

**ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT STAFF GUIDELINES**

**Intent** This policy will ensure accountability in respect to the assistance provided to Councillors in carrying out their responsibilities as elected representatives in an open and transparent manner

**Scope** This policy applies to Elected Members (Councillors) of Cairns Regional Council.

**PROVISIONS**

**1. Definitions**

To assist in interpretation the following definitions shall apply:

**Act** shall mean the Local Government Act 2009.

**Councillors** shall mean the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors as elected representatives of Cairns Regional Council.

**Councillor Administrative Support Staff (Support Staff)** shall mean a CRC employee who assists the Mayor and Councillors in meeting the responsibilities of their roles and delivery of important services and infrastructure for local communities.

**CRC Employee** shall mean all persons employed by MRC on a permanent, temporary or casual basis and includes persons engaged under a contract of service, and volunteers.

**CRC** shall mean Cairns Regional Council.

**2. Background**

The Local Government Act 2009 (LGA) include prohibitions on councillors giving direction to employees of the local government. These provisions may be perceived as restricting the ability of councillors to ask administrative support staff to undertake routine administrative functions such as typing, organising meetings and copying documents.

Section 170 AA of the LGA provide that a councillor may give a direction to a local government employee who provides administrative support to the councillor in accordance with guidelines made by the chief executive officer (CEO).

**3. CRC Administrative Support Staff (Support Staff) for Elected Members**

The following positions and resources are specifically provided in direct support of Councillors and their functions:

**Personal Assistant to the Mayor** – Provision for the Mayor for a full time Council staffed Personal Assistant within the Office of the Chief Executive Officer.

**Executive Support Officer - Councillors** – Provisions for Councillors of access to the services of a full time Council staffed Executive Support Officer within the Office of the Chief Executive Officer.

The following tasks may be directed by a Councillor to Support Staff, and include but are not limited to:

- Answering telephone calls
- Managing appointments calendar
- Photocopying, printing and ordering stationery
- Liaising with Council about office maintenance or health and safety issues on behalf of the Councillor
- Room or travel bookings, for example booking Council vehicles or meeting rooms
- Logging requests for service jobs from the community, for example requests for street or park maintenance
- Locating information for Councillors such as legislation, information from Council's website or other sources
- Coordination of committees or groups that Councillors Chair or are members of as part of their Council appointed roles
- Coordination of community consultation sessions or community meeting sessions attended by Councillors
- Minute taking for meetings and agenda coordination for Council committee meetings
- Assisting with communication to the community through emails, e-newsletters, informational advice flyers about construction works, or other similar mediums, if the communication is objective, factual, informational, 'business as usual' and an efficient use of funds.

Specific tasks for the Personal Assistant to the Mayor:

- Minute taking for meetings and agenda coordination, preparing correspondence memos and power-point presentations, and document management for the Mayor.
- Acting as front-office contact for Mayor, for face to face visitors, or individual community members lodgements of enquiries or service complaints through telephone, electronic media or correspondence.
- Undertake background research to obtain information and report to the Mayor in an organised and logical manner through the drafting of briefs, papers and correspondence. To include but not limited to community organisations, researching requests for support from Mayor and prior to meeting dignitaries / visitors or attending community events.
- Accompany the Mayor to events, as requested, to support, record enquires and follow up as appropriate

For any urgent out of standard hours services or requests contact should be made via the CEO and/or the Executive Manager – Engagement and not initially directly with the Councillor Support Officer.

When a request for advice or information is received that is considered to be outside the scope of a Councillor's official duties or a request for advice or information is received which, upon consideration, will take a significant amount of resources to satisfy or cause an undue impact on the Support Staff, as per Councils Policy, Acceptable Request Guidelines the matter is to be escalated to the CEO and/or the Executive Manager – Engagement to make a decision as to whether it is considered that the fulfilment of the request is required to allow the Councillor to perform their duties.

Council Support Staff cannot assist with the Councillor's re-election or other 'campaigning' tasks. Should a Councillor have concerns or are dissatisfied with their Support Staff they must submit their concerns directly to the CEO and/or Executive Manager – Engagement who are responsible for managing Support Staff

#### **4. Complaints**

A Councillor's failure to follow any Council Policy regarding Support Staff that contravenes the behaviour standards set out under the Code of Conduct for Councillors or Reasonable Request Guidelines Policy is considered inappropriate conduct.

CRC Employees including Support Staff, other Councillors or members of the community may lodge complaints about suspected inappropriate conduct to the Office of the Independent Assessor.  
Telephone: 1300 620 722  
Via Email: [OIAcomplaints@oia.qld.gov.au](mailto:OIAcomplaints@oia.qld.gov.au)

**5. Human Right Complaints**

When an individual feels that they are the subject of CRC's failure to act compatibly with human rights, they can make a complaint directly to CRC. These complaints will be assessed against the Human Rights Act 2019.

◆◆◆◆◆

**This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.**

**General Manager responsible for Review:**

**General Manager Human Resources & Organisational Change**

**ORIGINALLY ADOPTED:** 08/12/2021  
**CURRENT ADOPTION:** 08/12/2021  
**DUE FOR REVISION:** 08/12/2025  
**REVOKED/SUPERSEDED:**



.....  
**Mica Martin**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**