

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Portfolio Councillor Policy</b>
<b>Type of policy:</b>	Council
<b>Adopted:</b>	26 June 2024
<b>Record No:</b>	24/45301
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 1 – Form of appointment

## Acknowledgement of Country

*Murrindindi Shire Council is proud to acknowledge the Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the traditional owners of the land we now call Murrindindi Shire.*

*We pay our respects to First Nations leaders and elders, past, present and emerging, who are the keepers of history, traditions, knowledge and culture of this land.*

*We commit to working in collaboration with traditional owners of this land in a spirit of reconciliation and partnership.*

### 1. Purpose

Murrindindi Shire Council has established a Councillor Portfolio system. The purpose of this policy is to articulate the role of the Portfolio Councillor and the support that they will be provided.

### 2. Rationale

Good governance and appropriate operation of a Portfolio Councillor system requires a policy establishing the role of the Portfolio Councillor and the support that will be provided.

### 3. Scope

The policy applies to Portfolio Councillors and Council officers responsible for ensuring that the Portfolio Councillor is kept informed on key matters relating to their portfolio area.

### 4. Definitions

Reference Term	Definition
<b>Portfolio</b>	An area/s of focus relating to key functions and services of Council.

### 5. Policy

#### 5.1 Objectives of the Portfolio Councillor System

The objectives of establishing a Portfolio Councillor system are to:

- enable Councillors to develop a greater understanding of, and ability to input into strategy and policy development across Council's functions and services.
- facilitate the active and regular engagement of Portfolio Councillors in major planning, projects and services related to their portfolio.
- enable Councillors to advocate and champion portfolio issues to Council and the community.

- enable the briefing of other Councillors on portfolio areas by the Portfolio Councillor.

## 5.2 Portfolio Councillor appointment process

Portfolios will be established and a representative Councillor appointed annually by Council resolution. The responsibilities of each appointment will be documented as per Attachment 1.

To enable Councillors to gain a broader experience of Council functions and services it is preferred that Councillors represent a portfolio area for a maximum of two years per term.

The role of the Portfolio Councillor recognises that the CEO is responsible for the day-to-day management and direction of staff in implementing Council policy and strategy. Councillors can only exercise authority when they meet formally as Council at a properly constituted Council meeting.

## 5.3 Portfolio Councillor's Duties

Whilst recognising that the Mayor is the principal spokesperson for the Council on higher level matters, the role of the Portfolio Councillor includes:

- advocating on strategic and policy portfolio issues to Council and the community
- briefing other Councillors on portfolio areas through specific workshops or the presentation of reports
- representing Council on local, regional or state bodies of relevance to the portfolio
- acting as the spokesperson of Council on matters relating to the portfolio, including, quotes in media releases and speaking on radio and television as required; and
- acting as the Chair on relevant Council committees, unless legislative provisions require otherwise.

## 5.4 Support Provided to Portfolio Councillors

Portfolio Councillors will be provided with the following support to fulfil their role:

- a Director appointed as their primary contact for portfolio matters
- a timely induction on key issues affecting the portfolio following their appointment
- regular meetings (at least once every two months) with their appointed Director, and other Council officers, as needed.
- administration and meeting support to fulfill their role on appointed committees
- professional memberships, publications, training and/or conference attendance where appropriate to enable the Portfolio Councillor to be informed on issues relevant to their portfolio.

## 5.5 Reporting of Portfolio Councillors

Council will enable Portfolio Councillors to report on matters relevant to their portfolio during the Councillor Reports section of Scheduled Meetings of Council. Portfolio Councillors will also have the opportunity to lead discussions relevant to their portfolio at Councillor briefing sessions and during the development and annual review of the Council Plan.

## **6. Related Policies, Strategies and Legislation**

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

## **7. Council Plan**

The review of this policy is consistent with the Council Plan 2021-2025 Strategic Objective 5.1.5 '*Maintain transparent, inclusive and accountable governance practices*'.

## **8. Management and Review**

This policy will be implemented by members of the Executive Management Team and monitored by the Chief Executive Officer. This policy is to be reviewed every four years.

## **9. Consultation**

No public consultation was required in the writing or reviewing of this policy.

## **10. Human Rights Charter**

This policy has been developed with consideration of the requirements under the [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities](#).

## **11. Gender Impact Assessment**

This policy has been developed/reviewed with consideration of the criteria which inspires equality under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

## Attachment 1 – Form of Appointment

### Portfolio Councillor Appointment

Portfolio Councillor Name:	
Portfolio term:	Start:  End:
Assigned Executive Director(s):	
General Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet regularly with the Director(s) responsible for the functional areas of the portfolio to keep up to date matters relevant to their portfolio</li> <li>• Lead advocacy on strategic and policy portfolio issues to Council and the community</li> <li>• Update Councillors at Councillor briefings on strategic matters relevant to their portfolio, including matters likely to come before Council.</li> <li>• Represent Council on local, regional or state bodies, committees and forums relevant to the portfolio</li> <li>• Act as the Council spokesperson on matters relating to the portfolio, including, quotes in media releases and media interviews as required.</li> <li>• Report to the community during the Councillor Reports section of Scheduled Council Meetings on significant matters relevant to their portfolio.</li> </ul>
Relevant Council Plan Strategic Objectives / Strategies	
Relevant Council Departments/Areas	
Committee representation:	

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

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