



**SOUTHERN DOWNS
REGIONAL COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

LATE AGENDA ITEMS

Friday, 19 April 2024


ORDER OF BUSINESS:

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10. EXECUTIVE SERVICES REPORTS

10.8 Councillor Portfolios and Representation on Committees

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 19 April 2024
	Chief Executive Officer	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Adopt the Councillor Portfolio Policy as presented, including the portfolio details and representatives as detailed in Addendum A of the Policy; and
2. Adopt the appointment of Councillor representatives to various committees and organisations as detailed in this report.

REPORT

Report

The 2024 elected Councillors have considered the introduction of Councillor Portfolios and the appointment of Councillors to each of those Portfolios.

As a result of those considerations and discussions, a Policy has been drafted to provide the overarching intent and guidance for the implementation and ongoing success of the portfolio system.

A copy of the Policy is provided as **Attachment 1**.

Councillors have also considered their appointments to various committees and organisations. A table outlining the result of these deliberations is provided below.

COMMITTEE / ORGANISATION	COUNCILLOR/S
ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEES - SDRC	
Audit and Risk Management Committee	Mayor Hamilton, Cr Richters and Cr Wantling
Border Regional Organisation of Councils	Mayor Hamilton
Condamine Community Alliance	Cr Deane
Darling Downs and South West Queensland Council of Mayors	Mayor Hamilton

COMMITTEE / ORGANISATION	COUNCILLOR/S
Granite Belt Alliance	Cr Harslett
Local Disaster Management Group	Mayor Hamilton, Cr McDonald and Cr Richters
Local Disaster Recovery Group	Cr Windle and Cr Wantling
Pest Management Advisory Committee	Cr Pidgeon
Saleyards Advisory Committee	Mayor Hamilton and Cr Pidgeon
Shaping Southern Downs Advisory Committee	Cr Windle and Cr Richters
Southern Downs Youth Council	Cr Harslett
Southern Border Regional Roads and Transport Group	Cr Bartley
ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEES – EXTERNAL	
Agricultural Transport & Logistics Working Group	Cr Bartley (proxy Cr Pidgeon)
Condamine River Sports Group Committee	Cr Wantling
Granite Belt Art and Craft Trail Committee	Cr Harslett
Headspace	Cr McDonald (Cr Windle is a community representative)
Morgan Park User Group	Cr Richters and Cr Wantling
Public Art Reference Group	Cr Harslett
Southern Downs Industry Education Association Board	Harslett
Stanthorpe Community Reference Panel	Cr Deane
Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery	Cr Harslett (proxy Cr Windle)
Stanthorpe Shire River Improvement Trust	Mayor Hamilton and Cr Deane
Stanthorpe Sports Association	Cr Wantling
Warwick and District Community Road Safety Committee	Cr Bartley
Warwick Art Gallery	Cr Windle (proxy Cr Harslett)
Warwick Shire River Improvement Trust	Mayor Hamilton and Cr Deane
Warwick Women's Work Camp	Cr Windle and Cr Deane

The Terms of Reference for each of these committees or organisations will be reviewed in due course.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Risk

Nil

Opportunity

These appointments provide an opportunity for elected members to support inclusive teamwork, co-operation between elected members and the Executive Leadership Team and to provide a valuable link to the community on specific matters and strategic issues.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Internal Consultation

Elected members

External Consultation

Nil

LEGAL / POLICY

Legislation / Local Law

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Corporate Plan

Goal 1 Our People

Outcome: 1.1 Communities trust us to engage with them and advocate on their behalf.

Objective: 1.1.2 Implement effective and genuine community consultation processes that enable participation, engagement and collaboration.

1.1.3 Build confidence in our communities by being visible, empathetic and by actively listening.

Policy / Strategy

Draft Councillor Portfolio Policy

ATTACHMENTS

1. Councillor Portfolio Policy 2024-04 [↓](#)



Councillor Portfolio Policy

Policy Number:	Policy Number to be inserted by Governance
Policy Type:	Strategic
Department:	Executive Services
Section:	Office of the CEO
Responsible Manager:	CEO
Date Adopted:	Insert Date adopted
Date to be Reviewed:	Insert Date to be reviewed (minimum every two years)
Date Reviewed:	Insert Date reviewed (if applicable)
Date Rescinded:	Insert Date rescinded (if applicable)

REVISION RECORD

Date	Version	Revision description

Councillor Portfolio Policy

Policy no: Insert Policy Number

Updated: Insert date update

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1 **Purpose**

Councillors act as elected community representative “sounding boards” for strategic issues and suggestions from senior officers, members of the business and community, and other Councillors.

The purpose of this policy is to set clear guidelines to define the roles and responsibilities of the Mayor and Councillors as spokespersons for the portfolios of Council.

Assigning Councillors as Portfolio Spokespersons ensures:

- the workload associated with being an elected member is shared across all Councillors;
- the Councillor's individual skill, knowledge and background is utilised by linking them to an area of interest;
- the community can identify which Councillor to approach according to the strategic issue at hand;
- informed discussion is generated by the whole of Council;
- Councillors act as sounding boards for strategic issues and suggestions from senior officers, members of the public, and other Councillors relating to their portfolio; and
- That Councillors are reporting back to the community.

This policy defines the roles and responsibilities of the Mayor and Councillors as an appointed Portfolio Councillor to support inclusive teamwork and co-operation between elected members and the Executive Leadership Team.

2 **Scope**

This policy applies to:

- The Mayor and Councillors of the Southern Downs Regional Council; and
- The Chief Executive Officer and Directors who will assist with the implementation of this policy.

3 **Legislative Context**

- *Local Government Act 2009, s 12*
- *Public Records Act 2002*

4 **Policy Details**

Each Portfolio directly aligns with a core pillar of Council’s Strategic Planning framework:

- Our People
- Our Places
- Our Prosperity; and
- Our Performance

Portfolio responsibilities will be assigned to a respective Councillor by resolution of Council and changes to Councillor Portfolios can occur at any time by means of a Council resolution.

The Councillor Portfolio Policy Schedule is provided in **Appendix A**.

Councillor Portfolio Policy

Policy no: Insert Policy Number

Updated: Insert date update

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Where an issue impacts on more than one portfolio area, the relevant portfolio Councillors and Directors will work collaboratively to determine the appropriate approach.

As prescribed in the *Local Government Act 2009*, the Councillors' responsibilities, endeavours, interest and influence must be focused at the strategic level of issues of their portfolio, and not the day-to-day operational matters that fall under the domain of the administration.

Within certain provisions detailed in section 170 (2) of the Act, the Mayor may give a direction to the Chief Executive Officer. Section 170 (3) of the Act provides that no Councillor, including the Mayor, may give a direction to any other local government employee, except in accordance with guidelines made under [section 170AA](#) about the provision of administrative support to councillors.

Contravention of this provision is specifically included in the definition of "misconduct" in the Act.

In addition, section 12 of the Act states that when performing their responsibility, a Councillor must serve the overall public interest of the whole local government area.

The "sounding board" role of Portfolio Councillors does not contradict this legislative framework. As elected representatives of the communities, Portfolio Councillors have a legitimate role in providing advice to the Executive Leadership Team regarding the communities' views and opinions on issues being brought to Council.

Specific objectives and key indicators for each portfolio over the term of the Council are to be identified and where appropriate considered by Council for inclusion in any scheduled Corporate Plan review.

4.1 Powers and Authorities

The Portfolio system provides no formal delegated authority to the Portfolio Councillor. It provides, however, the Councillor with an opportunity to develop and maintain a heightened level of knowledge and strategic leadership across the region in a specified field of Council's strategic plan.

The Portfolio system in no way overrides or impinges on the requirements of the Act that requires corporate decisions on policies and resources to be made at properly constituted Council meetings.

The Portfolio system cannot conflict with any of the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland especially in relation to the provisions of the Act preventing Councillors from giving directions to staff on how they shall undertake their duties.

The Portfolio system must not eventuate in a Portfolio Councillor assuming any of the roles normally prescribed to the Mayor (as per the Act).

4.2 Role of Portfolio Councillor

Councillor Portfolios are outward focused to the community, interest groups, business groups etc and are not internally focused. As such the role of a Portfolio Councillor is:

- Identifying opportunities for the Southern Downs in their portfolio area;
- Participate in developing the strategic plan for Council in their portfolio area;
- Be a spokesperson within the Council Chamber advising on topical issues for their allocated portfolio;
- Represent the Council when required in relation to portfolio related matters;
- Participate as Council's representative on external bodies as resolved by Council on issues relevant to the portfolio;

- Be a key point of contact and engage with industry and community groups and associations on their portfolio matters.
- To liaise with the community and attend meetings, forums or deputations, as required.
- To keep the Mayor abreast of issues and to liaise with other Councillors regarding matters that may affect their portfolio areas.
- In the role of Portfolio Spokesperson a Councillor must ensure he/she accurately represents the view of the whole of Council rather than their own personal view.
- Councillors are responsible for being fully informed of issues reported on within their assigned portfolio at Council meetings. Conducting further research may be necessary including engaging with the community and requesting further information from Council Officers in accordance with Councillors Acceptable Requests and Administrative Support Guidelines.
- Report back to Council any feedback received from the community significant to strategic and/or future planning issues.
- Generally champion the advancement of Council’s key priorities and decisions relevant to the portfolio area across the community.

For clarity, the responsibilities of a Portfolio Councillor do not include:

- Involvement in operational matters of the organisation.
- Giving directions to staff. For example: Portfolio Councillors cannot independent of Council set policy or direct Officers in carrying out their duties, including report preparation. Portfolio Councillors may discuss the proposed content of reports with Directors, but the report preparation and content will always remain the Officers responsibility. It is most important that reports presented to Council are written by Officers reflecting their professional judgement.
- Committing Council funds or promise to fund or resource any project or matter.
- Making strategic or policy decisions on behalf of Council; or
- Portraying personal views when representing or speaking on behalf of Council.

The Executive Leadership Team are to provide reasonable assistance to enable Portfolio Councillors to gain increased knowledge and experience in the specific portfolio area.

Portfolio Councillors are not responsible for the operational performance or outcomes of the portfolio area.

4.3 Reporting protocols

A standing agenda item will be included in the agenda for the Council Information Sessions for portfolio reports.

Whilst written reports are not required for all items it is essential that portfolio holders update all Councillors on issues that have arisen in the previous period. Written reports are preferred for complex strategic issues. Any business arising from previously notified matters should be updated at the portfolio agenda item.

4.4 Media protocols

All media statements will be in accordance with Council’s Media Relations Policy.

The Mayor acts as spokesperson for the whole of Council and is therefore Council's primary media representative. However, where appropriate Portfolio Spokespersons may also act as Council media representatives working closely with the Chief Executive Officer and/or relevant Director and Council’s Media

and Communications staff to formulate appropriate media approaches and responses. In this capacity Councillors are expected to be available where possible for media engagements.

5 Definitions

Insert definitions, if applicable. Delete this section if not applicable.

Term	Meaning
Councillor	The Mayor and Councillors of Southern Downs Regional Council
Portfolio	The specific responsibilities relative to the delivery of key functions and services to the community along the four pillars outlined in Council's Strategic Planning framework
Portfolio Councillor	The Councillor appointed to each of the identified Portfolios
Media	Includes television, print, radio, online and social media, as well as Council-branded or sub-branded social media, mastheads, magazines and media releases
The Act	The Local Government Act 2009
The Regulation	The Local Government Regulation 2012

6 Related Documents

- Councillors Acceptable Requests and Administrative Support Guidelines
- Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland
- Media Relations Policy



Appendix A: Councillor Portfolio Policy Schedule

Councillor Portfolios as adopted on 19 April 2024

Portfolio	Portfolio Definition	Portfolio Holder
Vibrant communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development Governance Regional Advocacy Intergovernmental Relations 	Mayor
Liveable communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism Visitor Information Centres Parks and gardens (including cemeteries), active recreation areas and trails Community engagement 	Sheryl Windle
Connected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads and transport Footpaths, cycleways 	Ross Bartley
Resilient communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster planning and response Disaster community recovery Mental health Disability community Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities 	Cynthia McDonald
Secure communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Planning and Development Urban Design Frameworks 	Joel Richters
Productive communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture Water Saleyards Biosecurity and pest management 	Carla Pidgeon
Healthy communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wastewater Resource Recovery and waste management Circular economy Natural environment, climate and sustainability 	Sarah Deane
Active communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance Audit & Risk Community halls and progress associations Sporting groups and associated facilities Camping facilities 	Russell Wantling
Inspired communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth projects Education Art galleries Libraries Events 	Morwenna Harslett