivity			
I declared all conflicts of interest promptly and accurately.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have not allowed personal relationships or interests to influence my Committee contributions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have maintained confidentiality of all Committee information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contribution and participation			
I actively contributed to discussions at each meeting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I asked constructive questions of management and auditors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I supported the Chair in maintaining meeting focus and outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge and skills			
My knowledge of local government governance and finance remains current.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have identified any skills gaps and raised them with the Chair.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I completed the induction or refresher briefing where applicable.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Overall comments and observations (optional):



Signature: _____ Date: _____

RATES AND CHARGES POLICY

Policy | Governance / Finance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT) and NT rating guidelines.



Policy No.	GOV-RC-01	Version	5.0
Category	Governance / Finance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next term of Council
LG Act 2019 Ref.	Chapter 11; Part 11.9	Applies To	All rateable properties within the Wagait Shire

1. Purpose

In plain terms: Rates are a tax the Council collects from all property owners in the Wagait Shire to fund local services and infrastructure. This policy explains how rates are calculated and charged, when they are due, and what happens if you cannot pay on time. If you are struggling to pay, contact the Council as early as possible — there are options available to help.

This policy sets out Wagait Shire Council's approach to the levying and application of rates and charges, and the recovery of monies owing to the Council in a timely, fair, and efficient manner. It provides clear guidance to ratepayers on their obligations and to Council officers on the procedures and powers available in administering the rating system.

Best practice alignment: This policy is informed by Chapter 11 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the ACLG Good Governance Guide, and the NT Local Government Rating Guidelines. It is designed to be transparent, equitable, and operationally efficient for a small shire council.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all rateable properties within the Wagait Shire, and to all ratepayers, property owners, and debtors with financial obligations to the Council under the rating system. It applies equally to current year rates and charges and to arrears from prior years.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
The Act	Local Government Act 2019 (NT)
The Regulations	Local Government (General) Regulations (NT)
Rateable property	Land or property within the Wagait Shire on which rates are levied in accordance with Chapter 11 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
Rates	A form of taxation levied by the Council on rateable properties. Rates are not a fee for service and are not linked to the specific services, infrastructure or facilities used by any individual property owner.
Charges	Fees levied by the Council for specific services provided to individual properties or ratepayers, in addition to general rates.
Differential rates	Rates set at different levels for different categories of rateable land, such as residential, commercial, industrial or vacant land, as permitted under Chapter 11 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
Arrears	Rates or charges from a prior financial year that remain unpaid after the due date.
Instalment plan	A formal arrangement agreed between the Council and a ratepayer for the payment of outstanding rates or charges by periodic payments over an agreed period.
Undue hardship	A circumstance in which the requirement to pay rates or charges in full by the due date would cause a ratepayer genuine financial difficulty, assessed on a case-by-case basis by the CEO.
Statutory charge	A charge registered against a property title under the LG Act 2019 (NT) to secure unpaid rates or charges. It takes priority over most other encumbrances on the title.
Pensioner concession	A rebate on annual rates and charges available to eligible ratepayers under the NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme, administered by the NT Department of Health.
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of Wagait Shire Council.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The following table sets out the key responsibilities for administering this policy:

Role	Responsibilities
Council	Set the annual rates and charges in accordance with Chapter 11 of the LG Act 2019 (NT); adopt the annual budget; approve sale of land for rate

	arrears by resolution; approve debt write-offs above the CEO threshold; receive and consider quarterly rates recovery reports.
Chief Executive Officer	Administer the rates and charges system; negotiate extended payment terms and instalment arrangements; authorise recovery and legal action; approve debt write-offs within delegated authority; delegate rating administration functions to appropriate staff; report quarterly to Council on rates recovery performance.
Finance Manager	Issue rates notices and reminder letters within required timeframes; maintain accurate records of all ratepayer accounts; process instalment arrangements; manage relationships with debt collection agencies; administer the statutory charge registration process; maintain the standard rates notice template.
All ratepayers	Pay rates and charges by the due dates; contact Council promptly if unable to meet obligations; keep contact details up to date to ensure receipt of rates notices.

5. Rating principles

Rates are a system of taxation and are not reflective of the services, infrastructure or facilities used by any individual property owner or resident. The Council will be guided by the following core principles in making rates and charges:

Transparency	Equity	Simplicity	Flexibility
Making clear how rates and charges are calculated and what ratepayers' obligations are.	Taking account of different levels of capacity to pay within the local community.	Maintaining a rating regime that is straightforward and inexpensive to administer.	Accommodating changes in the local economy and individual ratepayer circumstances where appropriate.

5.1 Levying rates

In levying rates, the Council will make clear its responsibilities in implementing the rating system. The levying process will be kept simple and inexpensive to administer. Flexible payment arrangements will be available to ratepayers who demonstrate a lower capacity to pay.

The Council will set rates annually as part of the budget process in accordance with Chapter 11 of the LG Act 2019 (NT). The annual rates resolution will specify the rate in the dollar applicable to each category of rateable land.

Transparency note: The annual rates resolution, including the basis for calculating rates for each land category, will be published on the council's website and made available to ratepayers on request.

5.2 Recovering rates

The Council will exercise its rate recovery powers to reduce the overall rate burden on all ratepayers. Transparency is fundamental to the recovery process: the Council will make clear the obligations of individual ratepayers and the processes it uses in assisting them to meet those obligations.

The Council recognises that some ratepayers may face genuine financial difficulty. Early contact with the Council is encouraged so that appropriate arrangements can be made before debts escalate.

5.3 Chief Executive Officer delegation

The Council delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the ability to negotiate extended payment terms of up to two years with ratepayers, where, in the CEO's assessment, immediate payment would cause the ratepayer undue hardship. Any such arrangement must be documented and reported to Council at the next available meeting.

This delegation is exercised in accordance with the Council's Delegations Manual (GOV-DEL-01). Where any inconsistency exists between this policy and the Delegations Manual, the Delegations Manual prevails.

Good governance note: The CEO's exercise of this delegation should be guided by consistent, documented criteria for assessing undue hardship. A record of all extended payment arrangements must be maintained and available for audit review.

5.4 Rating categories and differential rates

In accordance with Chapter 11 of the LG Act 2019 (NT), the Council may levy differential rates on different categories of rateable land. The categories of rateable land within the Wagait Shire, and the basis for rating each category, are set out in the table below. The actual rate in the dollar for each category is determined by the Council each year in the annual rates resolution.

Land category	Description	Rating basis
Residential	All land used or zoned for residential purposes, including vacant residential lots.	Standard general rate in the dollar applied to unimproved capital value.
Commercial / Industrial	All land used or zoned for commercial, retail, industrial or business purposes.	Rate in the dollar as determined by Council in the annual rates resolution. May be set at a differential to the residential rate.
Other rateable land	Any rateable land not falling within the above categories, including rural, recreational or special use land.	Rate in the dollar as determined by Council in the annual rates resolution.

Legislative note: The Council must publish its rating methodology, including the categories of rateable land and the rate in the dollar for each category, in the annual rates notice and on the council's website. Ratepayers are entitled to know the basis on which their rates are calculated.

6. Rates notices

Council will send rates notices for each rateable allotment at least 28 days before payment falls due. Rates notices are issued in the last week of August each year, with the first payment (or payment in full) due in the last week of September.

Ratepayers may pay current year rates by four equal instalments during the financial year. All arrears from previous years must be paid in full before a ratepayer is eligible to pay current year rates by instalments.

Instalment	Due date	Notes
Instalment 1	30 September	First instalment or payment in full due.
Instalment 2	30 November	Second instalment due.
Instalment 3	31 January	Third instalment due.
Instalment 4	31 March	Fourth and final instalment due. All current year rates fully paid by this date.

Important: Ratepayers are responsible for ensuring the Council holds their current postal and contact details. If a rates notice is not received, the ratepayer should contact the Council promptly. Non-receipt of a notice does not relieve a ratepayer of their obligation to pay rates by the due date, except as provided in Section 7.2 of this policy.

6.1 Payment methods

The Council offers the following payment methods for rates and charges:

- online via the Council's website payment portal;
- BPAY (biller code published on the rates notice and the Council's website);
- direct bank transfer to the Council's nominated account (details on the rates notice);
- in person at the Council offices during business hours; and
- by cheque or money order made payable to Wagait Shire Council.

Payment method details, including the BPAY biller code and bank account details, are published on each rates notice and on the Council's website. Ratepayers in remote locations are encouraged to use online or BPAY payment options to avoid postal delays.

7. Interest on unpaid rates

7.1 Accrual of interest

If rates or charges are not paid by the due date, interest accrues daily on the unpaid amount at the rate determined by the Council in accordance with the LG Act 2019 (NT). The applicable interest rate will be published in the annual rates notice and on the council's website.

Best practice: Councils are encouraged to set an interest rate that is sufficient to incentivise timely payment, while not being so punitive as to compound genuine hardship cases. The rate should be reviewed annually as part of the budget process.

7.2 Reduction of interest

Where a rates notice was not received by the ratepayer through no fault of their own, for example due to a postal error or an out-of-date address held by the Council, any interest that accrued during that period may be reduced or waived at the CEO's discretion. The ratepayer must notify the Council as soon as they become aware of the issue.

8. Pensioner and carer concession

Under the NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme, eligible ratepayers may receive a rebate on their annual rates and charges, provided they reside on the property subject of the claim. Concessions will be applied in accordance with the conditions set by the NT Department of Health.

Where an eligible ratepayer has not received their concession rebate because the NT Department of Health has not notified the Council of their eligibility, the ratepayer should contact the NT Department of Health directly to resolve the matter.

Council note: The Council does not administer the NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme. Eligibility, application, and payment of concessions are managed by the NT Department of Health. Ratepayers with queries about their concession entitlement should contact the NT Department of Health on 1800 777 704.

9. Rate recovery process

Ratepayers are expected to take responsibility for their Council debt obligations and to organise their financial affairs so that they can meet those obligations when required. If a ratepayer cannot meet their obligations on the due date, they are encouraged to contact the Council as early as possible to make appropriate arrangements before debts escalate.

Part 11.9 of the LG Act 2019 (NT) provides the Council with powers to recover rates that are levied and unpaid. Available remedies include recovery by court action and the sale of land. The Council will follow a structured, escalating recovery process as set out in the table below:

Timeline	Stage	What happens
Day 0	Rates notice issued	Council sends rates notice at least 28 days before payment falls due (last week of August). Payment due last week of September.
Day 58	First reminder letter	Issued 30 days after the 28-day notice period closes. Ratepayer given 14 days to pay in full or negotiate an instalment arrangement.
Day 102	Second reminder letter	Issued if debt remains unpaid 30 days after the first reminder. Demands payment of all outstanding balances. Advises that legal action may commence.
Day 132	Referral to CEO	If still unpaid 30 days after the second reminder, debt referred to CEO to authorise recovery action. May include debt collection agency or court proceedings.
6+ months	Statutory charge registered	If rates in arrears for at least 6 months, Council may apply to the Land Titles Office under s.171(1) of the Act to register a charge over the property.
3+ years	Sale of land proceedings	If unpaid for 3 or more years, statutory charge registered for at least 6 months, and no arrangement in place (or arrangement in default), Council may initiate sale proceedings under s.173 of the Act following a Council resolution.

9.1 First and second reminder letters

The Council will issue a first reminder letter to all property owners with overdue rates 30 days after the close of the 28-day rates notice period. The letter will give the ratepayer 14 days to either pay the outstanding amount in full, including any interest that has accrued, or to contact the Council to negotiate an instalment arrangement.

If the debt remains unpaid more than 30 days after the first reminder letter, a second reminder letter will be issued requiring payment of all outstanding balances, including arrears, interest, and charges. The letter will advise the ratepayer that legal action may commence if payment is not received.

Reminder letters will not be sent to property owners where a payment arrangement has already been negotiated and is being maintained.

9.2 Legal action

Where an account remains outstanding 30 days after the second reminder letter, the debt will be referred to the CEO to authorise recovery action. The method of recovery will be selected on the basis of what is most beneficial to the Council, having regard to the size and nature of the debt. Recovery options include:

- referral to a registered debt collection agency;
- recovery through Small Claims Court proceedings; or
- recovery through Magistrates Court proceedings.

Once legal action has commenced, payment in full is taken to include the original debt, all accrued interest, and any legal costs incurred by the Council in pursuing the debt.

After rates have been in arrears for at least six months, the Council may apply to the Land Titles Office under Section 171(1) of the LG Act 2019 (NT) to register a statutory charge over the property. The statutory charge secures the Council's debt and takes priority over most other encumbrances on the title.

9.3 Alternative and instalment arrangements

At the discretion of the CEO, the Council may accept alternative arrangements for the payment of unpaid rates on a case-by-case basis. The CEO may approve instalment plans for property owners based on their individual circumstances and merits.

All instalment plans must:

- have the effect of liquidating the debt in full by no later than the end of the current financial year, unless an extended arrangement has been approved under the CEO's delegation at Section 5.3;
- provide for interest to continue to accrue on any overdue amounts subject to the plan; and
- not attract any premium or additional charge for paying by instalments.

Operational note: All instalment arrangements must be documented in writing and signed by both the ratepayer and an authorised council officer. A copy of the arrangement must be retained on the ratepayer's account file for audit purposes.

9.4 Sale of land for rate arrears

Where rates remain unpaid for three years or more, a statutory charge has been registered for at least the last six months, and no payment arrangement exists or any existing arrangement is in default, the Council may commence proceedings to sell the property under Section 173 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).

Sale proceedings may only be initiated following the tabling of a written report to the Council and the passing of a Council resolution to initiate the sale. The Council must give the property owner written notice of the proposed sale and a reasonable opportunity to remedy the arrears before the sale proceeds.

Important: Sale of land for rate arrears is a remedy of last resort. The Council should exhaust all other recovery options, including instalment arrangements and extended payment terms, before initiating sale proceedings. All steps taken prior to the sale resolution must be documented.

9.5 Write-off of irrecoverable debts

Where a rates debt is considered to be irrecoverable, the following write-off provisions apply:

- The CEO may approve the write-off of debts of \$500 or less where the cost of recovery is assessed to exceed the amount of the debt, or where the debt is demonstrably irrecoverable (for example, where the property owner is deceased with no estate, or the property has been destroyed).
- Debts above \$500 may only be written off by Council resolution, following a report from the CEO outlining the circumstances and the basis for the write-off recommendation.

All write-offs, regardless of amount, must be reported to the Council at the next ordinary meeting following the write-off decision. The Finance Manager must maintain a register of all debts written off, available for audit review.

Good governance note: A write-off does not extinguish the debt at law. If circumstances change and the debt becomes recoverable, the Council may recommence recovery action. The write-off register should be reviewed annually to identify any accounts where recovery may again be possible.

10. Rates objections and reviews

A ratepayer who believes their rates assessment is incorrect may lodge a formal objection with the Council. The objection process is designed to be simple, accessible, and resolved in a timely manner.

10.1 Grounds for objection

A ratepayer may formally object to their rates assessment on the following grounds:

- the land has been incorrectly classified (for example, classified as commercial when it is residential);
- the unimproved capital value used to calculate rates is incorrect;
- the ratepayer believes they are not liable to pay rates on the property (for example, the property is exempt under the LG Act 2019 (NT)); or
- an administrative error has been made in the calculation or issue of the rates notice.

10.2 Lodging an objection

Objections must be lodged in writing with the CEO within 60 days of the date of the rates notice to which the objection relates. The written objection must clearly state:

- the property to which the objection relates;

- the specific grounds for the objection; and
- any supporting evidence the ratepayer wishes to provide.

Lodging an objection does not suspend the obligation to pay rates by the due date. Where a ratepayer has lodged a valid objection, the Council may, at the CEO's discretion, defer the disputed portion of the rates pending resolution of the objection.

10.3 Resolution of objections

The CEO will acknowledge receipt of the objection within 10 business days and provide a written determination within 30 business days of receipt, or such longer period as is reasonably required in complex cases. The determination will state the outcome and the reasons for the decision.

If the ratepayer is not satisfied with the CEO's determination, the matter may be escalated to the Council for consideration at the next ordinary Council meeting. If still unresolved, the ratepayer may seek review through the relevant NT administrative review tribunal.

Transparency note: The Council is committed to resolving all rates objections fairly and promptly. A summary of all objections received and their outcomes will be included in the annual report on rates recovery performance provided to the Audit Committee.

11. Hardship provisions

The Council recognises that ratepayers may from time to time experience genuine financial hardship that affects their ability to pay rates and charges on time. The following provisions are available to assist ratepayers in hardship:

- payment by four instalments (Section 6);
- negotiation of a customised instalment plan (Section 9.3);
- extended payment terms of up to two years negotiated by the CEO (Section 5.3);
- reduction or waiver of interest where a rates notice was not received through no fault of the ratepayer (Section 7.2); and
- the NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme rebate for eligible ratepayers (Section 8).

Ratepayers experiencing hardship are strongly encouraged to contact the Council before their rates become overdue. Early contact allows the Council to tailor an arrangement that is workable for the ratepayer while protecting the interests of all ratepayers.

Compassionate approach: The Council's preference is always to work with ratepayers to find a solution. Legal action and sale of land are actions of last resort, used only after genuine efforts to reach an agreement have been exhausted.

12. Privacy and use of ratepayer information

In administering this policy, the Council collects and holds personal information about ratepayers, including names, postal addresses, contact details, financial circumstances, and hardship information. This information is collected for the purpose of levying, administering, and recovering rates and charges.

All ratepayer personal information is collected, used, stored and disclosed in accordance with the Information Act 2002 (NT) and the Council's Privacy Policy. Personal information will not be disclosed to third parties except:

- as required by law (for example, to the Land Titles Office for the registration of a statutory charge);
- for the purpose of debt recovery (for example, to a registered debt collection agency or the courts); or
- with the consent of the ratepayer.

Ratepayers may access personal information the Council holds about them by contacting the Council's Privacy Officer. Requests to correct inaccurate information will be dealt with promptly.

Privacy compliance: The Council's collection and handling of ratepayer information is also subject to the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) where applicable. Ratepayers with privacy concerns should contact the Council in the first instance. Unresolved complaints may be directed to the NT Information Commissioner.

13. Reporting and monitoring

The CEO will provide a quarterly report to the Council on the status of rates collections and arrears, including:

- the total value of rates levied for the current financial year;
- the total value of rates collected to date;
- the total value of outstanding rates and charges, including arrears;
- the number and value of active instalment arrangements and extended payment plans;
- the number of accounts referred for legal action;
- the number and value of any statutory charges registered against properties; and
- any debts written off during the period, with the basis for each write-off.

Where a material issue arises between quarterly reporting cycles, such as a significant increase in arrears, a new statutory charge registration, or an account referred for sale of land proceedings, the CEO will provide an exception report to Council at the next available meeting.

The Audit Committee will receive an annual report on rates recovery performance as part of its review of the Council's financial management and internal controls.

14. Contact the Council

Ratepayers who have questions about their rates, need to update their contact details, or wish to discuss payment difficulties are encouraged to contact the Council directly:

Wagait Shire Council

Phone: [Insert council phone number]

Email: [Insert council email address]

Address: [Insert council office address]

Office hours: [Insert office hours]

Website: [Insert council website URL]

Contact details are reviewed and updated at each policy review cycle.

15. Associated documents

- Wagait Shire Council Long-Term Financial Plan
- Wagait Shire Council Annual Business Plan and Budget
- GOV-FCP-01 Fraud and Corruption Protection Policy
- GOV-AC-01 Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- GOV-DEL-01 Delegations Manual
- Annual Rates Resolution (adopted by Council each financial year)
- Council Privacy Policy

16. References and legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), Chapter 11 (Rating) and Part 11.9 (Recovery of Rates)
- Local Government (General) Regulations (NT)
- Local Government (Accounting) Regulations (NT)
- Information Act 2002 (NT)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme (NT Department of Health)
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government
- NT Local Government Rating Guidelines

17. Review history

Date approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Next review
16/06/2015	Council – Res. 2015/196 Moved: V Pres L Stones Seconded: Cr A Richmond Vote: AIF	2015/196	Next Council election
19/11/2019	Council – Res. 2019/545 Moved: Cr N White Seconded: Cr G Drake Vote: AIF	2019/545	Next term of Council
19/10/2021	Council – Res. 2021/186 Moved: VP Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Noeletta McKenzie Vote: AIF	2021/186	Next term of Council
17/10/2023	Council – Res. 2023/175 Moved: VP Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Sarah Smith Vote: AIF	2023/175	Next term of Council
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	Next term of Council, or earlier if required by legislative change, material change in financial position, or at the request of the Audit Committee

ELECTION OF PRINCIPAL MEMBER

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT).



Policy No.	GOV-EPM-001	Version	5.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next term of Council
LG Act 2019 Ref.	LG Act 2019 (NT) – Sections 60 and 61	Applies To	All workplace participants and council members

Best practice alignment: This policy is based on Sections 60 and 61 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the ACLG Good Governance Guide, and the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT). It is reviewed at the commencement of each new Council term to ensure it remains current and effective.

1. Purpose

In plain terms: After every Council election, the newly elected Councillors must choose a President or Mayor (the Principal Member) from among themselves. This policy explains how that election works, what happens if there is a tie, and how a mid-term vacancy is filled.

This policy establishes the process for the election of the Principal Member and Deputy Principal Member of Wagait Shire Council following each general election, in accordance with Sections 60 and 61 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). It ensures the process is conducted lawfully, transparently, and in a manner that commands the confidence of both Council and the community.

The election of the Principal Member is one of the most significant governance acts of an incoming Council. This policy provides a clear and consistent framework so that every incoming Council can conduct the election with confidence, efficiency, and integrity.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors of Wagait Shire Council and to the CEO in their role as administrator of the election process. It applies at the first meeting of the Council following each general election and at any time a vacancy in the role of Principal Member or Deputy Principal Member arises during a Council term.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
CEO	The Chief Executive Officer of Wagait Shire Council.
Declaration of Acceptance	A formal statement made by a newly elected Principal Member or Deputy Principal Member accepting the responsibilities of the office, as may be required by Council's standing procedures.
Deputy Principal Member	The Deputy President or Deputy Mayor of Wagait Shire Council, elected by Council to support the Principal Member and to preside in the Principal Member's absence.
General Election	A local government general election held in accordance with the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT).
Lot	A method of determining the outcome of a tied election by chance, as prescribed under Section 61 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
Mid-Term Vacancy	A vacancy in the office of Principal Member or Deputy Principal Member that arises during a Council term, other than at a general election.
Principal Member	The President or Mayor of Wagait Shire Council, elected by Council members from among their number at the first meeting following a general election.

4. Policy Statement

Wagait Shire Council recognises that the roles of Principal Member and Deputy Principal Member are critical to the effective leadership and governance of the Council. The election of these roles at the commencement of each Council term must be conducted with integrity, in strict compliance with the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), and in a manner that reflects Council's commitment to transparent and democratic governance.

Council is committed to ensuring that all newly elected Councillors have equal opportunity to nominate for these positions, that the election process is free from undue influence, and that the outcome is accepted and respected by all members.

5. Procedures

5.1 Basis for Filling the Office

5.1.1 Pursuant to Section 60 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), where election is the basis for filling the office of Principal Member, the office is to be filled at each general election cycle.

5.1.2 Pursuant to Section 61(1) of the Act, the Council must, at the first meeting of the Council after the general election, elect one of its members to be the Principal Member and another to be the Deputy Principal Member.

5.2 Conduct of the Election Meeting

5.2.1 The CEO must preside at the first meeting of the Council following a general election for the purposes of conducting the election. If the CEO is unable to preside, an acting CEO must be appointed to fulfil this function.

5.2.2 The CEO will call for nominations. Any member may nominate themselves or, with the nominee's prior and explicit consent, nominate another member.

5.2.3 Where only one nomination is received, that member is declared elected without a vote being required.

5.2.4 Where two or more nominations are received, the CEO must conduct a vote. The candidate receiving the most votes is declared elected. In the event of a tied vote between candidates, the result must be determined by lot in accordance with Section 61 of the Act.

5.2.5 Once the Principal Member has been elected and has taken the chair, the newly elected Principal Member presides over the election of the Deputy Principal Member using the same process.

5.2.6 Before presiding over the remainder of the meeting, the newly elected Principal Member and Deputy Principal Member are encouraged to make a brief declaration of acceptance of their respective offices, to be recorded in the minutes.

Best Practice: The CEO should prepare a simple written agenda for the election meeting in advance, confirming the order of business and the election procedure. Providing this to all incoming Councillors before the meeting reduces procedural uncertainty and supports a smooth transition.

5.3 Recording the Election

5.3.1 The CEO must ensure that the process and outcome are formally recorded in the minutes, including:

- the names of all members present;
- the names of all nominees for each position;
- the result of the vote or, where applicable, the result of the lot; and
- the names of the elected Principal Member and Deputy Principal Member.

5.4 Mid-Term Vacancy

5.4.1 If the position of Principal Member or Deputy Principal Member becomes vacant during the Council term, the same election process must be followed at the next practicable ordinary or special meeting of the Council.

5.4.2 The CEO must advise Council of the vacancy at the earliest practicable opportunity and arrange for the election to be conducted at the next meeting.

5.4.3 The CEO must notify the Electoral Commission of the NT and any other relevant authority of the vacancy as required by legislation.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preside at the first meeting of the incoming Council following a general election for the purposes of conducting the election of the Principal Member and Deputy Principal Member. • Call for nominations, conduct the vote or lot as required, and declare the result. • Record the election process and outcome completely and accurately in the minutes. • Notify relevant authorities of the election result as required by the Act. • Advise Council promptly of any mid-term vacancy and arrange for the election to be conducted at the next practicable meeting. • Ensure the incoming Principal Member and Deputy Principal Member are briefed on their roles and obligations.
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the election process in good faith and in accordance with this policy. • Respect the outcome of the election, including where determined by lot. • Fulfil the obligations of the office if nominated and elected. • Declare any conflict of interest relating to the election before the meeting commences.
Principal Member (once elected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preside at all subsequent Council meetings in accordance with the Act and Council's meeting procedures policy. • Exercise the casting vote in the event of a tied vote as required by Section 95(6)(a) of the Act. • Fulfil all obligations under the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), this policy, and all other Council policies.

7. Compliance and Monitoring

7.1 Compliance

Failure to conduct the election of the Principal Member at the first meeting following a general election in accordance with Section 61 of the Act may constitute a breach of the Act. The CEO must ensure compliance at each election cycle. Any procedural irregularity must be referred to Council's legal advisors immediately.

7.2 Policy Review

This policy must be reviewed at the commencement of each new Council term and whenever there are relevant changes to the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) or to the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT).

8. Associated Documents

- Casual Vacancy on Council Policy (GOV-CVC-001)
- Casting Vote of the Principal Member Policy (GOV-CVP-001)
- Procedures for Council and Council Committee Meetings Policy (GOV-MTG-001)
- Code of Conduct for Elected and Committee Members (GOV-COC-001)

9. References and Legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) – Sections 60 and 61
- Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT)

10. Review History

Date Approved	Approved By	Resolution No.	Next Review
20/05/2008	Council Resolution No.		Next Council Election
17/03/2009	Council Resolution No. 08/195 Moved: Cr McIntyre Seconded: Cr Lamont	08/195	Next Council Election
18/09/2017	Council Resolution No. 2017/86 Approved By Council Moved: Cr Michael Vaughan Seconded: Cr Neil White Vote: AIF	2017/86	Next Council Election



15/02/2022	Council Resolution No. 2022/034 Moved: Vice President Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Michael Vaughan Vote:	2022/034	Next Council Election
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	

CASTING VOTE OF THE PRINCIPAL MEMBER

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT).



Policy No.	GOV-CVP-001	Version	5.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active - Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next Council Election
LG Act 2019 Ref.	LG Act 2019 (NT) - Section 95(6)	Applies To	All workplace participants and council members

Best practice alignment: This policy is based on Section 95(6) of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the ACLG Good Governance Guide, and the NT Electoral Commission guidelines. It is reviewed at the commencement of each new Council term to ensure it remains current and effective.

1. Purpose

In plain terms: When a vote at a Council meeting ends in a tie, the chairperson – the Principal Member or their deputy – must cast a second, deciding vote. This policy sets out how and when that casting vote is used, and how it is recorded.

This policy establishes the obligation and procedure for the use of a casting vote by the chairperson of a Council meeting. It ensures that all Council meetings can reach a conclusive decision on any motion, in accordance with Section 95(6) of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). The casting vote mechanism exists so that the business of Council is never left unresolved, and that the responsibility for breaking a tied vote is clearly assigned to the presiding officer by law.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the Principal Member of Wagait Shire Council and, in the absence of the Principal Member, to the Deputy Principal Member when presiding as chairperson at any Council meeting.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Casting Vote	A second vote exercised by the chairperson of a Council meeting when a motion results in an equal number of votes for and against. The casting vote determines the outcome of the motion.
Chairperson	The presiding officer at a Council meeting, being the Principal Member or, in the Principal Member's absence, the Deputy Principal Member when presiding over that meeting.
Deputy Principal Member	The Deputy President or Deputy Mayor of Wagait Shire Council, appointed to preside over Council meetings in the absence of the Principal Member.
Principal Member	The President or Mayor of Wagait Shire Council, elected by Council members at the first meeting following a general election.
Tied Vote	A circumstance in which the votes cast for and against a motion at a Council meeting are equal in number, requiring the chairperson to exercise a casting vote.

4. Policy Statement

Wagait Shire Council is committed to ensuring that all meeting proceedings are conducted in a lawful, decisive, and accountable manner. Council recognises that tied votes, while uncommon, must be resolved without delay and in accordance with the Act. The casting vote mechanism provides a clear, legislatively mandated pathway for resolving tied votes, and it is the responsibility of the chairperson to exercise it without hesitation.

Transparency in the exercise of the casting vote supports community confidence in Council decision-making. Where the chairperson chooses to state a reason for the direction of their casting vote, that reason will be recorded in the public minutes.

5. Procedures

5.1 Obligation to Exercise a Casting Vote

5.1.1 Pursuant to Section 95(6)(a) of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the chairperson must exercise a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes on any motion. This obligation is not discretionary. A failure to exercise the casting vote is not a valid procedural outcome and may constitute a breach of the Act.

5.1.2 Before exercising the casting vote, the chairperson must confirm that:

- all members entitled to vote have done so;
- no member who declared a conflict of interest has been included in the count; and
- the vote count has been verified by the CEO or meeting officer.

5.2 How the Casting Vote Is Exercised

5.2.1 The chairperson may exercise the casting vote in favour of, or against, the motion, according to their honest judgement of what best serves the interests of the Council and the community.

5.2.2 The chairperson is encouraged, though not obliged, to briefly state the reason for the direction of the casting vote. Where a reason is given, it must be recorded in the minutes verbatim or as accurately as practicable.

5.2.3 The casting vote and its outcome must be formally recorded in the minutes, including the direction of the vote and any reason stated by the chairperson.

Best Practice: The Principal Member is encouraged to keep a brief written note of the rationale for each casting vote, filed with the minutes. This practice supports transparency and reinforces community confidence in Council governance.

5.3 Duration, Alteration, and Lapse of this Policy

5.3.1 Pursuant to Section 95(6)(b) of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), this policy cannot be altered or revoked during the term of the current Council.

5.3.2 Pursuant to Section 95(6)(c) of the Act, this policy lapses at the conclusion of each general election. The incoming Council must consider and, if appropriate, re-adopt this policy at its first meeting following the general election.

5.3.3 The statutory obligation to exercise a casting vote under Section 95(6)(a) remains in effect regardless of whether this policy is currently in force.

5.4 Non-Exercise and Escalation

5.4.1 If a chairperson declines or is unable to exercise the casting vote, the CEO must note the irregularity in the minutes immediately and seek legal advice at the earliest opportunity.

5.4.2 Any procedural irregularity must be reported to the full Council at the next ordinary meeting and to Council's legal advisors if the validity of a resolution may be affected.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principal Member (President / Mayor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise the casting vote whenever a tied vote occurs at any Council meeting over which they preside.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State a reason for the direction of the casting vote before the vote is recorded, where they choose to do so. • Ensure the casting vote and, where given, the reason are accurately captured in the minutes.
Deputy Principal Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise the casting vote in the event of a tied vote at any Council meeting over which they preside in the Principal Member's absence. • Observe the same obligations as the Principal Member with respect to recording and transparency.
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present this policy to the incoming Council for re-adoption at its first meeting following each general election. • Ensure every exercise of the casting vote is correctly and completely recorded in the minutes. • Maintain this policy in the Council's policy register and advise the chairperson of their statutory obligation prior to each meeting. • Seek legal advice if any uncertainty arises about the validity of a casting vote exercise.

7. Compliance and Monitoring

7.1 Policy Compliance

The exercise of a casting vote is a statutory obligation under Section 95(6)(a) of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). Non-compliance, or a failure to exercise the casting vote as required, may constitute a procedural irregularity that affects the validity of the relevant resolution and may expose Council to legal challenge.

7.2 Monitoring

The CEO is responsible for reviewing the minutes of each Council meeting to confirm that any casting vote exercises have been correctly recorded, and for maintaining a register of all casting vote exercises available for inspection on request.

7.3 Policy Review

This policy lapses at the conclusion of each general election and must be re-adopted by the incoming Council at its first meeting. The CEO is responsible for presenting this policy for re-adoption at the appropriate time.

8. Associated Documents

- Procedures for Council and Council Committee Meetings Policy (GOV-MTG-001)
- Election of Principal Member Policy (GOV-EPM-001)
- Code of Conduct for Elected and Committee Members (GOV-COC-001)

9. References and Legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) - Section 95
- Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT)

10. Review History

Date Approved	Approved By	Resolution No.	Next Review
13/11/2008	Council Resolution No. 2008/	2008/	Next Council Election
17/03/2009	Council – Res. 2009/ Moved: Seconded: Vote: AIF	2009/	Next Council Election
18/09/2017	Council – Res. No. 2017/084 Moved: Cr Peter Clee; Seconded: Cr Trish McIntyre Vote: AIF	2017/084	Next Council Election
18/01/2022	Council – Res. No. 2022/013 Moved: Vice President Tom Dye Seconded: Cr Noeletta McKenzie Vote: AIF	2022/013	Next Council Election
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	

PROCEDURES FOR COUNCIL AND COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT).



Policy No.	GOV-MTG-001	Version	4.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active - Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next term of Council
LG Act 2019 Ref.	Chapter 6 - LG Act 2019 (NT)	Applies To	All workplace participants and council members

Best practice alignment: This policy is based on Chapter 6 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT), and the ACLG Good Governance Guide. It is reviewed at the commencement of each new Council term to ensure it remains current and effective.

1. Purpose

In plain terms: This policy sets out the rules for how Council and committee meetings are run — from how meetings are called and who can attend, to how motions are moved, voted on, and recorded. It ensures every meeting is run fairly, legally, and consistently.

This policy establishes the procedures for the orderly, efficient, and transparent conduct of meetings of Wagait Shire Council and its committees. It sets out the rights, obligations, and expected conduct of Council members, officers, and members of the public at all Council and committee meetings, and supports Council in fulfilling its statutory obligations under the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).

Well-ordered, properly documented meetings are fundamental to good governance. This policy provides a consistent procedural framework that all participants can rely on, and that supports the Council in making lawful and accountable decisions on behalf of the Wagait community.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all ordinary and special meetings of the Council of Wagait Shire Council;
- all meetings of committees established by the Council under Section 54 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT);
- all elected members (Councillors), the Chief Executive Officer, and Council staff in attendance at or supporting any such meeting; and
- members of the public and invited guests attending or participating in any such meeting.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Agenda	A list of items for consideration at a meeting, together with reports and other attachments relating to those items.
Amendment	A motion moved as a proposed variation to the original motion, requiring the same process as the original motion.
CEO	The Chief Executive Officer of Wagait Shire Council.
Committee	A committee established by the Council in accordance with Section 54 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
Confidential Business	Business involving the consideration of confidential information, as prescribed under Part 3, Division 2, Section 52 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT), considered in a closed session of the Council.
Council	The Council of Wagait Shire Council.
Councillor	An elected member of the Wagait Shire Council.
Deputation	A formal presentation to the Council by an individual or group on a specific matter, at the invitation or prior approval of the Principal Member.
Minutes	The official and permanent record of proceedings at any meeting of the Council or its committees.
Motion	A formal proposal put before the Council at a meeting requesting a decision or the expression of an opinion on a matter.
Ordinary Meeting	A scheduled regular meeting of the Council, ordinarily held monthly.
Petition	A formal written request to Council, signed by members of the public, requesting Council to take a particular action or reconsider a decision.

Principal Member	The President or Mayor of Wagait Shire Council, or in their absence the Deputy Principal Member.
Quorum	The minimum number of members required to be present for a meeting to be validly constituted, as specified in Section 64 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
Remote Attendance	Attendance at a Council or committee meeting via an approved technology platform such as video conferencing, where a member is unable to be physically present.
Resolution	A motion that has been passed by the required majority of Councillors at a valid meeting of the Council.
Special Meeting	A meeting of the Council convened for a specific purpose outside the ordinary meeting schedule, called in accordance with Section 63 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).

4. Policy Statement

Wagait Shire Council is committed to conducting its meetings in a manner that is transparent, inclusive, accountable, and consistent with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). Council recognises that well-ordered and properly documented meetings are fundamental to good governance and to maintaining community confidence in local government.

All participants in Council and committee meetings are expected to conduct themselves with respect, courtesy, and professionalism at all times. The Principal Member is responsible for maintaining order and ensuring that all proceedings are conducted in accordance with this policy.

5. Meeting Procedures

5.1 Setting Dates, Place, and Time for Ordinary Meetings

5.1.1 The Council must, at its first meeting of each calendar year or at such other time as the Council resolves, fix the dates, times, and places of its ordinary meetings for the forthcoming period.

5.1.2 Ordinary meetings of the Council are to be held monthly, unless the Council resolves otherwise. If no ordinary meeting is held in a calendar month, the CEO must record the reason.

5.1.3 Where a fixed meeting date falls on a public holiday, the meeting is to be held on the next practicable business day unless the Council determines otherwise.

5.2 Order of Business at an Ordinary Meeting

Unless the Council resolves otherwise, the order of business at an ordinary Council meeting is:

- Opening and Acknowledgement of Country;
- Apologies and leave of absence;
- Confirmation of minutes of the previous meeting;
- Declarations of conflict of interest;

- Petitions;
- Deputations;
- Questions from the public;
- Reports and officer recommendations;
- Notices of motion;
- Questions from members;
- Confidential business (closed session); and
- Close of meeting.

5.3 Quorum

5.3.1 A quorum is required for a Council meeting to be validly constituted. The quorum for Wagait Shire Council is as specified in Section 64 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).

5.3.2 If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the appointed meeting time, the CEO must adjourn the meeting to a time and date to be confirmed, and record the reason for adjournment in the minutes.

5.4 Agenda and Notice of Meeting

5.4.1 The CEO must prepare and distribute the agenda and supporting papers to all Councillors at least 72 hours before each ordinary meeting, unless the Council resolves otherwise.

5.4.2 A copy of the agenda must be made available to the public at the Council office and on the Council's website at the time it is distributed to Councillors.

5.4.3 Matters not included on the agenda may only be considered at a meeting if the Council resolves by absolute majority to do so, and the CEO advises that no prejudice will result from proceeding.

5.5 Motions and Debate

5.5.1 Any Councillor may move a motion on any matter included on the agenda. All motions must be seconded before debate commences.

5.5.2 Each Councillor may speak once on the original motion and once on any amendment, unless the Council grants leave to speak again.

5.5.3 The mover of a motion has the right of reply after all other speakers have concluded, before the vote is taken.

5.5.4 The Principal Member may participate in debate but must vacate the chair if they wish to move or second a motion.

5.6 Voting

5.6.1 Voting at a Council meeting is to be conducted by a show of hands unless the Council resolves to use another method.

5.6.2 A simple majority of members present and voting is required to pass a motion unless the Act or Council's policies require an absolute majority or special majority.

5.6.3 In the event of a tied vote, the chairperson must exercise a casting vote in accordance with Section 95(6) of the Act and the Casting Vote of the Principal Member Policy (GOV-CVP-001).

5.7 Conflict of Interest

5.7.1 A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter must declare the conflict before the matter is considered, leave the chamber while the matter is discussed and voted upon, and ensure their declaration and withdrawal are recorded in the minutes.

5.7.2 The CEO must provide advice to any Councillor who is uncertain whether they have a conflict of interest in a matter. If uncertainty remains, the Councillor should err on the side of declaration.

5.8 Remote Attendance

5.8.1 A Councillor who is unable to attend a meeting in person may attend remotely via an approved technology platform, provided that:

- the Councillor notifies the CEO as early as practicable of their intention to attend remotely;
- the technology platform is tested in advance to confirm it is functional; and
- the remote attendee can hear and be heard by all other participants at all times.

5.8.2 A Councillor attending remotely is counted towards the quorum and may vote on all matters before the meeting.

5.9 Maintenance of Order

5.9.1 The Principal Member is responsible for maintaining order at all Council meetings. The Principal Member may direct any person who disrupts the meeting to cease the disruptive behaviour and, if the direction is not followed, may expel that person from the meeting.

5.9.2 A Councillor who behaves in a disorderly manner may be directed by the Principal Member to leave the chamber for the remainder of the meeting.

5.10 Petitions and Deputations

5.10.1 Members of the public may submit a petition to Council by delivering a signed petition to the CEO before the meeting. The CEO must include the petition on the agenda for the next meeting.

5.10.2 A person or group wishing to make a deputation must apply in writing to the CEO at least five business days before the meeting. The Principal Member may approve or decline the deputation.

5.10.3 Deputations must be no longer than ten minutes, unless the Principal Member grants an extension. Presenters must address the meeting through the chair and may not engage in debate with Councillors.

5.11 Confidential Business

5.11.1 Certain business may be conducted in closed session where the matter involves information prescribed as confidential under Part 3, Division 2, Section 52 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT). Council must pass a resolution to close the meeting before considering such business.

5.11.2 When a meeting is closed to the public, members of the public and media must leave the chamber. Only Councillors, the CEO, and any person specifically authorised by the Principal Member may remain.

5.11.3 After the closed session, the meeting must be reopened to the public. The Principal Member must announce any resolution made in closed session that can properly be made public.

5.11.4 Documents considered in closed session must not be distributed outside of the meeting without authorisation.

5.12 Minutes

5.12.1 The CEO must ensure that accurate minutes of every Council and committee meeting are prepared and distributed to all Councillors within seven business days of the meeting.

5.12.2 The minutes must record:

- the date, time, and place of the meeting;
- the names of all members present and all apologies;
- all motions moved, including the names of the mover and seconder;
- the result of all votes, including any casting votes exercised;
- all resolutions passed; and
- any declarations of conflict of interest and the action taken.

5.12.3 The minutes of the previous meeting must be confirmed at the next ordinary meeting. Corrections must be made by resolution. Confirmed minutes must be signed by the Principal Member.

5.13 Special Meetings

5.13.1 A special meeting of the Council may be called by the Principal Member or by the CEO where a matter requires Council's consideration before the next ordinary meeting.

5.13.2 Notice of a special meeting must be given to all Councillors at least 48 hours before the meeting, specifying the matters to be considered. Only the matters specified in the notice may be considered at a special meeting.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principal Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preside at all Council meetings and maintain order throughout proceedings. • Exercise the casting vote in the event of a tied vote, as required under Section 95(6)(a) of the Act. • Approve requests for deputations and public presentations. • Declare meetings open and closed and ensure all procedural requirements are observed. • Rule on points of order and questions of procedure during meetings. • Sign confirmed minutes as the official record of proceedings.
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and distribute agendas and supporting papers within required timeframes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend all Council and committee meetings and provide procedural advice to the chair. Prepare and distribute accurate minutes of all meetings promptly after each meeting. Ensure public copies of agendas are made available in accordance with this policy. Manage confidential business processes and ensure secure handling of confidential documents. Advise the Principal Member on quorum matters and on the procedural requirements of the Act. Maintain the register of approved technology for remote attendance and ensure the platform is tested before each meeting at which remote attendance is expected.
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend all Council meetings and committee meetings to which they are appointed, and give advance notice of any absence. Prepare for meetings by reading the agenda and supporting papers in advance. Conduct themselves in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Elected and Committee Members (GOV-COC-001) at all times. Declare conflicts of interest before the relevant agenda item is discussed.
Members of the Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe the public gallery rules and behave with respect during Council meetings. Submit requests to address Council via petition or deputation through the CEO in advance of the meeting. Respect the right of Council to consider matters in closed session where permitted by law.

7. Compliance and Monitoring

7.1 Policy Compliance

Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all participants in Council and committee meetings. Failure to comply may affect the validity of resolutions. The CEO must advise the Principal Member of any procedural irregularity as soon as it is identified.

7.2 Monitoring

The CEO is responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy at each meeting and for maintaining the register of meetings, agendas, and minutes. The CEO must bring any systemic compliance issues to the attention of the Principal Member and Council.

7.3 Policy Review

This policy must be reviewed at the commencement of each new Council term and whenever there are relevant changes to the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) or the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT).

8. Associated Documents

- Casting Vote of the Principal Member Policy (GOV-CVP-001)
- Code of Conduct for Elected and Committee Members (GOV-COC-001)
- Caretaker Policy (GOV-CTP-001)
- Election of Principal Member Policy (GOV-EPM-001)

9. References and Legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) - Chapter 6 (Sections 62, 63, 64, 95)
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT) - Part 3, Division 2

10. Review History

Date Approved	Approved By	Resolution No.	Next Review
20/10/2009	Council Resolution -	-	17/02/2011
19/02/2019	Council – Res. 2023/29 Moved: Cr Michael Vaughan Seconded: Vice- President Tom Dyer Vote: AIF	2019/326	19/02/2022
19/10/2021	Council – Res. 2021/186 Moved: Vice President Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Noeletta McKenzie Vote: AIF	2021/186	Next term of Council
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026		

CODE OF CONDUCT - ELECTED AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT).



Policy No.	GOV-COC-001	Version	2.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active - Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next term of Council
LG Act 2019 Ref.	Chapter 7, Part 7.4 - LG Act 2019 (NT)	Applies To	All workplace participants and council members

Best practice alignment: This policy is based on Chapter 7, Part 7.4 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and Schedule 1 of the Act, the ACLG Good Governance Guide, and the NT ICAC Corruption Prevention Framework. It is reviewed at the commencement of each new Council term to ensure it remains current and effective.

1. Purpose

In plain terms: This policy sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all Councillors and committee members. It explains how members should treat each other, the community, and Council staff, and what happens if those standards are not met.

This policy establishes the standards of conduct expected of all elected members and committee members of Wagait Shire Council. It sets out the values, obligations, and behavioural expectations that underpin ethical leadership and community trust, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and the code of conduct set out in Schedule 1 of the Act.

Community trust is fundamental to effective local government. That trust is built through the consistent demonstration of ethical leadership by elected and committee members. This policy provides clear, practical guidance so that every member understands what is expected of them and can fulfil their obligations with confidence.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all elected members (Councillors) of Wagait Shire Council;
- all members of committees established by Council under Section 54 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT); and
- any person acting in the capacity of an elected or committee member.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
CEO	The Chief Executive Officer of Wagait Shire Council.
Committee Member	A person appointed to a Council committee under Section 54 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), whether or not they are an elected member.
Complaint	A formal complaint made to the CEO or Principal Member alleging a breach of the Code of Conduct by an elected member or committee member.
Confidential Information	Information held by Council that is not in the public domain and that a member becomes aware of by virtue of their position on Council or a committee. This obligation continues after a member ceases to hold office.
Conflict of Interest	A situation in which a member has a personal or financial interest in a matter that may influence, or may reasonably be seen to influence, their exercise of official functions.
Gift	Any benefit, gratuity, advantage, or entertainment received by a member in connection with their official functions, whether monetary or non-monetary, including hospitality, discounts, travel, and goods.
ICAC	The Independent Commissioner Against Corruption, established under the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT).
Member	An elected member or committee member of Wagait Shire Council, as applicable.
Official Functions	The duties, responsibilities, and activities carried out by a member in their capacity as an elected member or committee member of Wagait Shire Council.
Principal Member	The President or Mayor of Wagait Shire Council.

4. Policy Statement

Wagait Shire Council is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct, integrity, and accountability in the exercise of the functions of Council. The Council recognises that community trust is fundamental to effective local government and that this trust is built through the consistent demonstration of ethical leadership by elected and committee members.

All members are required to conduct themselves in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), this policy, and the values of Wagait Shire Council. These obligations apply at all times when members are acting in their official capacity and in any other context where their conduct may reflect on the integrity of the Council.

5. Procedures

5.1 General Conduct Obligations

All members must:

- act honestly, with integrity, and in good faith in the performance of their official functions;
- exercise their functions in the best interests of the community;
- treat all persons respectfully and courteously, including fellow members, Council staff, and members of the public;
- not engage in any conduct that is dishonest, fraudulent, or likely to bring Council into disrepute;
- not use their position for personal gain or for the benefit of another person without authorisation; and
- comply with all relevant legislation, this policy, and all other Council policies.

5.2 Conflicts of Interest

5.2.1 A member who has a conflict of interest in a matter before Council or a committee must:

- disclose the conflict of interest to the meeting before the matter is considered;
- leave the chamber while the matter is being discussed and voted upon;
- not participate in debate or attempt to influence the decision of other members; and
- ensure that the declaration and their withdrawal are recorded in the minutes.

5.2.2 A member who is uncertain whether they have a conflict of interest in a matter should seek written advice from the CEO before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.

5.2.3 A member who fails to declare a conflict of interest may be subject to action under Chapter 7 of the Act and may expose Council to legal challenge.

Best Practice: Members are encouraged to declare interests early, even where they are unsure whether a conflict exists. An early, voluntary declaration protects the member and demonstrates the transparency that the community expects of its elected representatives.

5.3 Gifts and Benefits

5.3.1 Members must not solicit any gift, gratuity, advantage, or entertainment in connection with their official functions.

5.3.2 Members must not accept any gift or benefit with a value of \$50 or more without prior written approval from the CEO or, in the case of the CEO receiving a gift, from the Principal Member.

5.3.3 Any gift or benefit received with a value of \$50 or more must be declared to the CEO within five business days of receipt. The CEO must record the declaration in the Council's Gift Register.

5.3.4 The Gift Register must be maintained by the CEO, reviewed annually, and made available for public inspection on request.

5.3.5 Gifts of a token or ceremonial nature with a value clearly below \$50 need not be declared but should be noted for personal records.

5.4 Confidential Information

5.4.1 Members must not disclose confidential information obtained by virtue of their position, except where authorised to do so by Council resolution, the CEO, or applicable legislation.

5.4.2 The obligation to maintain confidentiality continues after a member has ceased to hold office.

5.4.3 If a member is uncertain whether information is confidential, they must seek written advice from the CEO before disclosing it.

5.5 Use of Council Resources

5.5.1 Members must use Council resources, including information, vehicles, technology, and premises, only for the purposes for which those resources are provided.

5.5.2 Members must not use Council resources for personal purposes or for purposes unconnected with their official functions, including the use of Council letterhead, branding, or media for personal political or campaign purposes.

5.5.3 During the caretaker period, the additional restrictions in the Caretaker Policy (GOV-CTP-001) apply to the use of Council resources by elected members who are candidates.

5.6 Social Media and Online Conduct

5.6.1 Members must conduct themselves online, including on social media platforms, in a manner consistent with the obligations of this policy and with the standards of respect and professionalism expected of a public officeholder.

5.6.2 Members must not make public statements online that are defamatory, misleading, discriminatory, or that could bring the Council into disrepute.

5.6.3 Members must not use the Council's name, branding, or logo in any personal online communications without prior written approval from the CEO.

5.6.4 Where a member becomes aware of online content posted by another member or a Council employee that may breach this policy, they should raise the matter with the CEO or Principal Member promptly, rather than engaging publicly with the content.

5.7 Complaint Process

5.7.1 Any person, including a fellow elected member, a Council employee, or a member of the public, may make a formal complaint about the conduct of an elected or committee member by submitting a written complaint to the CEO or Principal Member.

5.7.2 The CEO must assess each complaint promptly and determine whether:

- the complaint discloses a potential breach of the Code of Conduct warranting investigation;
- the matter should be referred to Council for consideration; or
- the matter may amount to corrupt conduct and must be reported to the ICAC.

5.7.3 All complainants will be advised of the outcome of the CEO's assessment within a reasonable time.

5.8 ICAC Mandatory Reporting Obligations

5.8.1 Under the Independent Commissioner against Corruption Act 2017 (NT), Council, the Principal Member, and the CEO each have mandatory reporting obligations where they form a reasonable suspicion that conduct may amount to corrupt conduct.

5.8.2 Conduct that may trigger a mandatory ICAC report includes, but is not limited to:

- misuse of a member's position for personal or third-party gain;
- failure to declare a conflict of interest with intent to obtain a personal benefit;
- fraudulent misuse of Council resources or funds; and
- conduct that is dishonest or biased in the exercise of official functions.

5.8.3 The obligation to report to the ICAC is not discretionary where a reasonable suspicion exists. The CEO must seek legal advice if uncertain about whether a reporting obligation has been triggered.

5.9 Consequences of Contravention

Where a member is found to have contravened the Code of Conduct, Council may take action under Chapter 7 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). Where the conduct is serious, the matter may be referred to the ICAC. Consequences may include formal censure, removal of privileges, suspension, or disqualification from office, depending on the severity of the breach.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Elected and Committee Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and this policy at all times when acting in an official capacity. • Declare conflicts of interest promptly and in accordance with the process in Section 5.2. • Declare all gifts and benefits of \$50 or more to the CEO within five business days. • Maintain the confidentiality of information obtained in an official capacity. • Use Council resources only for official purposes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct themselves professionally online and refrain from posting content that could bring Council into disrepute.
Principal Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model the conduct expected of all elected and committee members. • Receive complaints regarding the conduct of elected and committee members and refer them to the CEO for assessment. • Preside at any Council meeting at which a complaint or conduct matter is considered. • Refer matters to the ICAC where required under mandatory reporting obligations.
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the Gift Register and make it available for public inspection on request. • Receive and assess complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. • Provide advice to members on their obligations under this policy. • Present this policy to the incoming Council for re-adoption at the first meeting following each general election. • Report to the ICAC where the CEO forms a reasonable suspicion that conduct may amount to corrupt conduct under the ICAC Act. • Maintain a register of all complaints received and their outcomes. • Arrange for training on the Code of Conduct to be provided to all incoming elected and committee members.

7. Compliance and Monitoring

7.1 Policy Compliance

Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all elected and committee members. Failure to comply may result in formal complaint processes, action under Chapter 7 of the Act, and, where conduct is serious, referral to the ICAC.

7.2 Monitoring

The CEO must maintain a register of all complaints received and their outcomes. The Gift Register must be reviewed annually and made available for public inspection. Any pattern of conduct suggesting systemic non-compliance must be reported to Council for consideration.

7.3 Policy Review

This policy must be reviewed at the commencement of each new Council term and whenever there are relevant changes to the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) or the ICAC Act.

8. Associated Documents

- Procedures for Council and Council Committee Meetings Policy (GOV-MTG-001)
- Caretaker Policy (GOV-CTP-001)
- Fraud and Corruption Protection Policy (GOV-FCP-001)
- Wagait Shire Council Gift Register
- Schedule 1 - Local Government Act 2019 (NT)

9. References and Legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) - Chapter 7, Part 7.4 and Schedule 1
- Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT)
- Information Act 2002 (NT)

10. Review History

Date Approved	Approved By	Resolution No.	Next Review
19/10/2021	Council – Res. 2021/186 Moved: Vice President Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Noeletta McKenzie Vote: AIF	2021/186	Next Term of Council
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026		

USE OF COUNCIL FIREARMS

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, Firearms Act 1997 (NT).



Policy No.	GOV-UCF-001	Version	5.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active - Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next term of Council
LG Act 2019 Ref.	Firearms Act 1997 (NT)	Applies To	All workplace participants and council members

Best practice alignment: This policy is based on the Firearms Act 1997 (NT), the Firearms Regulations 1997 (NT), the Animal Welfare Act 1999 (NT), and the Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT). It is reviewed at least every two years, or sooner if there are changes to relevant legislation.

1. Purpose

In plain terms: Council owns firearms for animal control purposes. This policy explains who is allowed to use them, how they must be stored and maintained, and what records must be kept every time a firearm is used.

This policy prescribes the standards, accountabilities, and procedures for the safe and lawful use, storage, maintenance, and decommissioning of firearms held by Wagait Shire Council. It ensures that Council's firearms are used only for authorised purposes and in full compliance with the Firearms Act 1997 (NT), the Firearms Regulations 1997 (NT), the Animal Welfare Act 1999 (NT), and all associated legislation.

The possession of firearms by a local government body carries significant legal, safety, and reputational responsibilities. This policy is designed to ensure those responsibilities are met consistently and that every interaction with Council firearms is properly authorised, documented, and reviewed.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all authorised officers of Wagait Shire Council who are authorised, as part of their official duties, to access, use, transport, or maintain Council firearms. It also applies to the CEO in their oversight, audit, and licensing responsibilities. No other person may access or handle Council firearms under any circumstances.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Authorised Officer	A Council employee who has been formally authorised in writing by the CEO to access and use Council firearms for the purposes specified in Council's firearms licence.
CEO	The Chief Executive Officer of Wagait Shire Council.
Decommissioning	The formal process of removing a firearm from active service, including disabling or surrendering it to the relevant authority in accordance with the Firearms Act 1997 (NT).
Firearms Licence	The licence held by Wagait Shire Council authorising the possession and use of firearms for the purposes of animal control and welfare.
Incident Log	The register maintained by the CEO in which all removals, uses, and incidents involving Council firearms are recorded. The Incident Log is a controlled document and must be stored securely.
Safe Storage	Storage of a firearm in a locked, compliant firearms safe in accordance with the Firearms Act 1997 (NT) and the Firearms Regulations 1997 (NT).

4. Policy Statement

Wagait Shire Council recognises that the possession and use of firearms is a significant responsibility, one that requires the highest standards of safety, accountability, and compliance. Council is committed to ensuring that firearms in its possession are used only for legitimate animal control and welfare purposes, are stored and maintained safely at all times, and that every use is properly authorised, documented, and reviewed.

The safety of Council staff, the community, and animals is paramount. Council maintains a zero-tolerance approach to any unauthorised use or misuse of firearms and will cooperate fully with any investigation or audit conducted by the relevant authorities.

5. Procedures

5.1 Authorisation to Access and Use Firearms

5.1.1 Council firearms may only be used in accordance with the conditions of Council's firearms licence, that is, for the purpose of animal control and welfare.

5.1.2 Only authorised officers of Council may access and use Council firearms. No other person may handle Council firearms under any circumstances.

5.1.3 To become an authorised officer, an employee must:

- hold a current personal firearms licence of the appropriate category issued under the Firearms Act 1997 (NT);
- have completed all relevant firearms safety training required by the CEO; and
- receive written authorisation from the CEO before accessing any Council firearm.

5.1.4 Authorisation may be withdrawn by the CEO at any time if the authorised officer no longer meets the requirements of this policy or if there are concerns about their fitness to use a firearm safely.

5.1.5 Council will maintain appropriate and current licensing for all firearms at all times. The CEO is responsible for ensuring all licence renewals are completed prior to expiry.

5.2 Storage of Firearms and Ammunition

5.2.1 All firearms must be stored in a compliant, locked firearms safe when not in use, in accordance with the Firearms Act 1997 (NT) and the Firearms Regulations 1997 (NT).

5.2.2 Ammunition must be stored in a separate locked container, kept apart from the container in which the firearm is stored. Firearms and ammunition must never be stored together.

5.2.3 The CEO is responsible for ensuring storage arrangements are compliant and physically inspected at least annually, with the results documented and retained.

5.3 Incident Log

5.3.1 The CEO must maintain an Incident Log for all Council firearms. An authorised officer must make an entry on each occasion the firearm is removed from storage, recording:

- the date and time the firearm was removed from storage;
- the name of the authorised officer removing the firearm;
- the reason the firearm was taken;
- the quantity and type of ammunition removed; and
- details of any incident involving the use of the firearm.

5.3.2 The Incident Log is a controlled document. It must be returned to and securely stored by the CEO after each use and reviewed following every use of a firearm.

Best Practice: A firearms compliance checklist should be completed by the authorised officer after each use and filed with the Incident Log. This supports the CEO's post-use audit process and creates a clear, auditable record for regulatory purposes.

5.4 Reporting Use to the CEO

5.4.1 Any use of a Council firearm must be verbally reported to the CEO as soon as practicable after the event, and no later than the end of the next business day.

5.4.2 The CEO must conduct an audit of the Incident Log and ammunition after each use, reconciling the ammunition taken against the ammunition used and the log entries. Any discrepancy must be investigated promptly and, if not resolved within two business days, reported to the relevant authority.

5.5 Transport of Firearms in Vehicles

5.5.1 When a firearm is transported in a Council vehicle, it must be secured in compliance with the Firearms Act 1997 (NT) and the Firearms Regulations 1997 (NT).

5.5.2 Ammunition must be stored in a separate, locked compartment of the vehicle, apart from the firearm.

5.5.3 If the vehicle is to be left unattended with a firearm inside:

- the vehicle must be locked at all times;
- the firearm must be secured appropriately; and
- the firearm must be concealed from view and must not be visible through any window.

5.5.4 A firearm must not be left unattended in a vehicle overnight unless there is no reasonable alternative and the CEO has been notified.

5.6 Maintenance of Firearms

5.6.1 Authorised officers are responsible for cleaning the firearm and maintaining it in safe and functional condition after each use.

5.6.2 Any fault or defect must be reported to the CEO immediately. The firearm must be placed out of service until the fault is rectified.

5.6.3 The CEO must ensure any reported fault is rectified within seven business days. The authorised officer must confirm in writing when the fault has been resolved.

5.6.4 All Council firearms must be sent for professional cleaning and sight-checking on a bi-annual basis, scheduled and recorded by the CEO.

5.7 Decommissioning and Disposal

5.7.1 Where a Council firearm is no longer required or is unserviceable, the CEO must arrange for it to be decommissioned and disposed of in accordance with the Firearms Act 1997 (NT) and the Firearms Regulations 1997 (NT).

5.7.2 No Council firearm may be sold, gifted, or transferred to any person without the prior written approval of the relevant licensing authority.

5.7.3 The CEO must record all decommissioning and disposal events in Council's asset register and notify the relevant licensing authority as required by legislation.

5.8 Non-Compliance and Breaches

Any breach of this policy by an authorised officer, including unauthorised use, failure to maintain the Incident Log, or misuse of a Council firearm, must be reported to the CEO immediately. Breaches will be

dealt with in accordance with the Council's human resources policies and, where the breach involves a potential offence under the Firearms Act 1997 (NT), referred to the NT Police and the relevant licensing authority.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue and maintain written authorisation for eligible officers to access and use Council firearms. Maintain the Incident Log and conduct a post-use audit after each use. Ensure storage arrangements are compliant and inspected at least annually. Schedule bi-annual professional maintenance and cleaning of all Council firearms. Investigate and report any discrepancies, breaches, or incidents to Council and relevant authorities. Maintain Council's firearms licence and ensure all renewals are completed on time. Manage the decommissioning or disposal of any firearm no longer required by Council.
Authorised Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access and use Council firearms only for authorised animal control and welfare purposes. Complete the Incident Log accurately on every occasion a firearm is removed from storage. Report all uses verbally to the CEO by the end of the next business day. Clean and maintain the firearm in safe and functional condition after each use. Report any fault, defect, loss, or theft immediately to the CEO. Comply fully with safe storage and transport requirements at all times.

7. Compliance and Monitoring

7.1 Policy Compliance

Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all authorised officers and the CEO. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action and, where a breach involves an offence under the Firearms Act 1997 (NT), referral to the relevant authority.

7.2 Monitoring and Audit

The CEO must conduct an annual compliance audit covering: the currency of all firearms licences; the condition and security of storage arrangements; the completeness and accuracy of the Incident Log; and the schedule of bi-annual professional maintenance. A summary must be presented to Council for noting.

7.3 Policy Review

This policy must be reviewed at least every two years, or sooner if there are changes to the Firearms Act 1997 (NT), the Firearms Regulations 1997 (NT), or Council's operational requirements.

8. Associated Documents

- Wagait Shire Council Human Resources Policy
- Fraud and Corruption Protection Policy (GOV-FCP-01)
- Code of Conduct for Elected and Committee Members (GOV-COC-001)

9. References and Legislation

- Firearms Act 1997 (NT)
- Firearms Regulations 1997 (NT)
- Animal Welfare Act 1999 (NT)
- Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT)

10. Review History

Date Approved	Approved By	Resolution No.	Next Review
21/01/2007	Council – Res. 2007/07 Moved: Cr Clee Seconded: Cr Egan Vote: AIF	2007/07	Next Council Election
17/03/2009	Council – Res. 2007/07 Moved: Cr McIntyre Seconded: Cr Lamont Vote: AIF	2009/195	Next Council Election
15/09/2020	Council – Res. 2020/148 Moved: Cr P Clee Seconded: Cr G Drake Vote: AIF	2020/148	Next Council Election
18/01/2022	Council – Res. 2022/013 Moved: Vice President Tom Dyer	2022/013	Next Council Election



	Seconded: Cr Noeletta McKenzie Vote: AIF		
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	

MEDIA POLICY

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, the LG Act 2019 (NT), the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth) and current media and social media governance standards.



Policy No.	GOV-MED-01	Version	4.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next council election, or earlier if required
Legislation	LG Act 2019 (NT) s.59; Information Act 2002 (NT); Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth)	Applies To	All Elected Members and Council employees

1. Purpose

In plain terms: This policy tells everyone at Council — elected members and employees alike — who is authorised to speak to the media, what the rules are for social media, and how to handle sensitive or crisis communications. It keeps Council's message consistent and its reputation protected.

This policy provides a clear, practical framework for guiding Elected Member and employee interactions with media agencies, and for the responsible use of social media, to ensure consistent messaging, sound brand management and the protection of Wagait Shire Council's reputation.

It is also designed to reduce operational burden on the Chief Executive Officer and Council team by giving everyone clear guidance on who is authorised to communicate publicly on Council matters — particularly during election periods, caretaker periods and times of heightened governance activity.

Legislative basis: This policy is made under the framework of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), in particular s.59 (role of the President) and the general governance obligations of the Act. It is supported by the Information Act 2002 (NT) (privacy and information obligations) and the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth), as amended by the Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all current Elected Members and Council employees in any media interaction — including personal and professional use of social media — where Council, its operations, decisions or personnel are referenced or could reasonably be implied.

This policy applies regardless of whether the interaction occurs during or outside of working hours. The key question is always whether the communication relates to, or could reasonably be perceived as relating to, the Council or the individual's role at the Council.

Contractors and volunteers: While this policy does not formally apply to contractors and volunteers, the Council expects all persons engaged in Council activities to act consistently with its spirit. Contract arrangements should include appropriate confidentiality and media obligations.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Authorised spokesperson	A Council employee or Elected Member formally designated by the CEO to communicate with the media on a specific matter or for a defined period.
Caretaker period	The period commencing on the day nominations open for a general election and ending on the day the newly elected council first meets, during which heightened restrictions apply to Council communications and decision-making.
Confidential information	Information that Council is required or has decided to treat as confidential under the LG Act 2019 (NT), the Information Act 2002 (NT), legal advice, or by reason of its sensitive nature — including personal information, legal matters, and commercially sensitive content.
Crisis communication	Urgent, time-sensitive communication required in response to an emergency, significant incident, reputational risk, or event that has the potential to cause harm to the community, Council staff, or the Council's reputation.
Media	Traditional means of communication through which news, information, education and promotional content are disseminated — including television, radio, newspapers, magazines and online news publications — distinct from social media platforms.
Official Council communication	Any statement, release, post, or public comment made on behalf of, or in the name of, Wagait Shire Council — whether in person, in writing, digitally, or through any media or social media channel.
Personal social media communication	Content published by an individual on their own social media accounts for personal purposes, where no Council branding, official credentials, or confidential Council information is involved.

Social media	Digital platforms enabling user-generated content creation and sharing — including social networking sites, video and photo sharing platforms, blogs, forums, chatrooms, podcasts and online collaboration tools.
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4. Roles and responsibilities

The following table sets out the key responsibilities under this policy. Clear role delineation is essential to ensure that Council's communications remain consistent, accurate and appropriately authorised at all times.

Role	Responsibilities
Chief Executive Officer	Primary media spokesperson for Wagait Shire Council. Authorises all official media releases. Designates authorised spokespersons for specific matters. Coordinates all crisis communications. Ensures all elected members and staff are briefed on this policy. Maintains a list of current authorised spokespersons.
Council President	Authorised to speak on behalf of the Council regarding its decisions, policies and agreed positions, pursuant to s.59 of the LG Act 2019 (NT). Works in close coordination with the CEO on media strategy and messaging.
Elected Members	May make personal comment in the media in their individual capacity, clearly identifying that opinions are their own and not those of Council. Must not make statements that could be interpreted as official Council positions without CEO coordination. Exercise heightened caution during caretaker periods.
Council employees	Must not speak to the media on Council matters without prior CEO approval. Must not use personal social media in a way that discloses confidential Council information or implies Council authorisation. Breaches are managed under the Code of Conduct and relevant HR processes.
Authorised spokesperson	May communicate with the media on the specific matter or for the period formally designated by the CEO. Must stay within the scope of their designation and notify the CEO promptly of all media interactions.

5. Council media protocol

5.1 Primary spokesperson

The Chief Executive Officer is the primary point of contact for all media liaison on behalf of Wagait Shire Council. All media enquiries directed to Council must be referred to the CEO promptly.

Where the CEO is unavailable, they may designate an acting delegate to assume media liaison responsibilities for the duration of their absence. The identity of any acting delegate must be communicated to all staff and Elected Members before it takes effect.

Good practice: The CEO should maintain a short list of current authorised spokespersons and keep all Elected Members and relevant staff informed of who is authorised for specific matters. This avoids confusion and protects the Council from inadvertent unauthorised public comment.

5.2 Proactive communications

Council will maintain a proactive communications approach, providing timely and factual information to the community through approved channels. Proactive communication reduces the risk of misinformation and demonstrates good governance.

The CEO is responsible for developing and maintaining a simple communications plan for significant Council decisions, projects and events. This plan should identify: the key message, the intended audience, the approved channel, and the timing of release.

5.3 Media releases

All Council media releases must be authorised and released by the CEO or their designated delegate. No media release may be issued in the name of Wagait Shire Council without this authorisation.

All official media releases will be provided to Elected Members at or before the time of release to the media, so that Elected Members are able to respond to constituent enquiries consistently and accurately.

Elected Members may distribute their own media releases on matters within their elected role. However, these must clearly indicate that they are personal statements and do not represent the position of Wagait Shire Council.

Tip for Elected Members: If you are unsure whether a statement you wish to make could be perceived as an official Council position, contact the CEO before releasing it. A short call can avoid a much more difficult conversation later.

6. Staff media obligations

6.1 Prior authorisation required

No Wagait Shire Council employee is authorised to speak to the media on any Council matter without the prior approval of the CEO. This applies to all forms of media contact, including telephone interviews, written statements, and online comment.

This restriction also applies to personal social media communications that directly relate to, or could reasonably be interpreted as commenting on, issues arising from Council operations, decisions, or personnel.

6.2 Personal social media obligations

Council employees must not use personal social media in a way that:

- implies Council authorisation of any personal view or opinion;
- uses Council branding, logos or official credentials;
- discloses confidential Council information, in-camera decisions, or personal information about colleagues, Elected Members or community members — consistent with the Information Act 2002 (NT);
- brings Council into disrepute or undermines community confidence in the Council; or
- constitutes discrimination, harassment, bullying or harmful conduct of any kind.

The Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth), as amended by the Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024, establishes obligations on individuals and platform providers in relation to harmful online content. Council employees are expected to act consistently with these obligations in all online conduct.

6.3 Designated spokesperson arrangements

The CEO may formally designate a staff member as an authorised spokesperson for a specific matter or time-limited period. Any such designation must be in writing, clearly scoped, and communicated to relevant staff.

Staff must not use any media activity, whether authorised or otherwise, in a manner that is for the personal advantage of any Elected Member. This principle is consistent with the political neutrality obligations that apply to Council staff under Chapter 9 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).

6.4 Consequences of non-compliance

Breaches of this policy by staff will be managed under Council's Code of Conduct for CEO and Staff and relevant HR processes, which may include formal disciplinary action. In serious cases, breaches may also engage obligations under the Information Act 2002 (NT) or the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth).

If you are uncertain whether a media interaction or social media post complies with this policy, ask the CEO before proceeding. Acting in good faith on the basis of CEO guidance will always be taken into account.

7. Elected Members' media obligations

7.1 Role of the President

Pursuant to section 59 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the role of the President includes speaking on behalf of Council regarding Council's decisions, policies, agreed positions and Council-endorsed events. The President should coordinate media engagement on these matters with the CEO.

7.2 Personal comment

Elected Members are entitled to engage with the media and make public comment in their individual capacity. When doing so, they must make it clear that they are speaking in a personal capacity and not on behalf of Wagait Shire Council.

When approached by the media on Council matters, Elected Members are strongly encouraged to contact the CEO first to ensure they are fully and accurately briefed before making public comment. This protects the Elected Member as much as it protects the Council.

7.3 Social media — elected member obligations

Elected Members are encouraged to maintain an active and positive social media presence in their elected role. This engagement builds community connection and transparency. However, Elected Members must:

- clearly state on any personal social media account that the views expressed are their own and do not represent the official position of Wagait Shire Council;
- not publish confidential Council information, including matters discussed in closed sessions;
- not make statements that could reasonably be interpreted as official Council policy without CEO authorisation; and
- comply with the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth) and Council's Code of Conduct in all online conduct.

Suggested disclaimer for Elected Member social media pages: 'The views expressed on this page are my own personal views as an Elected Member of Wagait Shire Council. They do not represent the official position of the Council.'

8. Social media quick reference

The following table summarises the key dos and don'ts for all Elected Members and staff when using social media in any context connected to Council. This applies to both official Council accounts and personal accounts.

Do	Do not
Clearly identify when expressing personal opinions, separate from your Council role.	Share, comment on, or post confidential Council information — including in-camera decisions or legal matters.

Use respectful, factual and professional language at all times.	Post content that could be interpreted as an official Council position without CEO authorisation.
Direct media or public enquiries about Council matters to the CEO.	Use Council branding, logos or official credentials on personal social media accounts.
Report any threatening, abusive or harmful online conduct to the CEO promptly.	Engage in or encourage online conflict, harassment, or defamatory commentary.
Comply with the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth) and Council's Code of Conduct.	Post content about Council staff, Elected Members or community members that could be considered discriminatory or harmful.
Keep personal and professional social media profiles clearly separated.	Make media contact on Council matters without prior CEO approval.

9. Caretaker period

During a caretaker period, Elected Members and staff must exercise heightened caution in all media engagement. The caretaker period commences on the day nominations open for a general election and ends on the day the newly elected Council first meets.

During a caretaker period:

- the Council must not make announcements of new policies, initiatives or significant commitments that could be seen as seeking to influence the outcome of the election;
- all media releases must be approved by the CEO and, where appropriate, the Council President;
- Elected Members who are candidates in the election must take particular care to distinguish their candidate communications from their Council communications; and
- staff must not engage in any media activity that could be perceived as supporting or opposing any candidate or party.

Refer to the Council's Caretaker Policy (GOV-CAR-01) for the full framework governing Council conduct during election and caretaker periods.

If you are unsure whether a communication is appropriate during a caretaker period, check with the CEO first. The default position is to defer non-essential communications until after the election period.

10. Crisis communications

All crisis or sensitive media communications must be coordinated through the CEO or their authorised delegate. In the event of an emergency or significant incident, the CEO will activate the Council's crisis communication response.

During a crisis:

- the CEO is the sole authorised spokesperson unless a specific delegate is formally appointed;

- Elected Members and staff must refrain from uncoordinated public comment until a response is approved and issued by the CEO;
- all media enquiries must be directed to the CEO immediately; and
- all public statements must be factual, consistent and based only on confirmed information.

Where an emergency also engages the Council's Emergency Communications Policy (GOV-EC-01), both policies operate concurrently. The CEO must ensure that media communications and emergency communications are coordinated and consistent.

In a crisis, a single clear voice protects the Council and the community. Contradictory or unauthorised statements can cause serious harm and undermine public trust at exactly the moment it is most needed. When in doubt, say nothing and contact the CEO.

11. Privacy and information obligations

Wagait Shire Council is bound by the Information Act 2002 (NT), which establishes ten Information Privacy Principles governing the collection, storage, use and disclosure of personal information. All media and social media activity must comply with these principles.

Specifically, all Elected Members and staff must ensure that media or social media communications do not result in the unauthorised disclosure of personal information about any individual — including community members, Council staff, or Elected Members.

When uncertain about whether information is confidential or whether its disclosure may breach privacy obligations, seek guidance from the CEO before making any disclosure.

Examples of information that must not be disclosed through media or social media: personal details of ratepayers; contents of in-camera Council resolutions; legal advice received by Council; employment or HR matters relating to staff; and information about individuals received in a Council capacity.

12. Policy compliance and training

The CEO is responsible for ensuring all Elected Members and staff are made aware of this policy at the commencement of their role, and that any material updates are communicated promptly.

The CEO will provide a brief policy induction covering media obligations to all newly elected members following each general election. This induction should be completed within the first four weeks of the new council term.

Any breach of this policy will be assessed by the CEO and addressed under the applicable Code of Conduct or HR processes, proportionate to the nature and impact of the breach.

13. Associated documents

- GOV-CAR-01 Caretaker Policy
- GOV-COC-01 Code of Conduct – Council Members
- GOV-EC-01 Emergency Communications Policy
- GOV-FCP-01 Fraud and Corruption Protection Policy
- HR Code of Conduct – CEO and Staff
- Information Privacy Principles – Information Act 2002 (NT)

14. References and legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) — in particular s.59 (role of the President) and Chapter 9 (staff obligations)
- Information Act 2002 (NT) — Information Privacy Principles
- Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth)
- Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024 (Cth)
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government
- LGANT Media and Communications Guidance

15. Review history

Date approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Next review
20/06/2015	Council – Res. 2015/195 Moved: Cr S Gamble Seconded: Cr B Irvine Vote: AIF	2015/195	Next council election
19/11/2019	Council – Res. 2019/546 Moved: Cr N White Seconded: Cr M Vaughan Vote: AIF	2019/546	Next term of Council
15/02/2022	Council – Res. 2022/034 Moved: VP Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Michael Vaughan Vote: AIF	2022/034	Next term of Council
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – SOW Policy Review Phase 1	TBD	Next council election, or earlier if required by a change in the LG Act 2019 (NT), the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth), or



			at the request of the CEO or Audit Committee
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RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy | Governance / Finance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT), AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 and NT ICAC Guidelines.



Policy No.	GOV-RM-01	Version	3.0
Category	Governance / Finance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	February 2027, or earlier per Section 16
LG Act 2019 Ref.	LG (General) Regulations s.6(1)	Applies To	All workplace participants

1. Purpose

In plain terms: Risk management is how the Council systematically identifies things that could go wrong, works out how serious they are, and puts measures in place to reduce the chance of them happening or the damage they cause. This policy sets the framework for doing that consistently across all council activities.

Risk management is a central element of Wagait Shire Council's corporate governance. It spans strategic management, internal controls, business planning, project management and financial stewardship. An effective risk management framework provides reasonable assurance that:

- council operations are efficient and effective;
- public assets are properly safeguarded;
- applicable legislation and council policies are complied with; and
- financial reporting is accurate and reliable.

Effective risk management is critical to the council achieving its strategic goals and delivering quality services to the Wagait Shire community.

Best practice alignment: This policy is based on AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management Guidelines, the ACLG Good Governance Guide, and the NT Local Government (General) Regulations s.6(1). It is reviewed annually to ensure it remains current and effective.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all workplace participants of Wagait Shire Council. It covers all council activities, including but not limited to:

- strategic and operational planning;
- financial management and internal controls;
- project management and capital works;
- service delivery and community programmes;
- asset management;
- human resources and workplace health and safety; and
- information technology and data governance.

This policy applies to activities conducted at council premises and to activities conducted off-site or remotely where those activities relate to council business.

WHS note: Workplace health and safety risk management obligations are covered by this policy in conjunction with the council's WHS framework. The Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT) imposes specific risk management obligations on the council as an employer. Where there is any inconsistency between this policy and WHS-specific obligations, the WHS legislation prevails.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Risk	The effect of uncertainty on objectives. Risk can have positive or negative consequences and may be expressed in terms of likelihood and consequence.
Risk Management	A coordinated set of activities and methods used to direct an organisation and to control the many risks that can affect its ability to achieve its objectives. Based on AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018.
Risk Appetite	The amount and type of risk the Council is willing to accept in pursuit of its objectives, as determined by the Council.
Risk Register	A documented record of identified risks, their assessed likelihood and consequence, current controls, assigned owners, and planned treatment actions. Maintained by the CEO and reviewed regularly.
Risk Category	A defined domain of risk used to classify and organise risks in the Risk Register, ensuring comprehensive coverage across all council activities.
Risk Treatment	An action or set of actions taken to modify a risk, including avoiding, reducing, transferring or accepting the risk.

Likelihood	The probability that a risk will occur, rated on a scale defined in the Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria document.
Consequence	The outcome or impact of a risk event, rated on a scale defined in the Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria document.
Risk Matrix	A tool used to evaluate and prioritise risks by plotting likelihood against consequence. Referenced in the Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria document.
Internal Control	A process designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding operational effectiveness and efficiency, reliable financial reporting, and compliance with laws and council policies.
Inherent Risk	The level of risk existing before any controls or treatments are applied.
Residual Risk	The level of risk remaining after controls and treatments have been applied.
Risk Maturity	The level of capability and consistency with which the council identifies, manages and improves its risk management practices. Assessed annually using the tool at Appendix A.
Workplace Participant	All elected members, council employees, contractors, consultants, committee members and any individual or group undertaking activity for or on behalf of the Council.

4. Risk management principles

The Council's risk management framework is grounded in the following principles, consistent with AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018:

Integrated	Structured	Inclusive	Dynamic
Risk management is embedded in all council activities, not treated as a separate function.	The framework follows a consistent, evidence-based approach aligned to AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018.	All stakeholders, including staff and elected members, are engaged in identifying and managing risks.	The framework anticipates and responds to changes in the council's internal and external environment.

The Council is committed to maintaining a proactive risk management culture that emphasises integrity, ethical values and competence. It is recognised that not all risks can be eliminated; however, controls should reduce the likelihood and/or consequence of risks occurring to within the council's risk appetite.

5. Risk appetite

The Council's risk appetite defines the amount and type of risk the Council is willing to accept in pursuit of its objectives. Risk appetite is set by the Council and forms the foundation for all risk assessment and treatment decisions.

The risk appetite is reviewed:

- annually, as part of the strategic planning cycle;
- following a Council election, as incoming elected members may have a different risk posture; and
- whenever there is a material change in the council's operating environment, financial position or legislative obligations.

Risk appetite level	Areas of application	Approach
Low appetite (risk averse)	Safety, legal compliance, financial integrity, fraud and corruption	The Council will not accept risks in these areas beyond minimum unavoidable levels. Strong controls are mandatory. Zero tolerance for deliberate non-compliance.
Medium appetite (risk cautious)	Governance, service delivery, asset management, reputational matters	The Council will accept some risk where it is necessary to deliver community outcomes. Controls must be in place and monitored. Risks are escalated promptly.
Higher appetite (risk open)	Innovation, community engagement, partnerships, strategic opportunities	The Council is willing to accept a higher level of risk in pursuit of strategic objectives and community benefit, provided risks are identified, assessed and managed.

6. Risk management process

The Council's risk management process follows the seven-step framework based on AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018, as set out in the table below. The process is applied to all significant council activities and is documented in the Risk Register.

Step	Stage	Description
Step 1	Establish context	Define the goals, operating environment and assessment criteria for risk management. Understand internal and external factors that may affect the council's ability to achieve its objectives.
Step 2	Identify risks	Identify all risks that could affect the achievement of the council's objectives, using the risk categories in Section 6.1. Consult widely with staff, elected members and stakeholders. Record identified risks in the Risk Register.
Step 3	Analyse risks	Assess each identified risk in terms of its likelihood and consequence using the Risk Matrix. Determine the inherent risk level before controls and the residual risk level after controls.

Step 4	Evaluate risks	Determine whether the residual risk is acceptable within the council's risk appetite. Prioritise risks requiring treatment and document findings in the Risk Register.
Step 5	Treat risks	Apply one or more treatment strategies: avoid the activity generating the risk; reduce likelihood of occurrence; reduce consequence of occurrence; transfer the risk (for example, through insurance or contractual arrangements); or accept the risk where it falls within appetite.
Step 6	Communicate and consult	Engage all relevant stakeholders throughout the risk management process. Ensure staff and elected members understand identified risks, the rationale for treatment decisions, and their individual responsibilities.
Step 7	Monitor and review	Assign a responsible officer to each risk and control. The CEO monitors the effectiveness of risk treatments and reports progress to the Audit Committee at regular intervals. The Risk Register is reviewed at least annually.

Operational note: The Risk Register is the primary tool for documenting and tracking identified risks. It must be maintained by the CEO, reviewed by the Audit Committee at least twice per year, and tabled at Council at least annually. A copy of the Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria document, which contains the Risk Matrix and rating scales, must be accessible to all responsible officers.

6.1 Risk Register minimum content

To ensure consistency and comparability over time, all entries in the Risk Register must contain the following minimum fields:

Field	Description
Risk ID	A unique identifier for each risk entry (e.g. RM-001).
Risk category	The category from the standard taxonomy in Section 6.1.
Risk description	A clear statement of the risk, describing what could happen and why.
Risk owner	The responsible officer accountable for managing the risk and its controls.
Inherent likelihood	The likelihood rating before controls are applied, using the scale in the Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria document.
Inherent consequence	The consequence rating before controls are applied.
Inherent risk rating	The combined inherent risk level (from the Risk Matrix).
Current controls	A description of existing controls and treatments in place.
Residual likelihood	The likelihood rating after controls are applied.
Residual consequence	The consequence rating after controls are applied.

Residual risk rating	The combined residual risk level (from the Risk Matrix). Compared against the council's risk appetite.
Treatment actions	Any additional treatment actions required to further reduce the residual risk, with assigned owner and due date.
Status	Current status of the risk and any treatment actions (e.g. On track, Overdue, Completed, Escalated).
Last reviewed	The date the risk entry was last reviewed and updated.

Template note: The Risk Register template is maintained in the Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria document. The CEO is responsible for ensuring all responsible officers are familiar with the template and record risks consistently. The template may be updated by the CEO without Council approval, provided the minimum fields above are retained.

6.2 Risk categories

All risks recorded in the Risk Register must be assigned to one of the following standard categories. Using a consistent taxonomy ensures comprehensive coverage and makes it easier to identify gaps in the council's risk profile.

Risk category	Description	Examples
Strategic	Risks to the council's ability to achieve its long-term objectives and community outcomes.	Failure to deliver the Strategic Plan; loss of key partnerships; community dissatisfaction.
Financial	Risks to the council's financial position, reporting accuracy, and stewardship of public funds.	Budget overruns; fraud or misappropriation; rate arrears; inaccurate financial statements.
Operational	Risks to day-to-day service delivery, asset management, and business continuity.	Service disruption; infrastructure failure; contractor non-performance; system outages.
Compliance and Legal	Risks arising from failure to meet legislative, regulatory or policy obligations.	Non-compliance with LG Act 2019 NT; failure to meet statutory deadlines; legal proceedings.
Reputational	Risks to the council's standing with the community, government bodies and other stakeholders.	Adverse media coverage; elected member conduct; public complaints; audit failures.
Environmental	Risks arising from natural hazards, climate events or environmental impacts on council operations.	Cyclone, flood or extreme heat disrupting operations; environmental non-compliance.
Workforce	Risks related to the council's ability to attract, retain and manage its workforce.	Key person dependency; staff turnover; workplace injury; skills gaps.

Technology	Risks to the security, integrity and availability of the council's information systems and data.	Cyber attack; data breach; system failure; loss of financial records.
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Coverage check: At each annual Risk Register review, the CEO should confirm that at least one risk has been considered for each category. If a category has no registered risks, this should be noted and the rationale documented (for example, the category is not applicable given the council's current activities).

7. Risk management approach

The Council will maintain an internal control framework based on a proactive risk management culture. The key elements of this approach are:

7.1 Framework maintenance

The Council will maintain a risk management framework that ensures risks are identified, and controls are established, documented, maintained and adhered to across all council activities. The framework will be reviewed annually and updated to respond to emerging risks and changes in the operating environment.

7.2 Acceptable risk levels

The types of risks identified in the framework are those which may prevent the council from meeting its objectives or from maximising its opportunities. While not all risks can be eliminated, internal controls must reduce the likelihood of risks occurring to within acceptable limits, as defined by the Council's risk appetite.

7.3 Ethical culture

The Council will foster a culture that emphasises integrity, ethical values and competence across all levels of the organisation. All workplace participants are expected to act with honesty and in the best interests of the community in identifying and managing risks.

7.4 Cost/benefit approach to controls

The CEO must apply a cost/benefit analysis in developing internal controls. The cost of a control should not exceed the benefit it provides in terms of risk reduction. Controls that are disproportionate to the risk they address will be reconsidered in consultation with the Audit Committee.

7.5 Insurance and risk transfer

The Council will maintain appropriate insurance coverage as part of its risk treatment strategy. Insurance is a key mechanism for transferring the financial consequences of risks that cannot be fully avoided or

reduced. The CEO will review the adequacy of the council's insurance arrangements annually as part of the risk management review cycle, having regard to:

- the council's current risk profile and any material changes in operations;
- minimum coverage requirements under applicable NT legislation; and
- advice from the council's insurers and legal advisors.

A summary of the council's insurance coverage will be reported to the Audit Committee annually.

7.6 Business continuity and disaster recovery

The Council will maintain business continuity and disaster recovery plans as part of its risk treatment strategy for high-consequence operational risks. Given the council's remote location and exposure to natural hazard events such as cyclones and flooding, business continuity planning is a critical element of the risk management framework.

Business continuity and disaster recovery plans will be:

- reviewed annually as part of the risk management review cycle;
- tested periodically to confirm they remain effective and that staff understand their roles; and
- updated following any significant operational disruption or change in the council's operating environment.

7.7 Continuous improvement

The risk management framework is not static. The CEO will identify lessons learned from risk events, near misses, audit findings and external reviews, and incorporate them into the framework on a continuous basis. Significant improvements to the framework will be presented to the Audit Committee before being adopted.

The CEO will use the Risk Management Maturity Self-Assessment at Appendix A to track the council's progress in improving its risk management capability over time. Results will be reported to the Audit Committee annually.

8. Roles and responsibilities

The following table sets out the key responsibilities for implementing and maintaining this policy:

Role	Responsibilities
Council	Set and review the council's risk appetite; receive and consider risk management reports from the CEO and Audit Committee; adopt the Risk Management Policy; support a culture of proactive risk management.

Audit Committee	Provide independent oversight of the risk management framework; review the Risk Register and internal audit findings at regular intervals; advise Council on the adequacy of risk treatments and internal controls; recommend policy updates where required.
Chief Executive Officer	Establish, maintain and review the risk management framework and Risk Register; present updates to the Audit Committee before tabling to Council; ensure internal controls are in place and effective; apply cost/benefit analysis in developing controls; review insurance adequacy annually; report on risk management performance; ensure all staff fulfil their risk management obligations.
Senior Officers / Managers	Identify and assess risks within their areas of responsibility; implement and maintain assigned controls; monitor residual risk levels; escalate emerging risks to the CEO promptly in accordance with the escalation matrix at Appendix B.
All Workplace Participants	Conduct duties in accordance with internal control policies and procedures; report identified risks and control failures to their manager or the CEO promptly; complete required risk management training.

9. Internal control framework

The Council will maintain an internal control framework to safeguard public resources, ensure legislative compliance, and support reliable financial reporting. The essential elements of an effective internal control framework are set out below:

Control element	Description
Organisational structure and culture	An organisation chart showing council functions, committees and responsible officers. A culture that emphasises integrity, ethical values and competence.
Delegations of authority	Documented delegations of financial and administrative authority consistent with the Delegations Manual (GOV-DEL-01).
Policies and procedures	Council policies, the Accounting and Policy Manual, and operational procedures that define how activities are carried out.
Trained and qualified staff	Staff with appropriate qualifications, skills and training for their roles, including risk management awareness training.
Information technology controls	System access controls, data security protocols, audit logs and IT governance arrangements.
Internal audit	An internal audit plan to review and test internal controls, with findings reported to the Audit Committee.
External audit and legal advice	Annual financial statement audit by a registered external auditor; access to legal and professional advisors as required.
Senior management compliance assurance	Senior officers certifying compliance with key controls and policies as part of the annual reporting cycle.

Risk identification and assessment	The Risk Register and Risk Matrix, maintained in the Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria document.
Insurance and risk transfer	Appropriate insurance coverage maintained as a risk treatment mechanism. Reviewed annually by the CEO.
Business continuity planning	Business continuity and disaster recovery plans maintained for high-consequence operational risks. Reviewed annually and tested periodically.

Legislative note: Section 6(1) of the Local Government (General) Regulations requires the CEO to establish internal controls and an associated framework to ensure council objectives are achieved efficiently and effectively. Updates to the framework must be presented to the Audit Committee before being tabled to Council for adoption.

10. Accounting policies and procedures

Section 6(c) of the Local Government (General) Regulations requires the Council to maintain internal accounting policies and procedures. The Council's accounting policies and procedures are documented in the Accounting and Policy Manual, which is the primary reference document for this purpose.

The Accounting and Policy Manual must be reviewed annually by the Finance Manager and approved by the CEO. It must include, at a minimum, the matters required by Regulation 6(c), including the organisation chart, accounting policies, financial reporting timelines, delegations of authority, internal control procedures, and financial system operating procedures.

Operational note: The Accounting and Policy Manual must be accessible to all staff with financial responsibilities. The CEO is responsible for ensuring all relevant staff are aware of updates to the Manual and that training is provided where required.

11. Review of internal controls

The Council will maintain an internal audit plan to review and test the effectiveness of its internal controls. This plan is documented in the Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria document.

The annual audit of the council's financial statements by the external auditor provides an independent review of the control environment. Any observations identified by the external auditor are raised in a management letter and presented to the Audit Committee. All recommendations must be tracked to resolution.

The CEO will report to the Audit Committee at least twice per year on:

- the current status of the Risk Register, including any new or escalated risks;

- the effectiveness of existing controls and any control failures identified;
- the progress of risk treatment actions assigned to responsible officers;
- the adequacy of current insurance coverage; and
- any material changes to the internal control framework since the previous report.

Best practice: A dedicated risk management report should be a standing agenda item at each Audit Committee meeting. This ensures the Committee maintains an active oversight role rather than reviewing risk only at year-end.

12. Incident reporting and escalation

All workplace participants are required to report risk events, near misses and control failures to their manager or directly to the CEO as soon as practicable after they occur. Prompt reporting enables the council to:

- prevent recurrence by addressing root causes;
- update the Risk Register to reflect actual risk experience;
- notify relevant bodies (such as insurers, ICAC, or NT Police) where required; and
- meet any mandatory legislative reporting obligations.

The escalation pathway for each risk rating level is set out in Appendix B. All workplace participants must familiarise themselves with the escalation matrix and follow the required process when a risk event or near miss occurs.

The CEO will maintain a record of all reported incidents and the actions taken in response. Significant incidents will be reported to the Audit Committee at the next available meeting and to the full Council where the incident has material governance, financial or reputational implications.

Good practice: A no-blame reporting culture is essential to effective risk management. Workplace participants who report risk events or near misses in good faith will not be subject to any disciplinary action for the act of reporting. This policy supports open and honest identification of risks at all levels of the organisation.

13. Training and awareness

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that all workplace participants receive appropriate risk management training and awareness. This includes:

- induction training for all new staff and elected members covering the council's risk management framework and their individual obligations;
- annual refresher training on the Risk Register, the Risk Matrix, the risk categories, and any material changes to the risk management framework;

- targeted training for staff with specific risk management responsibilities, such as responsible officers assigned to individual risks; and
- briefings for elected members on significant risks affecting the council's strategic objectives.

Operational note: Training records must be maintained by the CEO and made available for review by the Audit Committee as part of its oversight of the risk management framework.

14. Privacy and records management

Risk management records, including the Risk Register, incident reports, and risk treatment documentation, may contain sensitive information about staff, elected members, contractors and council operations. All such records are maintained in accordance with the Information Act 2002 (NT) and the Council's Privacy Policy.

Access to risk management records is restricted to authorised persons only. The CEO determines who has access to the Risk Register and incident records, having regard to the sensitivity of the information and the need-to-know principle. The Audit Committee has access to all risk management records as part of its oversight role.

Records retention: Risk management records must be retained in accordance with the council's records management obligations under the Information Act 2002 (NT). The Risk Register should be retained for a minimum of seven years to support longitudinal analysis of risk trends.

15. Associated documents

- Wagait Shire Council Strategic Plan
- Wagait Shire Council Annual Business Plan and Budget
- Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria document (internal, maintained by CEO)
- Accounting and Policy Manual (internal)
- GOV-FCP-01 Fraud and Corruption Protection Policy
- GOV-AC-01 Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- GOV-DEL-01 Delegations Manual
- GOV-RC-01 Rates and Charges Policy

16. References and legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT)
- Local Government (General) Regulations (NT), Section 6(1) and Section 6(c)
- Local Government (Accounting) Regulations (NT)
- Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT)

- Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management Guidelines
- Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT)
- Information Act 2002 (NT)
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government
- NT ICAC Corruption Prevention Framework (current edition)

17. Review history

Date approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Next review
21/02/2023	Council – Res. 2023/29 Moved: Cr Sarah Smith Seconded: President Neil White Vote: AIF	2023/29	February 2024
19/03/2024	Council – Res. 2024/056 Moved: Cr P Clee Seconded: President N White Vote: AIF	2024/056	February 2025
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	February 2027, or earlier if triggered by a material change in risk legislation, a significant risk event, a change of Council, or at the request of the Audit Committee

Appendix A: Risk management maturity self-assessment

The CEO completes this self-assessment annually, typically as part of the end-of-financial-year risk management review. Results are reported to the Audit Committee and used to track improvement in the council's risk management capability over time. For each criterion, select the maturity level that best describes the council's current state.

Assessment period: _____ Completed by: _____ Date: _____

Criterion	Initial	Developing	Established	Optimising
Policy and framework	No formal policy. Risk management is ad hoc.	Policy exists but is not consistently applied.	Policy is in place, understood and applied consistently.	Policy is regularly reviewed and proactively improved based on emerging practice.
Risk identification and register	Risks identified informally or reactively.	Some risks recorded but the register is incomplete or inconsistent.	Risk Register maintained with all required fields. Reviewed at least annually.	Register reviewed quarterly. Risk categories used consistently. New risks identified proactively.
Risk treatment and controls	No formal controls documented.	Some controls documented but not all tested or monitored.	Controls documented for all registered risks. Tested annually.	Controls regularly tested and improved. Cost/benefit analysis applied. Residual risk tracked.
Reporting and oversight	No regular reporting to Council or Audit Committee.	Occasional reporting. No consistent format or frequency.	Regular reports to Audit Committee (at least twice per year) and Council (annually).	Standing risk report at each Audit Committee meeting. Council receives exception reports as required.
Culture and training	Risk management not embedded in culture. No training.	Some awareness of risk management. Training inconsistent.	Induction and annual refresher training delivered. No-blame reporting culture in place.	Risk management embedded in all planning and decision-making. Staff proactively identify and report risks.
Continuous improvement	No lessons learned process.	Some lessons captured but not systematically incorporated.	Lessons from incidents and audits incorporated into the framework annually.	Continuous improvement process embedded. External benchmarking conducted periodically.

Overall maturity rating (circle one): Initial / Developing / Established / Optimising

Key improvement priorities for the next 12 months:



Appendix B: Risk escalation matrix

All workplace participants must follow the escalation pathways below when a risk event, near miss, or control failure is identified. When in doubt about the risk rating, escalate to the next level. Escalation should never be delayed while a rating is being determined.

Risk rating	Colour	Escalation pathway	Required actions
Low	Green	Manager monitors	Risk owner manages within normal operations. Reviewed at next scheduled Risk Register review. No escalation required unless status changes.
Medium	Amber	Notify CEO within 5 business days	Risk owner notifies CEO in writing within 5 business days. CEO determines whether additional treatment is required. Reported to Audit Committee at next scheduled meeting.
High	Red	Notify CEO and Audit Committee Chair within 24 hours	Risk owner notifies CEO and Audit Committee Chair within 24 hours. CEO convenes a response meeting within 5 business days. Audit Committee informed at next available opportunity. Treatment plan documented and tracked.
Extreme	Dark Red	Immediately notify CEO and Council President	Risk owner immediately notifies CEO and Council President. CEO convenes an emergency response meeting within 24 hours. Council notified at next available meeting (special meeting if required). External notification (insurers, ICAC, NT Police, regulators) as appropriate.

Important: Escalation does not transfer responsibility for the risk from the risk owner to the CEO or Council. The risk owner remains responsible for managing the risk and implementing the treatment plan. Escalation ensures the right people are informed and can provide support.

For all escalations above Low rating, the risk owner must provide a brief written summary to the CEO containing:

- a description of the risk event or near miss;
- the risk category and current rating;
- the immediate actions already taken; and
- any recommended treatment actions.

CASUAL VACANCY ON COUNCIL

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT).



Policy No.	GOV-CVC-001	Version	4.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active - Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next term of Council
LG Act 2019 Ref.	LG Act 2019 - Chapter 4, Part 4.2, Subdivision 2	Applies To	All workplace participants and council members

Best practice alignment: This policy is based on Chapter 4, Part 4.2 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the ACLG Good Governance Guide, and the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT). It is reviewed at the commencement of each new Council term to ensure it remains current and effective.

1. Purpose

In plain terms: Sometimes a Councillor leaves their position before the end of their term — because of resignation, disqualification, or other reasons. This policy explains how Council decides whether to hold a by-election or appoint someone to fill that vacancy, and what steps must be followed.

This policy provides clear direction for the process to be followed when a casual vacancy arises on the Wagait Shire Council, including the circumstances in which a vacancy may be filled by appointment, by by-election, or left vacant, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). It supports Council in responding to casual vacancies in a timely, transparent, and legally compliant manner.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all elected members of Wagait Shire Council and to the Council as a body when considering how to fill a casual vacancy. It also applies to the CEO in administering the vacancy process and in meeting notification obligations to external bodies.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
By-Election	An election held to fill a casual vacancy on Council, as provided for in Chapter 8, Part 8.2 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
Casual Vacancy	A vacancy that arises on Council other than at a general election, as a result of one of the circumstances specified in Section 50 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
CEO	The Chief Executive Officer of Wagait Shire Council.
Co-option	The process by which Council appoints a person to fill a casual vacancy by vote of existing members, without holding a by-election.
Eligible Person	A person who satisfies the eligibility requirements for membership of the Council as set out in Section 46 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
Quorum	The minimum number of members required to be present for a Council meeting to be validly constituted, as specified in Section 64 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
The Act	The Local Government Act 2019 (NT).

4. Policy Statement

Wagait Shire Council recognises that the community is best served by a fully constituted Council. Where a casual vacancy arises, Council is committed to filling it in a timely, transparent, and legally compliant manner, ensuring the selection process is fair, that eligible persons in the community have a genuine opportunity to be considered, and that Council's decision is made in the best interests of the Wagait community.

Council also recognises that a casual vacancy may affect its capacity to form a quorum and conduct its business. This consideration will be taken into account when deciding how and when to fill a vacancy. The CEO must advise Council of any quorum implications at the earliest opportunity.

5. Procedures

5.1 Circumstances in Which a Casual Vacancy Arises

Pursuant to Section 50 of the Act, a member of Council ceases to hold office if the person:

- dies;
- is disqualified from office under Section 47 of the Act; or
- resigns by written notice given to the CEO.

Upon becoming aware of any of the above circumstances, the CEO must notify Council at the earliest practicable opportunity, advise Council of the time remaining until the next general election, and advise Council of any impact on its ability to form a quorum.

5.2 Options for Filling a Casual Vacancy

Pursuant to Section 54 of the Act, the following rules apply to filling a casual vacancy:

- (a) More than 18 months before the next general election: Council must hold a by-election to fill the vacancy.
- (b) Less than 18 months, but not less than six months, before the next general election: Council may appoint a person by vote of existing members, or may resolve to hold a by-election.
- (c) Six months or less before the next general election: Council may appoint a person by vote of existing members, or may resolve to leave the office vacant until the next general election.

Important: Where Council resolves to leave a vacancy unfilled, the CEO must monitor the Council's quorum capacity at each subsequent meeting. If the vacancy materially affects Council's ability to conduct its business, the CEO should recommend that Council reconsider filling the vacancy.

5.3 Process for Co-opting a Person to Fill a Vacancy

5.3.1 Where Council resolves to fill a casual vacancy by co-option, the following process must be followed:

Step 1 - Expression of Interest: The CEO must seek expressions of interest from eligible persons by advertising the vacancy:

- on the Council's website;
- on the Council's social media pages;
- on hardcopy notice boards at the Council office and at the local supermarket; and
- by any other means the CEO considers appropriate.

The advertisement must clearly state eligibility requirements, the process for expressing interest, and the closing date. The expression of interest period must be open for a minimum of seven calendar days.

Step 2 - List of Candidates: The CEO must compile a list of all persons who have expressed interest and present it to Council. Council may, by resolution, add further names where those persons are eligible and have indicated their willingness to serve.

Step 3 - Presentations (optional): Council may, at its discretion, invite candidates to make a short presentation. If presentations are offered to one candidate, they must be offered equally to all.

Step 4 - Selection: Council must select one person from the list by vote of the existing members at a Council meeting. The vote must be conducted openly and the result recorded in the minutes.

5.4 Criteria for Selection

In selecting a person to fill a casual vacancy, Council must give due consideration to:

- the eligibility requirements for Council membership under Section 46 of the Act;
- the length of the candidate's residence in the community; and

- the candidate's demonstrated interest in and commitment to community affairs.

Council may also have regard to any other matters it considers relevant to ensuring the candidate is suitable and willing to serve for the remainder of the current term.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Council (Full Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide how the casual vacancy is to be filled in accordance with the Act and this policy. • Conduct the selection process fairly and transparently, having regard to the criteria in Section 5.4. • Vote to appoint a co-opted member where Council resolves to fill the vacancy by co-option. • Consider the impact of the vacancy on Council's quorum and operational capacity when deciding how to fill the vacancy.
Principal Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preside at the Council meeting at which the vacancy is considered and, where applicable, the selection is made. • Ensure the selection process is conducted in accordance with this policy and that all members have a full and fair opportunity to participate.
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify Council promptly upon becoming aware of any circumstance giving rise to a casual vacancy. • Advise Council of the legal options available and the implications of each. • Administer the expression of interest process, including advertising and compiling the list of candidates. • Notify the NT Electoral Commission and any other required authority within the timeframes specified by the Act. • Maintain the record of the decision and, where applicable, the appointment, and update the Council's register of members.

7. Compliance and Monitoring

7.1 Compliance

This policy must be followed whenever a casual vacancy arises on Council. Failure to follow the correct process may expose Council to legal challenge of any appointment. The CEO must ensure that all steps are followed and documented, and must seek legal advice if there is any doubt about the correct approach.

7.2 Monitoring

The CEO is responsible for maintaining a record of all casual vacancies, the decisions made by Council in response, and the outcomes of any selection or election process, to be maintained in Council's governance register and made available for inspection on request.

7.3 Policy Review

This policy must be reviewed at the commencement of each new Council term and whenever there are relevant changes to the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) or the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT).

8. Associated Documents

- Election of Principal Member Policy (GOV-EPM-001)
- Procedures for Council and Council Committee Meetings Policy (GOV-MTG-001)
- Code of Conduct for Elected and Committee Members (GOV-COC-001)

9. References and Legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) - Chapter 4, Part 4.2, Subdivision 2 (Sections 50, 54, 64)
- Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 (NT)

10. Review History

Date Approved	Approved By	Resolution No.	Next Review
20/09/2016	Council – Res. 2016/81 Approved By:Moved: Cr Shenagh Gamble Seconded: President Peter Clee Vote: AIF	2016/81	Next Council election
17/01/2017	Council – Res. 2017/07 Approved By:Moved Cr Shenagh Gamble Seconded: Vice President Brad Irvine Vote: AIF	2017/07	Next Council election
19/10/2021	Council – Res. 2021/186 Approved By:Moved Vice President Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Noeletta McKenzie Vote: AIF	2021/186	Next term of council
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with the LG Act 2019 (NT), the Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT), the Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25 and current best practice.



Document No.	GOV-EMC-01	Version	4.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Every two years, or earlier if required
Legislation	LG Act 2019 (NT) ss.82, 114; Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT)	Applies To	Emergency Management Committee members, CEO and Council

1. Establishment

In plain terms: This document establishes the Emergency Management Committee as an advisory body to the Council. It sets out who is on the Committee, what it does, and how it operates — so that Wagait Shire is as prepared as possible for emergencies.

This document sets out the Terms of Reference for the Emergency Management Committee (the Committee). The Committee is established as an advisory committee to the Council pursuant to Part 5.2, section 82, of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).

Wagait Shire Council has a role under the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT), and the Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25, to ensure the wellbeing of the community during an emergency.

The Council must also ensure the safety and wellbeing of its own staff so it can continue to conduct normal business as required. The Council and its staff understand that, during an emergency, other priorities may temporarily overtake normal activities.

Legislative framework: The Committee operates within the framework of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) (Part 5.2 — Council Committees), the Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT), and the Territory

Emergency Plan 2024/25. Committee members should familiarise themselves with these instruments as part of their induction.

2. Scope

The aim of the Committee is to ensure the Wagait Shire, its population, environs and facilities, is prepared to prevent, respond to, and recover from an emergency.

The Committee provides independent advice and assistance to the Wagait Shire Council and the Chief Executive Officer across all four phases of emergency management:

Phase	Description
Prevention and mitigation	Regulatory and physical measures to ensure that emergencies are prevented, or their effects minimised. Includes the identification of hazards, assessment of threats to life and property, and measures to reduce potential loss of life and property damage.
Preparedness	Arrangements to ensure that, should an emergency occur, all resources and services needed to cope with its effects can be efficiently mobilised and deployed. Includes planning, training, exercises and community awareness.
Response	Actions taken in anticipation of, during, and immediately after an emergency to ensure that its effects are minimised and that people affected receive immediate relief and support.
Recovery	The coordinated process of supporting emergency-affected communities in the reconstruction of physical infrastructure and the restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing.

The Committee also advises on compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements applicable to emergency management in the Wagait Shire.

3. Authority

With due consideration of legal and confidentiality implications, the Committee is authorised, within the scope of its role and responsibilities, to:

- obtain any relevant information it requires from any Council employee or external party;
- discuss any relevant matters with external parties;
- request, via the Chief Executive Officer, the attendance of any Council employee at Committee meetings; and
- obtain external legal or other professional advice, as considered necessary to fulfil its responsibilities.

Important: The Committee is an advisory body only. It has no power or authority to override, amend or contradict Council decisions and policies. All recommendations require consideration and approval by the full Council before taking effect.

4. Membership and tenure

The Committee will comprise a minimum of five members. The following table sets out the composition of the Committee:

Role	Number	Notes
Chair	1	Independent member — not a Council employee or Elected Member. Appointed for knowledge of emergency management or local government.
Shire Councillors	2	Appointed by Council from among its elected members for a period of two years. Cease to be members if no longer elected members.
Community members	2	Persons with emergency services experience, or significant practical experience in risk management. Appointed by Council.
NTFES representative	1	Representative nominated by NT Fire and Emergency Services.
CEO (non-member)	—	Attends meetings in an advisory capacity. Does not hold voting rights.

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Council. Appointment to the Committee from among the Council shall be for a period of two years. Committee members cease to be a member if they are no longer an elected member of the Council.

4.1 Selection criteria for independent members

The selection process for independent members should consider the following factors when assessing applicants:

- level of understanding of local government and the environment in which it operates;
- level of knowledge and practical exposure to emergency management practices;
- capacity to dedicate adequate time to the Committee;
- depth of knowledge of regulatory and legislative requirements; and
- ability to maintain professional relationships with staff, council members and other stakeholders.

5. Voting rights

Each Committee member holds an equal voting right. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson is entitled to a casting vote.

The Chief Executive Officer attends meetings in an advisory capacity and is not entitled to vote.

6. Key responsibilities

The Committee will undertake the following functions in support of emergency management preparedness across the Wagait Shire:

- exchange experience and information relevant to the effective coordination of an emergency response in the Wagait Shire;
- develop collaborative partnerships within the Shire community, the locality, and NT Government agencies, to ensure resources are made available in a timely manner;
- assess requirements to mitigate, respond to and recover from an emergency — including physical, psychological, economic and environmental considerations — in association with responsible agencies;
- coordinate the development and implementation of an Emergency Management Plan for the Wagait Shire, including a facilities and community resource directory;
- collaborate and coordinate with local volunteer and commercial agencies;
- make recommendations and assist in the preparation of grant applications relevant to emergency preparedness and mitigation;
- make recommendations on key and emerging issues relevant to emergency management in the Wagait Shire to the Wagait Shire Council;
- make recommendations on key areas of expenditure for emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery; and
- ensure adequate, timely and well-informed information is provided to the community, in plain language and through accessible channels, during and after an emergency.

7. Reporting

The Committee will regularly report on its operations and activities to the Council, including:

- a summary of the key issues arising from each Committee meeting;
- an overall annual assessment of the Council's emergency management framework, together with a summary of the work performed by the Committee during the preceding year; and
- information for inclusion in the Council's annual report regarding the activities of the Committee, including the number of meetings held, Committee membership, and principal activities.

Information will be published on Council's website, including Committee membership, these Terms of Reference, and draft minutes of meetings, in accordance with sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).

Website publication: Sections 101 (minutes) and 102 (public access to minutes) of the LG Act 2019 (NT) impose specific obligations on the Council regarding the publication of committee information. The CEO is responsible for ensuring timely publication in compliance with these requirements.

8. Work plan and arrangements

A Work Plan for the Committee will be prepared, setting out work to be carried out in the short, medium and long term. The Work Plan will be reviewed annually by the Committee as part of the review of these Terms of Reference.

Arrangements for each emergency type will also be prepared, setting out the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery actions for different emergency situations — including, but not limited to, cyclone, fire, flood, pandemic, and other emergencies as deemed necessary.

Timeframe	Work items
Short term (Annual)	Respond to any emergency that puts at risk the Wagait Beach community or its residents. Review and update Emergency Management Arrangements for events including, but not limited to, cyclone, fire, flood, pandemic and other emergencies as required. Review and update the list of vulnerable persons in the community and a street map identifying where the most at-risk residents are located. Ensure community information is current, accessible and in plain language.
Medium term (Each council term)	Review the Emergency Management Committee Terms of Reference, Work Plan and Arrangements. Assess and update collaborative partnerships with NT Government agencies, local volunteer organisations and commercial agencies. Review grant funding opportunities relevant to emergency preparedness and mitigation.
Long term (As required)	Asset Plans — review and update plans for critical Council assets in relation to emergency risk. Critical Risk Analysis — conduct or commission a comprehensive risk analysis of emergency hazards relevant to the Wagait Shire. Consider legislative requirements, critical incidents and unacceptable risks as identified by the CEO.

9. Meetings

The Committee will meet up to four times per year, and more frequently as required during or in anticipation of emergency situations. The date and timing of each meeting will be determined to suit the majority of members.

A forward meeting plan, including meeting dates and agenda items, will be agreed by the Committee each year and will address items listed in the Work Plan.

A quorum will consist of three voting Committee members and must include at least one Council representative and one community representative.

10. Secretariat

The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that adequate secretarial support is provided to the Committee. The Secretariat will prepare and distribute an agenda and supporting documentation for each meeting, at least three working days prior to the meeting.

Minutes of each meeting will be taken and provided to Committee members within three working days of the meeting. Draft minutes will be published on Council's website in accordance with the LG Act 2019 (NT).

11. Conflict of interest

Pursuant to section 114 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), Committee members must declare any conflict of interest — real or perceived — at the start of each meeting, or before discussion of the relevant agenda item or topic. All details of any declared conflict of interest are to be recorded in the minutes.

If a Committee member or observer is deemed to have a real or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a particular matter, they are to be excused from Committee discussions on that matter while the conflict exists.

Conflict of interest obligations apply to all Committee members, including community and NTFES representatives — not only to Elected Members. If in doubt about whether a conflict exists, the matter should be raised with the Chairperson before the meeting.

12. Confidentiality and information obligations

Committee members will from time to time deal with confidential reports and sensitive information. Under Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and the Information Act 2002 (NT), Committee members must not:

- improperly disclose confidential information acquired as a member of a Council committee; or
- make improper use of information acquired as a member of a Council committee — whether for personal gain or to the detriment of the Council or any individual.

Breaches of this section may be managed under Council's Code of Conduct and, where applicable, the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). In serious cases, conduct may also be referred to the NT Independent Commissioner Against Corruption (ICAC).

13. Induction and due diligence

All proposed and new members of the Committee are entitled to receive relevant information and briefings prior to or at the time of their appointment. This induction will include:

- an overview of Council's governance framework and relevant policies;
- the Committee's current Work Plan and Terms of Reference;
- a briefing on the relevant legislative framework, including the Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT) and the Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25; and
- any current or emerging emergency risks relevant to the Wagait Shire.

The CEO is responsible for coordinating the induction of new Committee members in a timely manner.

14. Performance assessment

The Chair of the Committee and the Chief Executive Officer will initiate a review of the Committee's performance annually. The review will be conducted on an internal assessment basis, with appropriate input from the Council, CEO, relevant internal and external advisors, and any other relevant stakeholders.

The outcome of the annual performance assessment will be reported to the Council and used to inform any updates to the Work Plan or these Terms of Reference.

15. Review

These Terms of Reference and Work Plan will be reviewed every two years by the Committee, or earlier if required by:

- a material change in applicable legislation, including the LG Act 2019 (NT) or Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT);
- a significant emergency event affecting the Wagait Shire; or
- a resolution of the Council.

The Committee will recommend any substantive changes to the Council for consideration and approval. No changes to these Terms of Reference take effect until approved by Council resolution.

16. Associated documents

- GOV-EC-01 Emergency Communications Policy
- GOV-RM-01 Risk Management Policy
- GOV-MED-01 Media Policy
- GOV-AC-01 Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25
- Northern Region Emergency Plan (current edition)
- Council Code of Conduct – Council Members

17. References and legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) — Part 5.2 (Council Committees), ss.82, 101, 102, 114
- Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT)
- Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25
- Northern Region Emergency Plan (current edition)
- Information Act 2002 (NT)
- NT Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT)
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government

18. Review history

Date approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Next review
21/04/2020	Council – Res. 2020/063 Moved: VP Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Michael Vaughan Vote: AIF	2020/063	Next council election
19/05/2020	Council – Res. 2020/081 Moved: VP Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Michael Vaughan Vote: AIF	2020/081	Next council election
15/02/2022	Council – Res. 2022/034 Moved: VP Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Michael Vaughan Vote: AIF	2022/034	Next council election
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – SOW Policy Review Phase 1 Alignment with LG Act 2019 (NT), Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT) and current best practice	TBD	Every two years, or earlier if required by legislative change, a significant emergency event, or Council resolution

Appendix A: Emergency Management Committee Work Plan

The Work Plan sets out the program of work for the Committee across short, medium and long time horizons. It is reviewed annually by the Committee and updated as required. Changes to the Work Plan do not require a Council resolution unless they represent a substantive change to the Committee's scope or responsibilities.

Meetings: Quarterly (up to four per year, plus additional meetings during emergency situations) |
Quorum: Three voting members including at least one Councillor and one community representative

Timeframe	Work items
Short term (Annual)	Respond to any emergency that puts at risk the Wagait Beach community or its residents. Review and update Emergency Management Arrangements for events including, but not limited to, cyclone, fire, flood, pandemic and other emergencies as required. Review and update the list of vulnerable persons in the community and a street map identifying where the most at-risk residents are located. Ensure community information is current, accessible and in plain language.
Medium term (Each council term)	Review the Emergency Management Committee Terms of Reference, Work Plan and Arrangements. Assess and update collaborative partnerships with NT Government agencies, local volunteer organisations and commercial agencies. Review grant funding opportunities relevant to emergency preparedness and mitigation.
Long term (As required)	Asset Plans — review and update plans for critical Council assets in relation to emergency risk. Critical Risk Analysis — conduct or commission a comprehensive risk analysis of emergency hazards relevant to the Wagait Shire. Consider legislative requirements, critical incidents and unacceptable risks as identified by the CEO.

GIFTS AND BENEFITS POLICY

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT) and NT ICAC Guidelines.



Policy No.	GOV-GB-01	Version	2.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next council election, or earlier per Section 16
LG Act 2019 Ref.	Part 7.2, ss.110–113; s.117; Reg. 6(1)(g)	Applies To	Elected members, committee members and CEO

1. Purpose

In plain terms: This policy is about making sure that gifts or benefits received by elected members, committee members and the CEO do not influence, or appear to influence, their decisions. It sets out when a gift must be disclosed, how to disclose it, and when a gift should simply be returned.

This policy establishes the requirements for council members, committee members and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in relation to receiving, accepting, declining and disclosing gifts or benefits. It supports a culture of integrity and transparency, and ensures compliance with Part 7.2 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and Regulation 6(1)(g) of the Local Government (General) Regulations.

Best practice alignment: This policy is informed by Part 7.2 of the LG Act 2019 (NT), the NT ICAC Corruption Prevention Framework, and the ACLG Good Governance Guide. It is designed to protect the integrity of elected members and the CEO, and to maintain community confidence in council decision-making. Note: The LG Act 2019 (NT) was most recently amended by No. 15, 2025. Council members should ensure they refer to the current version of the Act and the Schedule 1 Code of Conduct, both of which are subject to ongoing NT Government reform.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all elected members, committee members and the CEO of Wagait Shire Council. It applies to gifts or benefits received in any context where the recipient is acting in, or could be perceived

to be acting in, their capacity as a council member, committee member or CEO. This includes gifts received outside of council hours where the gift is connected to the recipient's role.

Important: This policy does not cover gifts and benefits received by council staff other than the CEO. Gifts and benefits received by council staff are governed by the HR Code of Conduct for Workplace Participants.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Associate	As defined by section 8 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). Broadly includes a person with a close personal or business relationship with the council member or CEO, such as a family member, business partner or employer.
Benefit	Any advantage, favour, service or other non-monetary gain received by a council member, committee member or CEO from a donor, including free or subsidised meals, travel, accommodation, entertainment, tickets, or access to events.
Campaign donation return	As defined by Part 8.6, section 148 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). A return lodged by a candidate or council member disclosing political donations received during an election campaign.
Conflict of interest	A situation in which a council member's, committee member's or CEO's private interests (including receipt of a gift or benefit) may compromise, or appear to compromise, their ability to act impartially in carrying out their official duties.
Donor	A person, organisation or entity that gives or offers a gift or benefit to a council member, committee member or the CEO.
Gift	A thing given willingly to someone without payment. Includes physical items, vouchers, prizes, samples and other tangible presents.
Gifts and Benefits Register	The register maintained by the CEO in which all declared relevant gifts and benefits are recorded, as required by section 113 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
Nominal value	Gifts or benefits totalling less than \$50 from the same donor or an associate of the donor in a single financial year. Gifts and benefits of nominal value are exempt from disclosure requirements but are still subject to the policy principles in Section 4.
Protocol gift	A gift or benefit given to a council member for diplomatic, ceremonial or symbolic purposes that will not be sold or transferred, unless in diplomatic, ceremonial or symbolic circumstances. Protocol gifts given for the council are exempt from disclosure.
Relevant gift or benefit	A gift or benefit that exceeds the nominal value of \$50 and must be disclosed in accordance with this policy.

CEO	Chief Executive Officer of Wagait Shire Council.
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4. Policy principles

The Council's approach to gifts and benefits is grounded in the following core principles:

Integrity	Transparency	Impartiality	Accountability
Act honestly and ethically in all dealings, including when receiving or declining gifts.	Disclose relevant gifts promptly and ensure all disclosures are recorded in the public register.	Do not allow gifts or benefits to influence or appear to influence decisions or conduct.	Be answerable to the community and the Council for decisions made in relation to gifts or benefits.

Council members, committee members and the CEO must discharge their duties, responsibilities and obligations impartially and with integrity, including in relation to receiving, accepting and disclosing gifts or benefits. They must not accept a gift or benefit of any value that may be perceived by a reasonable person to improperly influence the performance of their duties or the decisions of the council.

Prohibition on soliciting gifts: Council members, committee members and the CEO must not solicit, request or encourage the offer of gifts or benefits in connection with their role. Soliciting a gift or benefit is a serious breach of this policy and may constitute corrupt conduct reportable to ICAC under the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT).

5. Relevant gifts and benefits

A relevant gift or benefit is any gift or benefit that exceeds the nominal value of \$50. This includes gifts or benefits:

- received and accepted by the council member, committee member or CEO personally; or
- received and accepted on behalf of another person.

The nominal value threshold of \$50 is assessed cumulatively from the same donor or an associate of the donor in a single financial year. If a recipient receives multiple gifts from the same donor in one year and their combined value exceeds \$50, all of those gifts become relevant gifts and must be disclosed.

Practical example: A council member receives a \$30 gift basket from a local contractor in November and a \$30 box of chocolates from the same contractor in February. The combined value of \$60 exceeds the \$50 threshold, making both gifts relevant gifts that must be disclosed to the CEO.

6. What to do when you receive a gift or benefit

6.1 First: apply the perception test

Before accepting any gift or benefit, ask yourself: would a reasonable and objective member of the community, knowing all the circumstances, consider that this gift or benefit could improperly influence my decisions or conduct as a council member, committee member or CEO?

If the answer is yes, or even possibly yes, the gift or benefit must be declined and returned to the donor. This applies regardless of the value of the gift.

The perception test is the primary test. A gift does not have to actually influence your decisions to breach this policy. If a reasonable person could perceive that it might, that is enough. When in doubt, decline.

6.2 If the gift passes the perception test: check the value

If the gift passes the perception test, determine whether it is a relevant gift or benefit (over \$50, or cumulatively over \$50 from the same donor in the financial year). If it is, it must be disclosed in accordance with Section 8 of this policy.

If the gift is below the nominal value threshold of \$50 and passes the perception test, no disclosure is required. However, a brief note of receipt is recommended for personal record-keeping.

6.3 Examples table

The following table provides practical guidance on common scenarios. Section references are to this policy.

Type of gift or benefit	Disclosure required?	Guidance
Physical gift (bottle of wine, hamper, jewellery, artwork)	Yes, if over \$50	Must be disclosed and recorded. Refer to Section 10.1 for disposal options.
Meal or hospitality at a council-related event or conference	No (exempt)	Exempt under Section 9(d) if attendance is part of official duties.
Tickets to a sporting or entertainment event (personal use)	Yes, if over \$50	Must be disclosed. Likely to raise perception concerns. Should generally be declined.
Donation to council member's election campaign	No (separate process)	Disclosed in campaign donation return under LG Act s.148. Not covered by this policy.
Protocol gift (ceremonial item from Indigenous community or government body)	Yes, if for the council	Exempt under Section 9(b) if given for the council as a body. Must be disclosed if accepted personally.
Gift from a family member (birthday, Christmas)	No (exempt)	Private and personal gift. Exempt under Section 9(f).

Free accommodation, airfares or travel for personal use	Yes, if over \$50	Must be disclosed. Strong perception risk. Should generally be declined unless pre-approved.
Vouchers, loyalty points or cash equivalents	Yes, if over \$50	Must be disclosed. Particular risk of perception of improper influence. Should generally be declined.

For a step-by-step visual guide to the decision process, refer to Appendix B.

7. Declining and returning gifts or benefits

If a council member, committee member or the CEO receives a gift or benefit that breaches the principles in Section 4, or that fails the perception test in Section 6.1, the gift or benefit must be declined. Where the gift has already been received, it must be returned to the donor as soon as practicable.

When declining or returning a gift, the recipient should respectfully explain to the donor that acceptance of the gift or benefit would be inconsistent with the council's Gifts and Benefits Policy. The decline or return should be handled with courtesy and without embarrassment to either party.

Suggested wording: 'Thank you for the generous thought. As a council member/the CEO, I am required to follow our Gifts and Benefits Policy, which means I am unable to accept this gift. I hope you understand and I appreciate the kind gesture.'

Where a gift cannot practically be returned (for example, because it is perishable or has already been consumed in a group setting), the recipient must document the circumstances and disclose the receipt to the CEO (or, in the case of the CEO, to the President) as soon as practicable.

8. Disclosure of relevant gifts and benefits

8.1 Who discloses to whom

The following disclosure pathways apply:

- Council members and committee members must disclose relevant gifts or benefits to the CEO as soon as practicable after receipt, and in any case within five business days.
- The CEO must disclose relevant gifts or benefits received personally to the President as soon as practicable after receipt, and in any case within five business days.

All disclosures must be made in writing. The CEO is responsible for recording all disclosures in the Gifts and Benefits Register.

8.2 Required information

The following information must be provided with each disclosure:

Required information	Council member / committee member	CEO
Name of person who received the gift or benefit	Yes	Yes (not required — CEO is the discloser)
Name of donor (person or organisation)	Yes	Yes
Date received	Yes	Yes
Description of the gift or benefit	Yes	Yes
Whether it is for the council, the individual or another person	Yes	Yes
Value or estimated value	Yes	Yes
Reason for the gift or benefit	Yes	Yes
Any other relevant details	Yes	Yes

Timeliness: Disclosures should be made as soon as practicable after receipt of the gift or benefit, and in any case within five business days. A delay in disclosure does not eliminate the obligation to disclose.

8.3 Conflict of interest declaration

Where receipt of a gift or benefit could give rise to a conflict of interest in relation to any matter before the Council or a committee, the recipient must also declare that conflict of interest at the relevant meeting in accordance with the applicable Code of Conduct and Part 7.3 of the LG Act 2019 (NT). A disclosure under this policy does not substitute for a conflict of interest declaration.

8.4 Annual return of interests

In addition to the disclosure obligations under this policy, council members are required to lodge an Annual Return of Interests each year under section 110 of the LG Act 2019 (NT), using the prescribed Schedule 5 form published by the NT Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development.

The Annual Return of Interests covers a council member's personal financial interests, including property holdings, company shareholdings, directorships and organisational memberships. It is a separate and parallel obligation to the gift disclosure regime under sections 112 and 113, and operates on an annual rather than event-driven basis.

Note: The Annual Return of Interests (s.110) and the Gifts and Benefits disclosure (ss.112–113) are two distinct obligations under Part 7.2 of the LG Act 2019 (NT). Both must be complied with. The CEO can

provide guidance on what each return requires. The Schedule 5 form is available from the NT Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development website.

9. Exemptions from disclosure

The following gifts and benefits are exempt from the disclosure requirements of this policy. However, the principles in Section 4 still apply to all exempted gifts and benefits. Exemption from disclosure does not mean the gift is automatically acceptable.

- (a) A gift or benefit given to the council member, committee member or CEO by the Council itself.
- (b) A protocol gift given to the council member or CEO on behalf of the Council (for example, a ceremonial item given by an Indigenous community or a government delegation).
- (c) A gift or benefit given to the Council as a body corporate, where no individual council member, committee member or the CEO is considered to have personally accepted it.
- (d) Food, accommodation, hospitality or entertainment that is included in the attendance at meetings, conferences, training courses, functions or other events organised through the Council or required in connection with the official duties of the council member, committee member or CEO.
- (e) A donation that is or will be disclosed by the council member or committee member in a campaign donation return under Part 8.6, section 148 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
- (f) A private and personal gift, such as a birthday or Christmas present from a family member, that has no connection to the recipient's role as a council member, committee member or CEO.

If you are unsure whether a gift is covered by an exemption, err on the side of disclosure. The CEO is available to provide guidance on individual cases.

10. Gifts and Benefits Register

The CEO is responsible for maintaining the Gifts and Benefits Register in accordance with section 113 of the LG Act 2019 (NT). The register must record all relevant gifts and benefits disclosed under this policy.

10.1 Publication obligation

In addition to maintaining the register, the Council is required under section 117 of the LG Act 2019 (NT) to publish the Gifts and Benefits Register. Section 292 of the Act also covers the Council's broader public access to information obligations.

The CEO must:

- publish the Gifts and Benefits Register on the Council's website; and
- update the published register promptly after each new disclosure is recorded, so that the version available to the public is kept current.

Legislative note: Both maintaining the register (s.113) and publishing it (s.117) are separate and distinct obligations under the LG Act 2019 (NT). Maintaining the register alone is not sufficient compliance. The City of Darwin and other NT councils publish their register on their websites as standard practice consistent with s.117. Any suppression of information from the published register must be authorised under s.293 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).

10.2 Gift disposal

Where a relevant gift or benefit is accepted and disclosed, the CEO must determine, in consultation with the recipient, how the gift will be disposed of. The following options apply:

- Retain as personal property: the recipient may retain the gift if it is of modest value and there is no reasonable perception concern. The CEO should document the decision.
- Donate to a charitable or community purpose: the gift is donated to a registered charity or community organisation approved by the CEO. The name of the recipient organisation must be recorded in the register.
- Transfer to the Council: the gift becomes council property and is managed accordingly.

The disposal decision must be recorded in the Gifts and Benefits Register alongside the original disclosure. Where the Council determines that acceptance of a gift was inappropriate, the CEO will arrange for the gift to be returned to the donor or disposed of to a charitable purpose.

Good governance note: For gifts of significant value or gifts from parties with an ongoing relationship with the Council (such as contractors or suppliers), the preference should be donation to a charitable purpose or transfer to the Council, rather than personal retention. This removes any residual perception risk.

10.3 Privacy and records management

The Gifts and Benefits Register contains personal information about recipients and donors. The register is maintained and published in accordance with the Information Act 2002 (NT) and the Council's Privacy Policy. The published register is a public document under the LG Act 2019 (NT), and any suppression of information from public access must be authorised under section 293 of the Act.

The CEO must retain gift disclosure records for a minimum of seven years to support audit review and longitudinal monitoring of gift trends.

Each entry in the register must record at minimum:

- the name of the recipient;
- the name of the donor;
- the date of receipt;
- a description of the gift or benefit;
- the estimated value;
- the disposal decision made; and

- any other relevant notes.

Annual report: The CEO will provide a summary report of all entries in the Gifts and Benefits Register to the Audit Committee at least once per year. The report will include the total number of disclosures, any patterns or trends, and any cases where the CEO has provided guidance to a council member or committee member.

The register template at Appendix A may be used for this purpose. The register may be maintained electronically or in hard copy, provided it is secure, up to date and accessible for audit purposes.

11. Roles and responsibilities

The following table sets out the key responsibilities under this policy:

Role	Responsibilities
Council members and committee members	Act impartially and with integrity; do not solicit, request or encourage gifts or benefits; decline gifts or benefits that may create a perception of improper influence; disclose relevant gifts to the CEO within five business days of receipt; return gifts that breach this policy; declare any conflict of interest arising from a gift at Council meetings; lodge the Annual Return of Interests under s.110 annually.
Chief Executive Officer	Act impartially and with integrity; do not solicit, request or encourage gifts or benefits; disclose relevant gifts received personally to the President within five business days; maintain the Gifts and Benefits Register; publish the register on the council's website and keep it current after each disclosure (s.117); report on the register to the Audit Committee annually; provide guidance to council members and committee members on their obligations.
Council President	Receive disclosures from the CEO; ensure CEO disclosures are recorded in the Gifts and Benefits Register; escalate any concerns to the full Council.
Audit Committee	Receive an annual report on the Gifts and Benefits Register from the CEO; review the adequacy of the policy and register; recommend policy updates to Council where required.

12. Training and awareness

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that all council members, committee members and new CEO appointees are briefed on their obligations under this policy at the time of their appointment or induction, and at least once per council term thereafter.

Briefings should cover:

-
- the policy principles and the perception test;
 - the prohibition on soliciting gifts;
 - the definition of relevant gifts and the cumulative value threshold;
 - how to disclose a relevant gift and the required timeframes;
 - the exemptions from disclosure;
 - the Annual Return of Interests obligation under s.110 of the LG Act 2019 (NT); and
 - the consequences of non-compliance under the LG Act 2019 (NT) and the applicable Code of Conduct.

Good governance note: A brief annual reminder of gift and benefit obligations is recommended, particularly before the council's end-of-year period when gifts are most commonly received. The CEO may issue this as a short written reminder or as part of a broader governance briefing. The Annual Declaration at Appendix C supports this annual awareness cycle.

13. Non-compliance and consequences

Failure to comply with this policy and the obligations under Part 7.2 of the LG Act 2019 (NT) may result in:

- a finding of misconduct under the applicable Code of Conduct;
- referral to the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption (ICAC) where the conduct amounts to, or could amount to, corrupt conduct;
- disciplinary action in accordance with the applicable Code of Conduct procedures; or
- criminal proceedings under the LG Act 2019 (NT) where applicable.

Council members and the CEO are encouraged to seek guidance from the CEO or the Council's legal advisors if they are uncertain about their obligations in relation to any specific gift or benefit before accepting it.

ICAC referral: Under the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT), the Council has an obligation to report suspected corrupt conduct to ICAC. The solicitation or acceptance of gifts or benefits with the intention of improperly influencing council decisions may constitute corrupt conduct.

14. Associated documents

- GOV-COC-01 Code of Conduct – Council Members
- GOV-FCP-01 Fraud and Corruption Protection Policy
- GOV-AC-01 Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- HR Code of Conduct – Workplace Participants
- FIN CEO Allowances and Other Benefits
- Gifts and Benefits Register (maintained by CEO, published on council website)

- Schedule 5 Annual Return of Interests form (NT Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development)

15. References and legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), Part 7.2, sections 110–113 and 117 (Interests, Gifts and Benefits, Publication)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), Part 7.3 (Conflict of Interest)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), Part 8.6, section 148 (Campaign Donation Returns)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), section 292 (Information to be publicly available) and section 293 (Suppression of certain information)
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT), Regulation 6(1)(g)
- Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT)
- Information Act 2002 (NT)
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government
- NT ICAC Corruption Prevention Framework (current edition)

16. Review history

Date approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Next review
19/09/2023	Council – Res. 2023/147 Moved: Cr Peter Clee Seconded: Cr Sarah Smith Vote: AIF	2023/147	Next council election
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	Next council election, or earlier if required by a change in the LG Act 2019 (NT), the Schedule 1 Code of Conduct, NT ICAC guidelines, or at the request of the Audit Committee

Appendix A: Gifts and Benefits Register template

The following template is to be used by the CEO to record all relevant gift and benefit disclosures. The register must be maintained in a secure location, published on the council's website in accordance with section 117 of the LG Act 2019 (NT), and updated after each new disclosure. A summary of entries is reported to the Audit Committee annually.

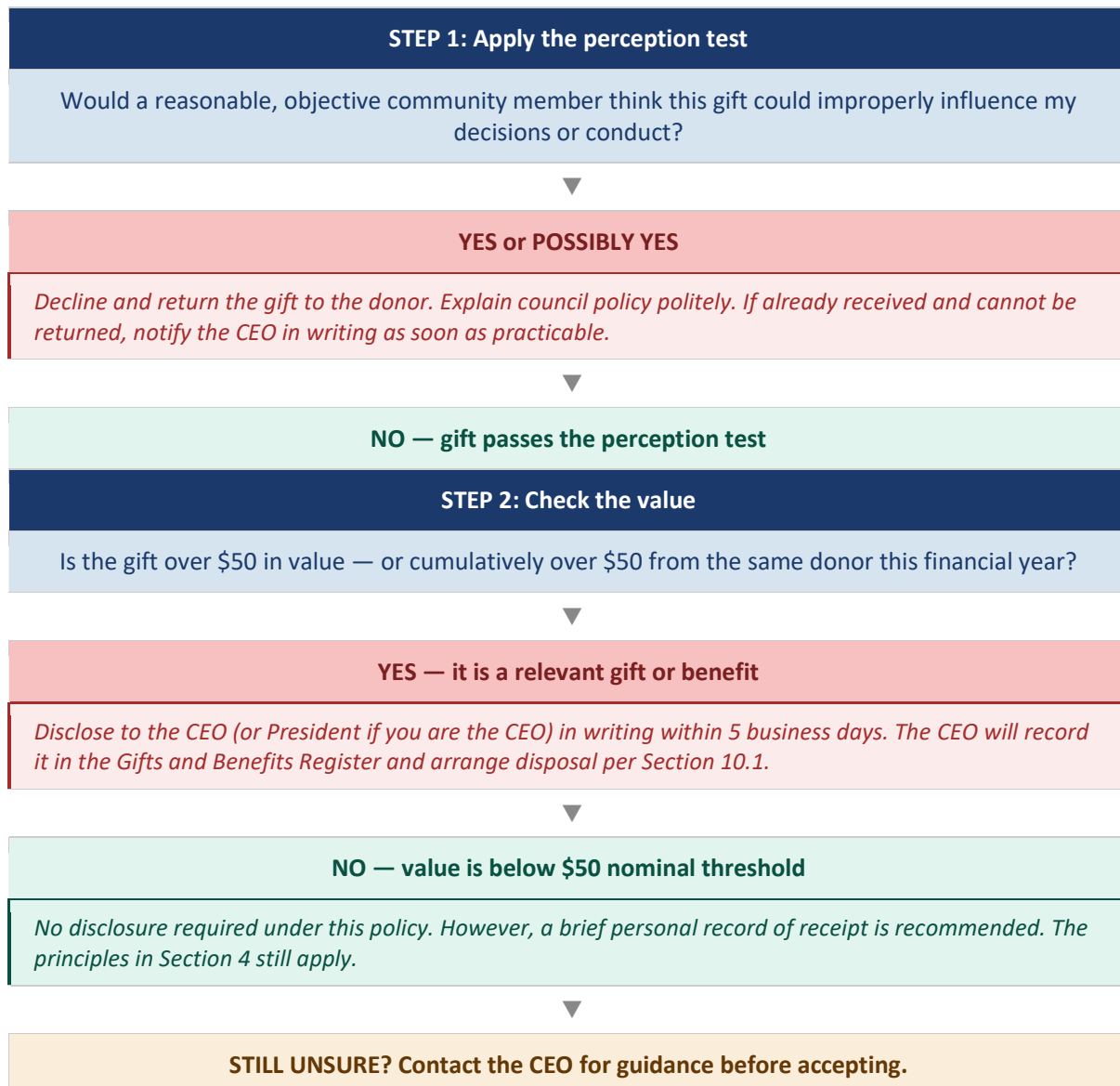
Financial year: _____ Maintained by: _____ Last updated: _____

No.	Recipient name	Donor name	Date received	Description	Est. value (\$)	Decision	Status / Notes

Decision key: A = Accepted and retained | D = Donated to charity / community | T = Transferred to Council | R = Returned to donor | X = Declined at time of offer

Appendix B: Quick reference decision flowchart

Use this flowchart when you receive a gift or benefit. Work through each step in order. If you are still unsure after completing all steps, contact the CEO before accepting anything.



Appendix C: Annual gifts and benefits declaration

This declaration must be completed by all council members, committee members and the CEO at the end of each financial year. Completed forms are retained by the CEO and made available for review by the Audit Committee as part of its annual oversight of the gifts and benefits framework.

Annual Gifts and Benefits Declaration	
Financial year	
Full name	
Role / position	
Council	
<p>Declaration</p> <p><i>I confirm that: (a) I have read and understood the Wagait Shire Council Gifts and Benefits Policy (GOV-GB-01) and my obligations under Part 7.2 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT). (b) I have disclosed all relevant gifts and benefits received during the financial year in accordance with this policy, or have recorded below that no relevant gifts or benefits were received. (c) I have not solicited, requested or encouraged the offer of any gift or benefit in connection with my role. (d) I understand that failure to disclose a relevant gift or benefit may constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct and may be referred to ICAC.</i></p>	
Disclosures made	<p>Tick one:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have made the following number of disclosures during this financial year: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I did not receive any relevant gifts or benefits during this financial year (nil return).</p>
Signature	Date
<p>Received by CEO / President:</p> <p>Name: _____ Signature: _____</p> <p>_____ Date: _____</p> <p><i>Note: Completed forms are retained by the CEO and made available for Audit Committee review on request.</i></p>	

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with the Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT), the Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25, the LG Act 2019 (NT) and current best practice.



Policy No.	GOV-EC-01	Version	5.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next council election, or earlier if required
Legislation	Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT); LG Act 2019 (NT); Information Act 2002 (NT)	Applies To	All Council employees, Elected Members and emergency response partners

1. Purpose

In plain terms: This policy explains how Council will communicate with residents and ratepayers during an emergency — which channels it will use, who is authorised to issue communications, and how Council ensures its messages are accurate, timely and reach everyone in the community.

This policy describes, for the community and for those responsible for delivering communications, the methods Council will employ to communicate with residents and ratepayers during an emergency.

It also establishes a clear authorisation and coordination framework to ensure that all emergency communications issued by Wagait Shire Council are timely, accurate, consistent and accessible — and are properly coordinated with NT Fire and Emergency Services (NTFES) and other relevant emergency management agencies.

Legislative basis: This policy operates within the framework of the Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT), section 9 (responsibilities of local government), the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25, the Northern Region Emergency Plan 2024 and the Information Act 2002 (NT).

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees, Elected Members and, where relevant, contracted emergency response partners, in relation to any communication issued on behalf of Wagait Shire Council during an emergency.

The policy covers all platforms used by the Council to communicate with ratepayers and residents about critical issues during an emergency. These platforms are described in Section 4.

Digital access: Council recognises that not all residents have access to digital platforms. Where practicable, and particularly for vulnerable or at-risk community members, Council will use physical notice boards and direct contact methods in addition to digital channels. Equity of access to emergency information is a core obligation under this policy.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Authorised officer	The Chief Executive Officer, or a person formally designated by the CEO to carry out the authorisation role for emergency communications during the CEO's absence.
Emergency	A sudden or unexpected event that endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment and requires a coordinated response. Includes cyclone, fire, flood, pandemic and other significant events affecting the Wagait Shire community.
Emergency communication	Any message, notice, alert or announcement issued by Council to the community in connection with an emergency — whether digital, physical or direct.
NTFES	NT Fire and Emergency Services — the primary emergency response agency for the Northern Territory, including the Cox Peninsula area.
Vulnerable community members	Residents or ratepayers who may have limited access to digital communications, reduced mobility, a disability, or other circumstances that make it harder to receive or act on emergency information.

4. Communication channels

Council will use the following channels to communicate with the community during an emergency. Where possible, all channels will be activated simultaneously to maximise reach. Digital and physical channels must carry consistent content.

Channel	Platform / Location	Notes
Council website	www.wagait.nt.gov.au	Primary digital channel. All emergency notices published here first. Most accessible archive for community reference.
Council Facebook page	Council's official Facebook account	Rapid broadcast to community members who follow the page. Must mirror website content exactly.
Physical notice boards	Shop and Council office notice boards; street-side chalkboard	Critical for residents without digital access. Updated promptly alongside digital channels.
Email newsletter	Registered subscribers	Sent to all community members registered for the Council newsletter service.
SMS	Registered mobile numbers	Direct, immediate contact for time-critical alerts. Used for urgent notifications to registered community members.
Direct contact	Phone calls or in-person visits	Used for vulnerable or at-risk community members where digital and physical channels may not be sufficient.

Channel maintenance: The CEO is responsible for ensuring that all communication channels listed above are operational, current and tested at least annually — including the SMS subscriber list, email newsletter list, and physical notice boards. Untested channels that fail during an emergency can cause serious harm to the community.

5. Communication principles

In an emergency, it is critical that information is provided quickly and efficiently to the community. All emergency communications issued by Wagait Shire Council must adhere to the following principles:

Principle	Description
Succinct	All information required, presented in plain language and in a manner that is easy to read — without extraneous material. Avoid jargon, technical language and unnecessary detail.
Timely	Relevant and up to date. Not issued so far in advance as to cause unnecessary alarm or confusion, but early enough to allow the community to take protective action.

Accurate	Verified and factual across all platforms before release. No unconfirmed information is to be published. If information changes, corrections must be issued promptly.
Consistent	The same core message delivered across all platforms — including the same dates, locations, instructions and criteria for action. Contradictory messages across channels cause serious community harm.
Accessible	Presented in plain English and, where possible, through multiple channels to ensure it reaches all community members — including those with limited digital access, older residents and those with a disability.

Plain language matters: Residents under stress during an emergency may have reduced capacity to process complex information. Council communications must always be written in plain, direct language — short sentences, clear instructions, and no acronyms or technical terms without explanation.

6. Authorisation

6.1 Who can authorise emergency communications

Authorisation for all emergency communications issued in the name of Wagait Shire Council can only be given by the Chief Executive Officer. The CEO will vet all proposed messaging prior to broadcast and advise which communication channel or channels are to be used.

Where the CEO is unavailable during an emergency, they may formally designate an acting officer to carry out the authorisation role for the duration of their absence. Any such designation must be clearly communicated to all relevant staff before, or as soon as practicable after, the emergency commences.

No unauthorised communications: No Council employee or Elected Member may issue an emergency communication in the name of Wagait Shire Council without CEO authorisation. This applies to all channels, including personal social media. Refer also to the Media Policy (GOV-MED-01) for the broader framework governing media and social media conduct.

6.2 Coordination with emergency agencies

All emergency communications must be consistent with the Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25 and the Northern Region Emergency Plan 2024, and coordinated — where relevant — with NT Fire and Emergency Services (NTFES), NT Police and other relevant emergency management agencies.

The CEO must ensure that Council communications do not contradict or undermine official emergency instructions issued by NTFES, NT Police or other responsible authorities. Where a conflict arises, the authoritative agency's messaging takes precedence and Council must update its communications accordingly.

7. Stakeholders and related agencies

Effective emergency communications rely on strong relationships with local and Territory emergency management partners. The following stakeholders are key to Council's emergency communications framework:

Stakeholder	Role in emergency communications
Wagait Shire Council	Responsible for community communications and coordination of Council's emergency response functions.
Wagait Shire Emergency Management Committee	Provides advisory support and oversight of emergency management arrangements, including communication preparedness.
NT Fire and Emergency Services (NTFES) — Cox Peninsula	Primary emergency response agency for the Cox Peninsula area. Council coordinates messaging to align with NTFES public communications.
Cox Peninsula Volunteer Bushfire Brigade	Local volunteer bushfire response. Council maintains liaison for consistent community messaging during fire events.
NT Police and relevant NT Government agencies	Coordination required for law enforcement communications, evacuation orders and public safety messaging.

The CEO is responsible for maintaining current contact details for all key emergency communication stakeholders and ensuring these are accessible to relevant staff during an emergency — including outside normal business hours.

8. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Chief Executive Officer	Sole authorised issuer of emergency communications on behalf of Council. Coordinates messaging with NTFES and other agencies. Designates an acting officer during absences. Ensures all channels are maintained and tested. Briefs Elected Members promptly on all significant communications issued.
Acting authorised officer	Assumes the CEO's authorisation responsibilities during the CEO's absence. Must stay within the scope of the designation and notify the CEO of all communications issued.
Council employees	Implement approved communications across assigned channels. Must not issue or publish unapproved communications. Report any requests for unauthorised communications to the CEO immediately.
Elected Members	Must not issue emergency communications on behalf of Council without CEO authorisation. May make personal comment clearly identified as their own view. Should direct community enquiries to the CEO or authorised channels.

9. Privacy and information obligations

All emergency communications must comply with the Information Act 2002 (NT), which establishes the ten Information Privacy Principles governing the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

The SMS and email subscriber lists used for emergency communications contain personal information and must be:

- stored securely and accessed only by authorised personnel;
- used solely for the purpose for which they were collected — that is, emergency and critical community communications; and
- kept current and maintained in accordance with Council's records management obligations.

Subscriber lists must not be used for general Council marketing or non-emergency communications without the informed consent of subscribers. Using personal information beyond its stated purpose is a breach of the Information Act 2002 (NT).

10. Testing and preparedness

The CEO will ensure that Council's emergency communication capability is tested and maintained on a regular basis. As a minimum, the following preparedness activities will be conducted annually:

- a test of the SMS alert system to confirm subscriber lists are current and the system is operational;
- a review of the email newsletter subscriber list to remove outdated addresses;
- a check that physical notice boards are in good repair and accessible;
- a review of Council's website emergency notification page to confirm it is current and accessible; and
- a communications exercise in conjunction with the Emergency Management Committee's annual work plan review.

The outcomes of all preparedness activities must be documented and reported to the Emergency Management Committee as part of its annual review.

11. Associated documents

- GOV-EMC-01 Emergency Management Committee Terms of Reference
- GOV-MED-01 Media Policy
- GOV-RM-01 Risk Management Policy
- Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25
- Northern Region Emergency Plan 2024
- Council Code of Conduct – Council Members
- HR Code of Conduct – CEO and Staff

12. References and legislation

- Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT), section 9 (local government responsibilities)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT)
- Territory Emergency Plan 2024/25
- Northern Region Emergency Plan 2024
- Information Act 2002 (NT) — Information Privacy Principles
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government

13. Review history

Date approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Next review
14/12/2020	Approved by WSC Emergency Management Committee	2020/192	November 2021
19/01/2021	Council – Res. 2021/009 Moved: President Neil White Seconded: VP Tom Dyer Vote: AIF	2021/009	January 2022
15/02/2022	Council – Res. 2022/034 Moved: VP Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Michael Vaughan Vote: AIF	2022/034	January 2023
21/02/2023	Council – Res. 2023/029 Moved: Cr Sarah Smith Seconded: President Neil White Vote: AIF	2023/029	Next council election
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – SOW Policy Review Phase 1 Alignment with Emergency Management Act 2013 (NT) and current best practice	TBD	Next council election, or earlier if required by a change in applicable legislation, a significant emergency event, or at the request of the CEO or Audit Committee

DELEGATIONS MANUAL

Governance Manual | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with Australian local government best practice, LG Act 2019 (NT), LG (General) Regulations 2021, WHS Act 2011 (NT) and the Council's current operational structure.



Document No.	GOV-DEL-01	Version	4.0
Category	Governance / Finance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next council election, or earlier per Section 10
LG Act 2019 Ref.	ss.40, 41, 168; Part 9.1; LG (General) Regs 2021	Applies To	CEO, Acting CEO, Office Manager, Works Manager, Finance Officer

1. Purpose

In plain terms: This Manual sets out who in the Council has authority to make decisions and take action on the Council's behalf, what limits apply to that authority, and which decisions must always be made by the full Council. It gives staff and officers a clear reference for what they can and cannot do.

This Manual sets out the delegation of authority by the Wagait Shire Council to the Chief Executive Officer, and the further sub-delegation of that authority by the CEO to nominated officers. It is made pursuant to sections 40, 41 and 168 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).

The purpose of this delegation framework is to provide for the expedient exercise and performance of the Council's powers and duties, and the efficient management of its business and responsibilities, while maintaining appropriate accountability and oversight.

Legislative basis: Section 40 of the LG Act 2019 (NT) enables the Council to delegate its powers and functions to the CEO. Section 41 requires the Council to review its delegations. Section 168 enables the CEO to further delegate those powers to other officers, with the express permission of the Council. This Manual constitutes the Council's express permission for such sub-delegation, subject to the limits set out herein.

2. Scope

This Manual applies to:

- the Chief Executive Officer;
- the Acting Chief Executive Officer;
- the Office Manager (and any officer appointed by the CEO to act in that position);
- the Works Manager (and any officer appointed by the CEO to act in that position); and
- the Finance Officer (and any officer appointed by the CEO to act in that position).

All delegations in this Manual are subject to the protocols and limitations set out in Section 5, the reserved matters in Section 6, and any applicable Council policy, Council resolution, or legislative requirement in force at the time of exercise.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this Manual:

Term	Definition
Delegation	The formal transfer of authority from one body or officer to another, permitting the recipient to exercise specified powers, functions or duties on behalf of the delegating body or officer.
Sub-delegation	A further delegation made by the CEO to another officer or employee, pursuant to the express permission of the Council under s.168 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
Delegated authority	The power, function or duty that has been formally delegated to an officer and which that officer is authorised to exercise within the limits specified in this Manual.
Instrument of financial delegation	A separate document issued by the CEO specifying the dollar thresholds applicable to expenditure delegations for each delegated officer. Must meet the minimum content requirements in Section 8.1. Reviewed at least annually and reported to Council.
Council	Wagait Shire Council, acting as the governing body established under the Local Government Act 2019 (NT).
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of Wagait Shire Council, appointed pursuant to Chapter 9, Part 9.1 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
Acting CEO	A person appointed by the CEO to act in the role of Chief Executive Officer during any period of the CEO's absence or leave.
Office Manager	The officer appointed to the position of Office Manager, or any staff member appointed by the CEO to act in that position from time to time.
Works Manager	The officer appointed to the position of Works Manager, or any staff member appointed by the CEO to act in that position from time to time.

Finance Officer	The officer appointed to the position of Finance Officer, or any staff member appointed by the CEO to act in that position from time to time.
Conflict of interest	A situation in which an officer's personal interests, or the interests of an associate, may compromise or appear to compromise the impartial exercise of delegated authority.
Emergency	A sudden or unexpected occurrence requiring immediate action to protect life, property or essential council services, including but not limited to natural disasters, cyclones, flooding, fire or critical infrastructure failure.
PCBU	A person conducting a business or undertaking, as defined in the Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT). Wagait Shire Council is a PCBU for the purposes of that Act.

4. Delegation framework

Authority flows from Parliament through the Council to the CEO and then to delegated officers. The following table summarises the delegation hierarchy applicable to Wagait Shire Council:

Level	Role in the delegation framework
Parliament / Territory laws	Grants authority to the Council to perform local government functions under the LG Act 2019 (NT) and other applicable legislation.
Council (full Council)	Holds all powers, functions and duties granted by legislation. Delegates specific powers to the CEO under s.40 of the LG Act 2019 (NT). Cannot delegate reserved matters (listed in Section 6 of this Manual).
Chief Executive Officer	Receives delegation from Council under s.40. May sub-delegate to officers under s.168 with the express permission of the Council. Retains full responsibility for monitoring the exercise of all delegations.
Delegated officers (Office Manager, Works Manager, Finance Officer)	Exercise powers sub-delegated by the CEO within the limits of this Manual and the current instrument of financial delegation. Cannot further delegate unless expressly permitted in writing by the CEO.

5. Protocols governing the exercise of delegated authority

The following protocols apply to all officers exercising delegated authority under this Manual. These are not optional. Every officer must read and understand these protocols before exercising any delegation.

5.1 Compliance requirements

Any exercise of delegated authority must comply with:

- all relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021;
- any other applicable legislative requirements, including the Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT) and the Information Act 2002 (NT);
- all current Council policies adopted by resolution, including the Procurement Policy;
- the relevant provisions of any Council By-laws; and
- any specific conditions or limits stated in this Manual or in the current instrument of financial delegation.

It is the personal responsibility of the officer exercising delegated authority to be aware of any restrictions on that authority and to comply with them. If in doubt, an officer must seek guidance from the CEO before acting.

5.2 Procurement obligations

All expenditure commitments are subject to the procurement thresholds and quotation/tender obligations under Subdivision 1 of the LG (General) Regulations 2021 and the Council's Procurement Policy. The following table summarises the key thresholds. Dollar values are exclusive of GST.

Procurement level	Requirement	Description
Below threshold (Reg. 34(1))	No minimum quotation requirement	The CEO or delegated officer may commit to expenditure without obtaining formal quotes. However, value for money must still be demonstrated and the decision documented.
Quotation range (Regs. 34–35)	Minimum written quotations required	The CEO or delegated officer must obtain a minimum number of written quotations as specified in the Council's Procurement Policy. If fewer quotations are received than required, the reasons must be recorded in writing.
Tender threshold \$150,000 and above (Reg. 36)	Public tender required	Procurement above \$150,000 (total anticipated contract value) must go to public tender. Tenders must be advertised and assessed by an evaluation panel. Accepting a tender above this threshold is reserved to the Council (reserved matter (s) in Section 6).
Contract variation (Reg. 42)	Reporting obligations apply	Where a contract variation results in the total cost exceeding \$100,000 (or exceeding the original tender cost by more than 10%), the CEO must table a report at the next Council meeting and publish a notice on the council's website.

Important: Delegation 1 (Expenditure — budgeted goods and services) does not override the procurement thresholds. An officer with an expenditure delegation still cannot commit to a contract above the public tender threshold (\$150,000) without going through the required tender process. Accepting tenders above the threshold is reserved to the Council (Section 6, item (s)).

5.3 Conflict of interest

Delegated authority must not be exercised where a conflict of interest exists, or where one may reasonably be perceived to exist. An officer who identifies a potential conflict of interest in relation to a matter must:

- not exercise any delegated authority in relation to that matter;
- disclose the conflict to the CEO (or to the Council President if the CEO is conflicted) as soon as practicable; and
- refer the matter to the next appropriate level of authority for decision.

Good governance note: The conflict of interest provisions of Part 7.3 of the LG Act 2019 (NT) apply to council members. For staff and the CEO, the relevant obligations are set out in Part 9.5 of the Act and the applicable Code of Conduct. Officers must be familiar with their obligations under both.

5.4 Delegation does not prevent higher action

Delegation of authority by the Council to the CEO does not prevent the Council from acting in the matter itself, or from revoking or varying the delegation at any time. Similarly, sub-delegation by the CEO to an officer does not prevent the CEO from acting in the matter, or from revoking or varying the sub-delegation at any time.

5.5 Judgment and escalation

Delegation requires judgment. It is not appropriate to exercise delegated authority in all circumstances. Matters that are contentious, attract significant public interest, involve novel or complex circumstances, or where no clear policy guidance exists, should be referred to the CEO or to the Council as appropriate, rather than decided under delegation.

An officer should always escalate a matter if they are uncertain whether their delegation covers it, or whether exercising it would be appropriate in the circumstances.

5.6 Standard of exercise

All officers exercising delegated authority are required at all times to act reasonably, honestly and in the best interests of the Council and the community it serves.

5.7 Recording and reporting

Exercises of delegated authority must be documented using the Delegation Exercise Log at Appendix B or an equivalent record. The CEO will maintain a consolidated record of all material decisions made under delegation and will include a summary in the quarterly report to the Council. Significant decisions made under delegation, particularly those involving expenditure approaching budget limits, emergency

commitments, or discretionary actions, must be drawn to the Council's attention at the next available meeting.

Accountability principle: Delegation transfers authority but does not transfer accountability. The officer who exercises a delegation is personally accountable for that exercise. The CEO remains accountable to the Council for the overall delegation framework and its outcomes.

6. Reserved matters — Council only

The following matters cannot be delegated to the CEO or any other officer. They must be decided by a resolution of the full Council. Any officer who is asked to act on these matters under delegation should immediately refer the matter to the CEO and the Council President.

Matter reserved to Council (CEO cannot exercise)	
(a)	Levy, make or fix rates, valuations, charges, fees, fares or dues.
(b)	Borrow money on behalf of the Council.
(c)	Approve expenditure on works, services or operations not set out in an approved Council budget.
(d)	Determine member allowances.
(e)	Make an application, under the Act, to the Administrator or Minister.
(f)	Do any other thing expressly prescribed as requiring a Council resolution.
(g)	Appoint a Chief Executive Officer, Deputy CEO or Auditor.
(h)	Determine the Auditor's fee.
(i)	Appoint a Deputy President.
(j)	Determine when the Council office is normally open to the public (minor changes to office hours are permitted under Delegation 26).
(k)	Determine a periodic review of electoral representation.
(l)	Determine where Council or Committee meetings are held.
(m)	Establish any Council Committee or approve an appointment to the position of Chair of any Council Committee.
(n)	Give directions or impose restrictions in respect of the calling and conduct of a Special Meeting of a Committee of Council.
(o)	Acquire, purchase, sell, exchange or surrender any land or other property.
(p)	Adopt a financial statement included in an annual financial report.
(q)	Review requests from a dissatisfied applicant under Part 11.8 of the Act (waiver or deferral of rates for financial hardship).
(r)	Grant rating concessions under s.167 of the Act (concessions relating to public benefit).
(s)	Accept tenders that are required under the Act or LG (General) Regulations 2021 to be invited by the Council (i.e. procurements above the \$150,000 public tender threshold under Regulation 36).

(t)	Call a meeting of electors to consider a matter in relation to the management of the Council (Part 6.4).
(u)	Make By-laws.
(v)	Exercise any function under this or any other Act, Regulation or By-law that is expressly required to be exercised by a resolution of the Council.

Important: This list reflects the limitations on CEO delegations specified in s.40(3) of the LG Act 2019 (NT) and the LG (General) Regulations 2021. It is not exhaustive. Any function that is expressly required by legislation to be exercised by a Council resolution falls within this category, regardless of whether it is listed here. Officers should seek legal advice if uncertain.

7. Chief Executive Officer delegations

Pursuant to s.40 of the LG Act 2019 (NT), the Council delegates to the person appointed as Chief Executive Officer the following powers, functions, duties and authorities. This delegation shall remain in force until specifically altered or revoked in writing by a Council resolution.

All delegations are subject to compliance with the protocols in Section 5 (including the procurement obligations in Section 5.2), the reserved matters in Section 6, all current Council policies, and all applicable legislation.

#	Delegation	Description and limits
1	Expenditure — budgeted goods and services	Commit the Council to expenditure on goods and services, including plant and equipment, provided that the expenditure has been provided for in an approved Council budget. To pay accounts for goods and services purchased on behalf of the Council. All expenditure commitments are subject to the procurement thresholds and quotation/tender requirements under Subdivision 1 of the LG (General) Regulations 2021 and the Council's Procurement Policy. Accepting tenders above the \$150,000 threshold is reserved to the Council (Section 6, item (s)).
2	Rates and charges — Assessment Record	Maintain the Assessment Record in accordance with s.230 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
3	Rates and charges — Apportionment	Make an apportionment of rates on behalf of the Council pursuant to s.224 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
4	Rates and charges — Recovery	Take action against a person for the recovery of unpaid rates and charges, including tracing charges, pursuant to s.254 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
5	Rates and charges — Certificates of liabilities	Sign Certificates of Liabilities pursuant to s.339 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
6	Debtors — write-off (non-rates)	Write off any fees or charges other than rates and charges (Chapter 11) to a maximum of \$500, subject to compliance with Regulation 32 of the LG (General) Regulations (NT). Amounts above \$500 or write-offs of rates require a Council resolution.

7	Debtors — extension of time	Approve an extension of time to pay any debtor account due to the Council, including rates and charges under Chapter 11 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
8	Investigations	Investigate the officers of the Council or of any department or division when directed or when the CEO deems this expedient. Report findings to Council.
9	Ombudsman — initial response	Make the initial response to enquiries from the NT Ombudsman in relation to complaints about Council decisions or the conduct of Council officers or employees.
10	Industrial relations	Represent the Council in industrial matters.
11	Training and conferences — elected members	Approve attendance by Council members at conferences, workshops, seminars and relevant training courses where there are no travel costs or overnight accommodation expenses. Approve attendance including travel and accommodation by Council delegates to LGANT meetings held in the NT and the ALGA National Assembly.
12	Training and conferences — staff	Approve training expenditure for Council staff, including attendance at conferences, seminars and workshops.
13	Policy discretion	In consultation with the President, exercise discretion in matters affecting the policies and practices of the Council in the interest of practical working arrangements or in special extenuating circumstances. Details of any exercise of this discretion, other than in minor matters, must be included in a report to Council.
14	Permits, licences and notices	Issue dispensations, permits, licences or notices in accordance with any Act, Regulation or By-law, subject to compliance with applicable Council policy. Fix any fees including expiation fees.
15	Cash advances	Vary the number and amount of cash advances within any limits prescribed by the Council.
16	Contract variations	Approve total variations to contracts during the progress of works to a limit of 10% of the total contract sum in aggregate (excluding period contracts). Variations must be in writing and within scope of the original contract. Where a variation results in the total cost exceeding \$100,000, or exceeds the original tender cost by more than 10%, the CEO must table a report at the next Council meeting and publish a notice on the council's website in accordance with Regulation 42 of the LG (General) Regulations 2021. Variations that would exceed this delegation require a Council resolution.
17	Reserve and investment funds	Transfer funds between the general fund and Reserve or Investment accounts (pursuant to s.194 of the LG Act 2019 NT), generally in accordance with the Council's budget or a Council resolution. Exercise discretion in the appropriation of surplus funds to reserves.
18	Council property	Manage property owned by Wagait Shire Council, including any commercial properties.
19	Execution of documents	In conjunction with the President: execute contracts or other documents requiring the Common Seal; execute instruments of encumbrance and applications for variation of priority to existing

		documents; execute documents relating to easements, leases, licences and permits and affix the Common Seal where required; affix the Common Seal to instruments granting consent to Unit Plan applications where the Council has an interest in the subject land.
20	Annual Report	Prepare the Annual Report in accordance with Chapter 14 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
21	Information Act	Exercise the Council's powers and undertake its responsibilities under the Information Act 2002 (NT), pursuant to Part 14.2 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
22	Bank account signatories	Nominate signatories to Council bank accounts. Any two of the following positions are required to sign cheques and authorise electronic disbursements: the Council President; the Deputy President; and any one of the CEO, Office Manager or Finance Officer.
23	Acting CEO appointment	Appoint an Acting Chief Executive Officer for periods of the CEO's leave or absence.
24	Contracts	Execute and sign contracts, including employment contracts, on behalf of the Council.
25	Professional and legal advice	Seek professional and legal advice on behalf of the Council.
26	Office hours	Make minor changes to Council office business hours. Material changes to office hours require a Council resolution.
27	Authorised persons	Appoint authorised persons for the purpose of enforcing the LG Act 2019 (NT), its regulations or by-laws, and any other Act, regulation or by-law in which powers are vested in the Council. The following positions are currently authorised: CEO; Acting CEO; Office Manager (Administration Manager); Works Manager; Policy Officer; Finance Officer.
28	Sub-delegation	Sub-delegate powers and functions to another officer or employee by name or by reference to a position, in accordance with the Council's express permission under s.168 of the LG Act 2019 (NT), and subject to the limits of this Manual.
29	Human resources management	Recruit, appoint, manage, discipline, suspend and terminate staff of the Council (other than the CEO, whose appointment and termination are reserved to the Council) in accordance with Chapter 9, Part 9.2 of the LG Act 2019 (NT), the Council's HR policies, and applicable employment law. Determine staff remuneration within approved budget parameters. This delegation does not include the appointment of the CEO, Deputy CEO or Auditor, which remain reserved to the Council.
30	Work health and safety	Exercise the Council's functions as a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) under the Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT), including: establishing and maintaining WHS management systems and procedures; directing work stoppages where an immediate risk to health or safety is identified; notifying SafeWork NT of notifiable incidents as required; and taking all reasonably practicable steps to eliminate or minimise workplace hazards. The CEO may sub-

		delegate site-level WHS authority to the Works Manager for operational decisions.
31	Emergency management	During a declared emergency, or where immediate action is required to protect life, property or essential council services, commit the Council to emergency expenditure and engage contractors or suppliers outside normal procurement processes, up to a limit of \$50,000 per emergency event. Any emergency expenditure must be reported to the Council at the next available meeting with a full account of the circumstances, actions taken, and amounts committed. The CEO may sub-delegate operational emergency authority to the Works Manager for site-level decisions.

8. Sub-delegations by the Chief Executive Officer

Pursuant to s.168 of the LG Act 2019 (NT), and with the express permission of the Council as granted in this Manual, the CEO sub-delegates the following powers and functions to the officers specified below. Sub-delegations are subject to the protocols in Section 5 and cannot be further delegated unless the CEO expressly permits this in writing.

All expenditure sub-delegations are subject to the procurement thresholds in Subdivision 1 of the LG (General) Regulations 2021, as summarised in Section 5.2.

Delegated officer	Delegation area	Description and limits
Office Manager	Expenditure — budgeted goods and services	Commit the Council to expenditure on goods and services, including plant and equipment, provided the expenditure is in the approved budget. Dollar limit as set in the current instrument of financial delegation. Subject to the procurement thresholds in Subdivision 1 of the LG (General) Regulations 2021.
Office Manager	Rates and charges — Assessment Record	Maintain the Assessment Record in accordance with s.230 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
Office Manager	Rates and charges — Apportionment	Make an apportionment of rates on behalf of the Council pursuant to s.224.
Office Manager	Rates and charges — Penalty remission	Remit all or part of any penalty for late payment under s.246 of the Act, where there is a satisfactory reason for the late payment or where payment would cause hardship. Includes associated expenses and legal fees.
Office Manager	Rates and charges — Recovery	Take action against a person for the recovery of unpaid rates and charges, including tracing charges, pursuant to s.254.
Office Manager	Commercial property and assets	Manage Council's commercial property and assets, including entering into leases and hire agreements. Disposal of assets is determined by the CEO or their delegate in the best interests of the Council.

Office Manager	Records management	Determine disposal and archiving schedules for Council records in accordance with legislative requirements. Dispose of records in accordance with approved schedules.
Office Manager	Information Act — access and correction	Make decisions under Part 3 (Access and Correction Rights) of the Information Act 2002 (NT) in relation to enquiries about access to information and correction of personal information.
Works Manager	Expenditure — budgeted goods and services	Commit the Council to expenditure on goods and services, including plant and equipment, provided the expenditure is in the approved budget. Dollar limit as set in the current instrument of financial delegation. Subject to the procurement thresholds in Subdivision 1 of the LG (General) Regulations 2021.
Works Manager	Work health and safety — site level	Exercise site-level WHS authority as sub-delegated by the CEO under Delegation 30, including directing work stoppages where an immediate risk to health or safety is identified, and notifying the CEO of any notifiable WHS incidents as soon as practicable.
Works Manager	Emergency management — site level	Exercise operational emergency authority as sub-delegated by the CEO under Delegation 31, including directing emergency responses on site, engaging emergency contractors, and committing emergency expenditure within the limit set by the CEO. All emergency actions must be reported to the CEO as soon as practicable.
Finance Officer	Expenditure — budgeted goods and services	Commit the Council to expenditure on goods and services, provided the expenditure is in the approved budget. Dollar limit as set in the current instrument of financial delegation. Subject to the procurement thresholds in Subdivision 1 of the LG (General) Regulations 2021.

Acting arrangements: Where an officer is appointed by the CEO to act in a delegated position (for example, an acting Office Manager), that acting officer assumes the same delegated authority as the substantive position holder for the duration of the acting arrangement. The CEO must notify affected staff of any acting appointments in writing.

8.1 Instrument of financial delegation — minimum content

The instrument of financial delegation must meet the following minimum content requirements. A copy of the current instrument must be provided to each delegated officer, who must sign an acknowledgement of receipt. The instrument must be retained on file and made available for audit review.

Required field	Description
Name or title of delegated officer	The full name and position title of each officer to whom a financial delegation applies.

Delegation(s) covered	The delegation number(s) from Section 7 or 8 of this Manual to which the threshold applies.
Dollar threshold	The maximum dollar value the officer is authorised to commit per transaction, stated exclusive of GST.
Any conditions or restrictions	Any specific conditions, approvals or reporting requirements applicable to the exercise of that delegation.
Date of issue	The date the instrument takes effect.
CEO signature	The instrument must be signed by the CEO. A Council-endorsed instrument must also record the resolution number.
Date provided to officer	The date a copy of the instrument was provided to each delegated officer. Each officer must sign an acknowledgement of receipt.

Operational note: The instrument of financial delegation may be reviewed and updated by the CEO at any time within the limits set by this Manual. Any update must be reported to Council at the next ordinary meeting. Where the Council wishes to set a limit different from the CEO's recommendation, this must be done by resolution. The instrument does not need a Council resolution to be issued unless it exceeds the CEO's delegation limits.

9. Acting Chief Executive Officer

The Acting Chief Executive Officer has authority to act on behalf of the CEO during any period of the CEO's absence or leave. The Acting CEO may make the decisions and issue the instructions that would otherwise be the responsibility of the CEO, within the limits of this Manual and any specific instructions given by the CEO before their absence.

The Acting CEO is expected at all times to act reasonably and in the best interests of the Council. Significant decisions, particularly those that are contentious, have major financial implications, or involve matters that the Council would reasonably expect to be informed of, should be deferred where possible until the CEO's return, or referred to the Council President for guidance.

Good practice: Before an absence, the CEO should brief the Acting CEO on any pending matters, outstanding delegations in progress, and any issues that may require attention. A written handover note is recommended for absences of more than five business days.

10. Review and amendment

10.1 Statutory review obligation

Section 41 of the LG Act 2019 (NT) requires the Council to review its delegations. This Manual must be reviewed and re-adopted by Council resolution at least once per council term, consistent with the s.41

obligation. The review must assess whether the delegations remain appropriate and whether any changes to legislation, the Council's structure or operations require amendments.

10.2 Early review triggers

An early review is required if any of the following circumstances arise:

- there is a material change in the LG Act 2019 (NT), the LG (General) Regulations 2021, the WHS Act 2011 (NT), or any other legislation directly affecting the delegation framework;
- there is a change of CEO;
- there is a significant change in the Council's organisational structure, staffing or business operations;
- a compliance review, audit finding or Audit Committee recommendation indicates the framework requires updating; or
- a Council resolution directs a review.

10.3 Amendment process

Any amendment to this Manual must be approved by a Council resolution before taking effect. The CEO may not unilaterally amend the delegation limits in this Manual. The instrument of financial delegation, which specifies the dollar thresholds for expenditure delegations, may be reviewed and updated by the CEO at any time within the limits set by this Manual, and must be reported to Council at the next ordinary meeting following any such update.

The Delegation Register at Appendix A must be updated to reflect any amendments and re-tabled with the updated Manual at the next Council meeting.

11. Associated documents

- Instrument of Financial Delegation (maintained by CEO, reviewed annually)
- Council Procurement Policy (adopted by Council resolution per Reg. 33 LG (General) Regulations 2021)
- GOV-FCP-01 Fraud and Corruption Protection Policy
- GOV-AC-01 Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- GOV-RM-01 Risk Management Policy
- GOV-RC-01 Rates and Charges Policy
- GOV-GB-01 Gifts and Benefits Policy
- Accounting and Policy Manual
- Code of Conduct – CEO and Staff
- WHS Management System documentation

12. References and legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), s.40 (Delegation by Council) and s.41 (Review of delegations)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), s.168 (Delegation by CEO)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), Chapter 9, Part 9.1 (CEO role and functions) and Part 9.2 (Other staff)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), Part 9.5 (Staff obligations and conflict of interest)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT), Part 7.3 (Conflict of interest — members)
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT), Regulation 32 (Write-off of debts)
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT), Subdivision 1, Regulations 33–42 (Procurement of supplies)
- Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT)
- Information Act 2002 (NT)
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government

13. Review history

Date approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Next review
16/06/2015	Council – Res. 2015/190 Moved: Cr Richmond Seconded: VP Lisa Marie Stones Vote: AIF	2015/190	Next council election
21/05/2019	Council – Res. 2019/400 Moved: Cr Michael Vaughan Seconded: Cr Graham Drake Vote: AIF	2019/400	Next council election
15/02/2022	Council – Res. 2022/034 Moved: VP Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Michael Vaughan Vote: AIF	2022/034	Next council election
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – April 2026	TBD	Next council election, or earlier if required under s.41 of the LG Act 2019 (NT), a change in applicable legislation, a change of CEO, a significant change in council operations, or at the request of the Audit Committee

Appendix A: Delegation Register

The following register provides a quick-reference summary of all delegations in this Manual. It is updated by the CEO whenever a delegation is amended and tabled at Council annually as part of the delegation review. The 'Last confirmed' column records the date the delegation was last reviewed and confirmed as current.

Financial year: _____ CEO: _____ Date tabled at Council: _____

#	Delegation title	Delegated officer(s)	Key limit / condition	Last confirmed
1	Expenditure — budgeted goods and services	CEO / Office Manager / Works Manager / Finance Officer	Budgeted items; procurement thresholds apply	
2	Rates — Assessment Record	CEO / Office Manager	s.230 LG Act	
3	Rates — Apportionment	CEO / Office Manager	s.224 LG Act	
4	Rates — Recovery	CEO / Office Manager	s.254 LG Act	
5	Rates — Certificates of liabilities	CEO	s.339 LG Act	
6	Debtors — write-off (non-rates)	CEO	Max \$500	
7	Debtors — extension of time	CEO	All debtor accounts	
8	Investigations	CEO	Report to Council	
9	Ombudsman — initial response	CEO	Initial response only	
10	Industrial relations	CEO	Council representation	
11	Training — elected members	CEO	Per protocol in delegation	
12	Training — staff	CEO	Within budget	
13	Policy discretion	CEO	In consultation with President; report to Council	
14	Permits, licences and notices	CEO	Per applicable Act/policy	
15	Cash advances	CEO	Within Council limits	
16	Contract variations	CEO	10% cap; Reg 42 reporting applies	
17	Reserve and investment funds	CEO	Within budget / Council resolution	
18	Council property	CEO	All commercial property	
19	Execution of documents	CEO (with President)	Common Seal; easements; leases	
20	Annual Report	CEO	Chapter 14 LG Act	

21	Information Act	CEO / Office Manager	Part 14.2 LG Act / Part 3 Info Act	
22	Bank account signatories	CEO	Two-signature requirement	
23	Acting CEO appointment	CEO	Periods of absence	
24	Contracts	CEO	Including employment contracts	
25	Professional and legal advice	CEO	On behalf of Council	
26	Office hours — minor changes	CEO	Minor only; material = Council	
27	Authorised persons	CEO	Per s.168 LG Act	
28	Sub-delegation	CEO	Per s.168 and Council permission	
29	Human resources management	CEO	Excludes CEO/Deputy CEO/Auditor	
30	Work health and safety	CEO / Works Manager (site)	WHS Act 2011 NT; PCBU obligations	
31	Emergency management	CEO / Works Manager (site)	\$50,000 per event; report to Council	

CEO signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Delegation Exercise Log template

Delegated officers must complete an exercise log entry for each material decision made under delegated authority. Log entries are reviewed by the CEO quarterly and retained on file for a minimum of seven years for audit purposes. A new entry form should be used for each separate decision.

Delegation Exercise Log — Entry	
Date of decision	
Delegation number and title	
Officer exercising delegation	
Description of decision or action taken	
Dollar value (if applicable)	
Procurement method used (if applicable)	
Any conditions applied	
Reference to supporting documentation	
Reported to CEO (date)	
Reported to Council (date, if required)	

Reviewed by CEO: _____ Date: _____

TELECONFERENCING AND VIDEOCONFERENCING POLICY

Policy | Governance | Wagait Shire Council

Reviewed and updated March 2026 to align with the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) and current best practice for hybrid and remote meeting participation.



Policy No.	GOV-TC-01	Version	3.0
Category	Governance	Status	Active – Pending Adoption
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer	Next Review	Next council election, or earlier if required
Legislation	LG Act 2019 (NT) ss.95(3), 98(3); Information Act 2002 (NT); Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)	Applies To	All Elected Members, Council Committee Members, senior staff and members of the public participating remotely

1. Purpose

In plain terms: This policy sets out when and how Elected Members, Committee Members, senior staff and members of the public can join Council meetings and workshops remotely — by phone or video call — and the rules that apply when they do.

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate access and participation in Council meetings and workshops by permitting Elected Members, Council Committee Members and senior staff to participate by teleconferencing or videoconferencing, subject to the conditions set out in this policy.

The policy is made in accordance with Chapter 6, Part 6.1, section 95(3)(a), (b) and (c), and Part 6.2, section 98(3)(a), (b) and (c) of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT), which permit remote participation in Council and committee meetings under prescribed conditions.

Legislative basis: Section 95(3) of the LG Act 2019 (NT) permits Elected Members to participate in Council meetings by telephone or electronic means, subject to the conditions set by Council in its meeting procedures policy. Section 98(3) extends the same permission to committee and local authority meetings. This policy gives effect to both provisions.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Elected Members, Council Committee Members, senior staff and members of the public who wish to participate in Council meetings, committee meetings or workshops by teleconferencing or videoconferencing.

It applies to all meeting types listed in Section 5. It does not apply to informal briefings, one-on-one discussions or administrative calls that are not formal Council proceedings.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Term	Definition
Chairperson	The person presiding over the meeting — typically the Council President for Council meetings, or the appointed Chair for committee meetings.
Meeting	Any formal Council meeting, Special Council meeting, Council Committee meeting or Council workshop conducted under the procedures set out in Chapter 6 of the LG Act 2019 (NT).
Remote participant	An Elected Member, Council Committee Member, senior staff member or member of the public who participates in a meeting by teleconferencing or videoconferencing rather than attending in person.
Senior staff	The Chief Executive Officer and any other staff member designated by the CEO as senior staff for the purposes of this policy.
Teleconferencing	Participation in a meeting by audio-only telephone connection.
Videoconferencing	Participation in a meeting by a digital platform that provides both audio and video capability, such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom or an equivalent platform.

4. Meeting types

The following table sets out which meeting types permit remote participation under this policy:

Meeting type	Remote participation permitted?	Notes
Ordinary Council Meetings	Yes	Subject to eligibility conditions and prior approval.

Special Council Meetings	Yes	Subject to eligibility conditions and prior approval.
Council Committee Meetings	Yes	Including the Audit Committee and Emergency Management Committee.
Council Workshops	Yes	Remote participation permitted where prior approval has been granted.
Meetings of Electors (Part 6.4)	No	Must be attended in person by those required to be present under the LG Act 2019 (NT).

5. Prior approval

Elected Members, Council Committee Members and senior staff are required to seek prior approval before participating by teleconferencing or videoconferencing. Prior approval should be sought at the time of requesting a leave of absence.

Where unforeseen circumstances arise at short notice, an Elected Member or senior staff member may seek leave of the Council to attend remotely at the commencement of the meeting. The Chairperson will determine whether to grant approval, taking into account the nature of the meeting and any matters requiring a vote.

Members of the public seeking to attend a Council meeting remotely must seek prior approval from the CEO before the meeting. The CEO will issue a formal invitation to those approved, and retains discretion to decline a request where it cannot be reasonably accommodated.

Good practice: Where a remote participant is expected to vote on a resolution, the Chairperson should confirm the participant's connection and ability to hear and be heard before the meeting formally commences. A brief roll-call at the start of the meeting covering remote participants is recommended.

6. Eligibility conditions

Elected Members, Council Committee Members and senior staff are eligible to participate remotely if one or more of the following conditions is met:

Eligibility condition	Who may rely on this	Notes
Leave of absence granted	Elected Members, Committee	Formal leave of absence has been approved. Participation via remote technology is permitted for the duration of the leave.

	Members, senior staff	
Located more than 100km from the meeting venue (within Australia)	Elected Members, Committee Members, senior staff	Distance prevents practical in-person attendance. Interstate or remote location does not disqualify participation.
Physically prevented from attending	Elected Members, Committee Members, senior staff, members of the public	Illness, injury, carer obligations or other physical circumstance preventing in-person attendance.
Directed to avoid attendance under another law	Elected Members, Committee Members, senior staff	Attendance in person is directed to be avoided to ensure compliance with a public health direction, emergency declaration or other legislative requirement in force at the time.

Distance rule: The 100km threshold applies from the appointed place of the meeting. Participants must remain within Australia. International participation is not permitted under this policy.

7. Connection and participation rights

Communication will be established by means of the Council's conferencing system at or around the commencement of the meeting, between remote participants and those present at the appointed meeting venue.

Remote participants will have the same, or substantially the same, opportunity to participate in debate and to register an opinion on questions arising for decision as if they were physically present at the meeting. This is a legislative requirement under sections 95(3)(c) and 98(3)(c) of the LG Act 2019 (NT) and must be actively maintained by the Chairperson throughout the meeting.

Chairperson responsibility: The Chairperson has an active obligation to ensure remote participants can hear, be heard and participate meaningfully. If the Chairperson believes a remote participant cannot adequately participate in a vote or substantive discussion, the meeting should pause until the issue is resolved.

8. Meeting materials

Where remote participants are unable to view presentations or materials being presented at the meeting, electronic copies will be provided to them before or at the start of the meeting, in sufficient time to allow meaningful participation.

The Secretariat is responsible for ensuring that all agenda papers, attachments and presentation materials are distributed to confirmed remote participants at least three working days before the meeting, consistent with standard agenda distribution requirements.

Confidential materials: Where a meeting includes confidential agenda items, the Secretariat must ensure that confidential documents are transmitted to remote participants through a secure channel and that participants are reminded of their confidentiality obligations before the confidential session commences.

9. Technical failure

9.1 Disconnection during a meeting

Where a remote participant experiences a technical failure, and connection cannot be re-established within a reasonable time as determined by the Chairperson, the meeting may continue without that participant. The Chairperson will note the disconnection and the time it occurred in the minutes.

9.2 Disconnection during a vote

Where a technical failure affects a remote participant's ability to vote on a resolution, the Chairperson will, where practicable, pause the vote to allow the connection to be re-established. If this is not practicable, the vote will proceed and the disconnection will be recorded in the minutes.

A remote participant who has been disconnected is not counted as present for quorum purposes while disconnected. If the disconnection reduces the meeting below quorum, the Chairperson must suspend the meeting until quorum is restored or adjourn the meeting.

Minutes requirement: All technical failures that affect participation or voting must be clearly recorded in the minutes, including the time of disconnection, the time reconnection occurred (if applicable), and any votes affected. This protects the integrity of the Council's decision-making record.

10. Security and confidentiality

Remote participants are responsible for ensuring they participate from a location that is secure and private, particularly where confidential or sensitive Council matters are being discussed. This includes ensuring that unauthorised persons cannot hear or view the proceedings.

Participants must not share meeting links, dial-in details, passwords or confidential agenda materials with unauthorised persons, whether before, during or after the meeting.

All participants must comply with the confidentiality obligations under Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and the Information Act 2002 (NT), regardless of their method of participation. These obligations apply equally to remote and in-person participants.

Recording of meetings: Meetings must not be recorded by any participant without the express consent of the Chairperson and all participants. Unauthorised recording may constitute a breach of the Information Act 2002 (NT) and the LG Act 2019 (NT) confidentiality obligations.

11. Inability to accommodate

Should Council be unable to accommodate a request to participate by teleconferencing or videoconferencing for any reason, the affected participant will be advised as soon as practicable, and prior to the meeting where possible.

Where a request cannot be accommodated and the participant is an Elected Member, the CEO must advise the Council President promptly so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

12. Hybrid meeting arrangements

Where a meeting is conducted with both in-person and remote participants (a hybrid meeting), the Council must ensure that the meeting environment supports equal participation. As a minimum:

- a suitable screen or monitor is available in the meeting room so that remote participants on video can be seen by those present;
- the audio system in the meeting room allows remote participants to hear all in-room discussion clearly;
- in-room participants are reminded to speak clearly and directly towards the microphone; and
- the Chairperson actively manages the meeting to ensure remote participants have equal opportunity to speak and vote.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring the Council's meeting facilities are appropriately equipped to support hybrid meetings, and that equipment is tested before each meeting at which remote participation is expected.

Technology currency: As remote meeting technology evolves rapidly, the CEO should review the platforms and equipment used by the Council annually and make recommendations to the Council if upgrades would materially improve participation quality or security.

13. Associated documents

- GOV-MPR-01 Procedures for Council and Council Committee Meetings

- GOV-AC-01 Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- GOV-EMC-01 Emergency Management Committee Terms of Reference
- Information Act 2002 (NT) — confidentiality and privacy obligations

14. References and legislation

- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) — Chapter 6, Part 6.1, section 95(3); Part 6.2, section 98(3)
- Local Government Act 2019 (NT) — Schedule 1 (Code of Conduct, confidentiality obligations)
- Information Act 2002 (NT) — confidentiality and privacy obligations
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) — as amended, including the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes No. 2) Act 2024
- ACLG Good Governance Guide for Local Government

15. Review history

Date approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Next review
19/05/2020	Council – Res. 2020/076 Moved: Cr Neil White Seconded: VP Tom Dyer Vote: AIF	2020/076	Next council election
19/10/2021	Council – Res. 2021/186 Moved: VP Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Noeletta McKenzie Vote: AIF	2021/186	Next term of Council
April 2026	Pending Council Adoption – SOW Policy Review Phase 1 Alignment with LG Act 2019 (NT), Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) and current best practice	TBD	Next council election, or earlier if required by a change in the LG Act 2019 (NT), a significant change in remote meeting technology, or at the request of the CEO or Audit Committee

9. IN-CAMERA ITEMS

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit Committee close the meeting to the general public in accordance with section 99(2) of the Local Government Act to enable Council to discuss in a Confidential Session an item described under Local Government (General) regulation Division 2;

51 (1) (a) information about the employment of a particular individual as a member of staff or possible member of the staff of the Council that could, if publicly disclosed, cause prejudice to the individual;

51 (1) (b) information about the personal circumstances of a resident or ratepayer;

51 (1) (c) information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to:

(i) cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person; or (ii) prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law; or

(iii) prejudice the security of the council, its members, or staff; or

(iv) subject to subregulation (3) – prejudice the interests of the council or some other person;

51 (1) (d) information subject to an obligation of confidentiality at law, or in equity;

51 (1) (e) subject to subregulation (3) – information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest;

51 (1) (f) subject to subregulation (2) – information in relation to a complaint of a contravention of the code of conduct.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:

At _____ pm Council closed the meeting to the general public.

9.1 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS TO BE RAISED IN-CAMERA

9.1.1 Confirmation of Previous IN-CAMERA Minutes

9.1.2 CEO Recruitment Update

51 (1) (a) information about the employment of a particular individual as a member of staff or possible member of the staff of the Council that could, if publicly disclosed, cause prejudice to the individual;

9.1.3 Office of the Ombudsman Correspondence

51 (1) (c) information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to:

(i) cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person; or (ii) prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law; or

(iii) prejudice the security of the council, its members, or staff; or

(iv) subject to subregulation (3) – prejudice the interests of the council or some other person;

9.1.4 Local Government Compliance correspondence

51 (1) (c) information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to:

(i) cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person;

(iii) prejudice the security of the council, its members, or staff; or
(iv) subject to subregulation (3) – prejudice the interests of the council or some other person;

9.1.5 2026-27 Draft Proposed Budget

51 (1) (c) information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to:
(i) cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person; or (ii) prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law; or
(iii) prejudice the security of the council, its members, or staff; or
(iv) subject to subregulation (3) – prejudice the interests of the council or some other person;

9.1.6 2026-27 Draft Rates Declaration

51 (1) (c) information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to:
(i) cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person; or (ii) prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law; or
(iii) prejudice the security of the council, its members, or staff; or
(iv) subject to subregulation (3) – prejudice the interests of the council or some other person;

9.1.7 2026-27 Draft Fees & Charges

51 (1) (c) information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to:
(i) cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person; or (ii) prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law; or
(iii) prejudice the security of the council, its members, or staff; or
(iv) subject to subregulation (3) – prejudice the interests of the council or some other person;

9.1.8 2026-27 Draft Shire Plan

51 (1) (c) information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to:
(i) cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person; or (ii) prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law; or
(iii) prejudice the security of the council, its members, or staff; or
(iv) subject to subregulation (3) – prejudice the interests of the council or some other person;

10. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The next meeting of the Wagait Shire Council Audit Committee will be held in the Wagait Shire Council Chambers TBC.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at am.