



SHIRE OF
VICTORIA PLAINS

COUNCIL POLICY MANUAL Part 2

Administration/Organisation

27 July 2022

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Rationale	Next Due
2.0	27/07/22	Sean Fletcher, GO	Part 2 – Section 2 Implemented by Council	May 2024

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Section 2 – Administration/Organisation



2.1 Structure for Administering the Shire and Designation of Senior Employees

Responsible Areas	Administration
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Affected Staff	All

Objective

To provide guidance to the Council and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) concerning the structure required to administer the Shire, including the management of functional responsibilities and the allocation and management resources within the structure and to prescribe the positions to be classified as a “Senior Employee.”

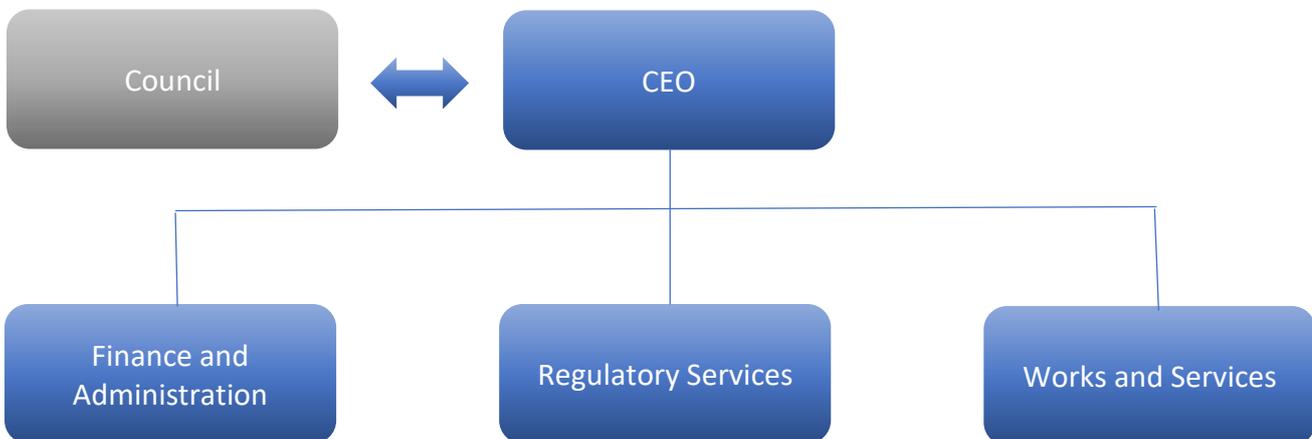
Scope

Policy 2.1 applies to the entity known as the Shire of Victoria Plains.

Policy

1. Determination of Organisation Structure

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995* Section 5.2, Council determines that the structure of the Shire of Victoria Plains shall be:



It is recognised that each division (Finance and Administration, Regulatory Services and Works and Services) is under the leadership and management of an appropriate office (function) determined by the CEO, in consultation with Council. In this case, the respective roles responsible for each division are:

Finance and Administration: Manager Finance and Administration.

Regulatory Services: Principal Building Surveyor.

Works and Services: Manager Works and Services.

In the event that the Council is not satisfied with the structure, the CEO is to revise it accordingly.



2.1 Structure for Administering the Shire and Designation of Senior Employees

2. Senior Employees

The positions determined to be a 'Senior Employee' for the purposes of the *Local Government Act 1995*, Section 5.37(1) are:

- a. Nil

3. Other Employees

As per the CEO's responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1955*, the CEO is responsible for the sub-structure (all other employees) of the organisation subject to sufficient funds being provided in the Shire's Annual Budget.

Definitions

Nil

Relevant management practices/documents

Policy 2.2 – Temporary Employment or Appointment of CEO

Legislation/local law requirements

Local Government Act 1995 Section 5.2

Local Government Act 1995, Section 5.37(1)

Office Use Only			
Relevant delegations	N/A		
Initial Council adoption	Date	27/07/2022	Resolution #
Last reviewed	Date	N/A	Resolution #
Next review due	Date	July 2025	

Note: This policy updates what was referred to previously as Policy 2.1: Senior Employees - Designation



2.2 Acting CEO and Temporary CEO Policy

Area Responsible	CEO/Governance
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Affected Staff	CEO, Managers

Objective

To establish a policy, in accordance with Section 5.39C of the *Local Government Act 1995* ('the Act'), that details the Shire of Victoria Plains processes for appointing an Acting or Temporary Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for periods of less than 12 months of planned or unplanned leave or an interim vacancy in the substantive office.

Scope

This policy applies to the statutory position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Shire of Victoria Plains.

Policy

1. Acting and Temporary CEO Requirements and Qualification

- (1) When the CEO is on planned or unplanned leave, or the CEO's employment with the Local Government has ended, an Acting or Temporary CEO is to be appointed in accordance with this Policy to fulfil the functions of CEO as detailed in Section 5.41 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, and other duties as set out in the Act and associated Regulations.
- (2) Through this policy and in accordance with section 5.36(2)(a) of the Act, the Council determines that an employee appointed to the substantive position(s) of:
 - a. Manager Finance and Administration.
 - b. Manager Works and Services.
 Are considered suitably qualified to perform the role of Acting or Temporary CEO.

Section 5.36(2)

A person is not employed in the position of CEO unless the Council:
 (a) believes that the person is suitably qualified for the position

- (3) A person appointed to act in the position of Manager Finance and Administration or Manager Works and Services is not included in the determination set out in Clause 3 (2).

Note: this means a person who is the Acting Manager Finance and Administration or the Manager Works and Services cannot be the Acting or Temporary CEO

2. Appoint Acting CEO – Planned and unplanned leave for periods up to 6 weeks

- (1) The CEO is **authorised** to appoint the the Manager Finance and Administration or the Manager Works and Services in writing as Acting CEO, where the CEO is on planned or unplanned leave for periods not exceeding 6 weeks, subject to the CEO's consideration of the respective person's performance, availability, operational requirements and where appropriate, the equitable access to the professional development opportunity.



2.2 Acting CEO and Temporary CEO Policy

- (2) The CEO must appoint an Acting CEO for any leave periods greater than 1 week and less than 6 weeks.
- (3) An application for annual leave, long service leave, personal leave, other unplanned leave or an extended absence made by the CEO is to be approved by the President. The CEO is to immediately advise all Elected Members of the leave and when and for what period of time the Manager Finance and Administration or the Manager Works and Services is appointed as Acting CEO.
- (4) If the CEO is unavailable or unable to make the decision to appoint an Acting CEO in accordance with (2), then the following line of succession shall apply:
 - a. The Manager Finance and Administration will be appointed as Acting CEO; or
 - b. If the Manager Finance and Administration is unable to act, the Manager Works and Services will be appointed as Acting CEO.
- (5) Council may, by resolution, extend an Acting CEO period under subclause (4) beyond 6 weeks if the substantive CEO remains unavailable or unable to perform their functions and duties.

3. Appoint Acting CEO for extended leave periods greater than 6 weeks but less than 12 months.

- (1) This clause applies to the following periods of extended leave:
 - Substantive CEO's Extended Planned Leave which may include accumulated annual leave, long service leave or personal leave; and
 - Substantive CEO's Extended Unplanned Leave which may include any disruption to the substantive CEO's ability to continuously perform their functions and duties.
- (2) The Council will, by resolution, appoint an Acting CEO for periods greater than 6 weeks but less than 12 months, as follows:
 - a. Appoint one employee, or multiple employees for separate defined periods, as Acting CEO to ensure the CEO position is filled continuously for the period of extended leave; or
 - b. Conduct an external recruitment process in accordance with clause 4(1)(c).
- (3) The President will liaise with the CEO, or in their unplanned absence the Governance Officer to coordinate Council reports and resolutions necessary to facilitate an Acting CEO appointment.
- (4) Subject to Council's resolution, the President will execute in writing the Acting CEO appointment with administrative assistance from the Personal Assistant or the OCM Officer.

4. Appoint Temporary CEO – Substantive Vacancy

- (1) In the event that the substantive CEO's employment with the Shire of Victoria Plains is ending, the Council when determining to appoint a Temporary CEO may either:
 - a. by resolution, appoint an appropriate officer(s) as the Temporary CEO for the period of time until the substantive CEO has been recruited and commences their employment with the Local Government; or



2.2 Acting CEO and Temporary CEO Policy

- b. by resolution, appoint an appropriate officer(s) as the interim Temporary CEO for the period of time until an external recruitment process for a Temporary CEO can be completed; or
- c. following an external recruitment process in accordance with the principles of merit and equity prescribed in section 5.40 of the Act (and the , appoint a Temporary CEO for the period of time until the substantive CEO has been recruited and commences employment with the Local Government.

Note: In relation to sub-clause 4(1)(c) , a local government must select a CEO in accordance with the principles of merit, equity and transparency. A local government must not exercise nepotism, bias or patronage in exercising its powers. Additionally, a local government must not unlawfully discriminate against applicants. Specific CEO Recruitment and Selection Standards to note are:

- CEO Standard **S1.4** The local government attracts applicants through a transparent, open and competitive process (this is not necessary for vacancies of less than one year). The local government must advertise a vacancy for the position of CEO in the manner prescribed.
- CEO Standard: **S1.7** The appointment is merit-based, with the successful applicant assessed as clearly demonstrating how their knowledge, skills and experience meet the selection criteria.

- (2) The President will liaise with the Governance Officer to coordinate Council reports and resolutions necessary to facilitate a Temporary CEO appointment.
- (3) The President is authorised to execute in writing the appointment of a Temporary CEO in accordance with Councils resolution/s, with administrative assistance from the Executive Assistant/OCM Officer.

5. Remuneration and conditions of Acting or Temporary CEO

- (1) Unless Council otherwise resolves, an employee appointed as Acting CEO shall be remunerated at 75% - 100% of the cash component only of the substantive CEO's total reward package.
- (2) Council will determine by resolution, the remuneration and benefits to be offered to a Temporary CEO when entering into a contract in accordance with the requirements of Sections 5.39(1) and (2)(a) of the Act.

Refers to when someone externally who is employed in the position of CEO. This requirement does not apply to an existing officer appointed by Council to be the temporary CEO.

- (3) Subject to relevant advice, the Council retains the right to terminate or change, by resolution, any Acting or Temporary CEO appointment.

Definitions

Acting CEO means a person employed or appointed to fulfil the statutory position of CEO during a period where the substantive CEO remains employed, but is on planned or unplanned leave.

Temporary CEO means a person employed or appointed to fulfil the statutory position of CEO for the period of time between the end of the substantive CEO's employment and the appointment and commencement of



2.2 Acting CEO and Temporary CEO Policy

a newly appointed substantive CEO.

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Reviewer:	Governance Officer	Decision Maker:	Council				
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Other:	CEO Recruitment and Selection Standards: CEO recruitment and selection, performance review and termination (dlgsc.wa.gov.au)						
Organisational:	Policy 2.1 Structure for Administering the Shire and Designation of Senior Employees Senior Employees - Designation; Policy 2.6 - Shire of Victoria Plains CEO Standards for Recruitment, Performance and Termination						
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1.	18 July 2018	Policy 2.2 Acting Relieving Staff Authority - Adopted					
2.	28 July 2021	Policy 2.2 amended based on WALGA Template – Acting CEO and Temporary CEO					
3.	27 July 2022	Policy 2.2 amended to reflect a more clear process regarding Acting/Temporary CEOs including suitable persons within the Shire to undertake the Acting CEO role.					

–End of Schedule



2.3 Information & Communications Technology Usage

Responsible Areas	Finance and Administration
Responsible Officer	Manager Finance and Administration
Affected Staff	All, Contractors

OBJECTIVE

STATUTORY CONTEXT

Local Government Act 1995

CORPORATE CONTEXT

Policy Manual –

- 1.1 – Code of Conduct
- 2.4 – Social Media

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Introduction

The following principles, must be adhered to by all those responsible for the implementation of this Policy and to whom it applies –

- a) The ICT resources of the Shire are provided to support business and administrative activities of the Shire;
- b) Authorised users may be granted access to Shire resources, sensitive data and to networks on the basis that their use of ICT resources shall be responsible, ethical and lawful at all times;
- c) Authorised users are required to observe Council Policy and all laws which apply;
- d) Data and information relating to persons and other confidential matters acquired for business purposes shall be protected;
- e) Shire business information shall be protected from unauthorised and/or accidental disclosure; and
- f) Shire ITC resources must not under any circumstances be used to humiliate, intimidate, offend or vilify others on the basis of their race, gender, or any other attribute prescribed under anti- discrimination legislation.

APPLICATION

2. Application

This Instruction applies to all employees, contractors (whether paid or unpaid), volunteers and any person performing work for or with the Shire in any capacity.



2.3 Information & Communications Technology Usage

3. Access to ICT Resources

Access to ICT resources is to be authorised by the CEO. Access to ICT resources are based on a need to access that ICT Resource, which may depend on the employee's current status or position with the Shire.

Access to ICT resources will cease on expiration of contract or end-date of employment.

Access and use of ICT resources must be lawful at all times. Unlawful use will breach this Instruction and will be dealt with as a discipline offence. Unlawful use of ICT resources may also lead to criminal or civil legal action being taken against individual authorised users. This could result in serious consequences such as a fine, damages and/or costs being awarded against the individual or even imprisonment.

The Shire will not defend or support any ICT user who uses ICT resources for an unlawful purpose.

4. General Use of ICT Resources

A user who is authorised to use ICT resources may use the ICT resources for limited, incidental personal purposes. Personal use of the IT resources is permitted provided such use is lawful, does not negatively impact upon the user's work performance, hinder the work of other users, or damage the reputation, image or operations of the Shire. Such use must not cause noticeable additional cost to the Shire.

Employees should exercise conservative judgment regarding the reasonableness of personal use but should be guided by the following principles –

- a) Personal use should be conducted either before or after contracted hours of work or authorised breaks;
- b) Personal use should be limited and brief, avoiding excessive download or transmission (an example of acceptable personal use would be conducting brief transactions through internet banking);
- c) Personal use should not breach anything in this Instruction, particularly relating to the downloading of offensive or copyrighted materials;
- d) Managers will determine the specific acceptable personal use for their respective business areas as this will differ according to the needs of each group; and
- e) If there is any uncertainty regarding acceptable personal use then employees should consult their supervisor or manager for guidance.



2.3 Information & Communications Technology Usage

For security and network maintenance purposes, authorised individuals within Shire may monitor equipment, systems and network traffic at any time, according to the specific nature and requirements of their roles.

The Shire resources must not be used for private commercial purposes.

The Shire reserves the right to audit networks and systems on a periodic basis to ensure system integrity and compliance with this Instruction.

5. Unacceptable Use

This Policy provides a framework for activities which fall into the category of unacceptable use, but do not represent an exhaustive list. Some users may be exempted from these restrictions by the CEO during the course of carrying out responsibilities related to their role.

Under no circumstances is any user authorised to engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state, federal or international law while connected to or utilising Shire ICT systems or resources.

6. Security and Proprietary Information

All information stored on the Shire's corporate systems should be regarded as confidential and care must be exercised before sharing or distributing any information. If there is any uncertainty regarding the level of confidentiality involved then employees should consult their supervisor or manager for guidance.

The following measures must be taken to ensure secure corporate systems –

- a) Passwords should be kept secure and accounts must not be shared. Authorised users are responsible for the security of their passwords and accounts. Passwords should be changed in accordance with Shire's advice from the ICT Team;
- b) All devices connected to the Shire's computing systems/networks, regardless of ownership, must be running approved and up to date virus-scanning software; and
- c) People must use caution when opening files received from unknown senders.

7. System and Network Activities

The following activities are not permitted –

- a) Violations of the rights of any person or company/organisation protected by copyright, trade secret, patent or other intellectual property, or similar laws or regulations, including, but not limited to, the duplication, installation or distribution of "pirated" or other software products that are not appropriately licensed for use by the Shire or the



2.3 Information & Communications Technology Usage

end user;

- b) Unauthorised copying or digitising of copyrighted material and the installation of any copyrighted software for which the Shire or the end user does not have an active license;
- c) Exporting software, technical information, encryption software or technology, in violation of international or regional export control laws. The appropriate manager should be consulted prior to export of any material where status is unclear;
- d) Introduction of malicious programs or code into the network or onto devices connected to the network;
- e) Revealing your account password to others or allowing use of your account by others;
- f) The Shire's equipment is not be used for the downloading or distribution of any material that could be considered as offensive. If a user receives such material they should notify their manager and also the ICT Team;
- g) Making fraudulent offers of products, items, or services, or running private business interests via any Shire equipment, device or account; and
- h) Undertaking private work.

The following activities are not permitted unless they are within the scope of regular responsibilities for an expressly authorised role/position –

- a) Effecting security breaches or disruptions of network communication. Security breaches include, but are not limited to, accessing data of which the user is not an intended recipient or logging into a server or account that the user is not expressly authorised to access;
- b) Executing any form of network monitoring which will intercept data not intended for the user's host;
- c) Attempting to avoid or bypass Shire's network security measures;
- d) Interfering with any other user's account, by whatever means; and
- e) Using the system in a way that could damage or affect the performance of the network in any way.

8. Email Activities

All emails sent by Shire employees should include the prescribed 'signature' and disclaimer at the foot of the body of the email, in the format specified by the Shire's style guide or as otherwise advised.

The following activities are not permitted –

- a) Except in the course of normal business notifications, sending or forwarding unsolicited electronic messages, including the sending of "junk mail" or other advertising material,



2.3 Information & Communications Technology Usage

jokes, or chain communication to individuals who did not specifically request such material;

- b) Any form of harassment via electronic/ICT means;
- c) Unauthorised use, or forging, of email header information;
- d) Solicitation of communication for any other electronic address, other than that of the poster's account, with the intent to harass or to collect replies;
- e) Creating or forwarding "chain letters" or "pyramid" schemes of any type;
- f) Use of any of the Shire's network or systems for the purpose of generating unsolicited communications;
- g) Providing information about, or lists of the Shire's employees to other parties or to personal email addresses;
- h) Communicating in a manner that could adversely affect the reputation or public image of Shire;
- i) Communicating in a manner that could be construed as making statements or representations on behalf of the Shire without the Shire's express permission to do so; and
- j) Users should also endeavor to clean out their Inbox, Sent Items, Deleted Items and other email boxes on a regular basis, by either deletion or saving in the central record system. A size limit per mailbox may be implemented to ensure that the system is functioning optimally.

9. Remote Access

When users with remote access they are connected to the Shire's network, their computers are an extension of that network, and as such are subject to the same rules and regulations that apply to the Shire's corporate equipment and systems. That is, their machines need to connect and communicate reliably with the Shire's network and servers to ensure the security and integrity of data and records.

The following conditions relating to remote access to the Shire's system –

- a) Family members must not violate any of the Shire's policies, perform illegal activities or use the access for outside business interests;
- b) The device that is connected remotely to the Shire's corporate network should be secure from access by external non-Shire parties and should be under the complete control of the user;
- c) The use of non-Shire email accounts (e.g. Yahoo, Hotmail, Gmail etc.) or other external resources is not permitted for the conduct of Shire business without the express permission of the EMCCS, to ensure official business is not confused with personal business; and



2.3 Information & Communications Technology Usage

- d) All devices (whether personal or corporate) connected to the Shire's networks via remote access technologies should have up-to-date anti-malicious-code software.

10. Provision and Use of Mobile Phones and Information / Communication Devices

Some people will be supplied with a mobile phone and/or other mobile computing device if it is deemed necessary to their position. All mobile devices supplied remain the property of the Shire and users must not change service providers unless permitted to do so.

Where a mobile device provides an email service, all emails sent or received or otherwise processed via the mobile device that are classified as a record of the Shire should be through the Shire's server, to ensure the integrity of the recordkeeping system.

Where the device includes a digital camera, users are to use the technology in a sensible manner. A failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action including possible termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for their actions.

It is unlawful for drivers to operate a mobile phone and/or other mobile computing device whilst driving. Phone calls may otherwise be made or received providing the device is accessible while mounted/fixed to the vehicle or does not need to be touched by the user. An employee who operates a mobile phone and/or other mobile computing device whilst driving may face disciplinary action including possible termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for their actions.

11. Department of Transport Licensing

Only employees with express authorisation of Department of Transport and CEO may access the Department of Transport Licensing system. Access and use of the system must be in accordance with the contract of agreement between the Shire and the Department. Failure to adhere to the agreement may result in disciplinary action including termination.

NOTES

Office Use Only				
Relevant delegations				
Initial Council adoption	Date	18 July 2018	Resolution #	
Last reviewed	Date	25 May 2022	Resolution #	2205-05
Next review due	Date	May 2024		



2.4 Communications and Social Media

Responsible Areas	Council/Governance
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Affected Staff	All, Contractors, Volunteers, Councillors, Committee Members

OBJECTIVE

STATUTORY CONTEXT

Local Government Act 1995

- a. President speaks on behalf of the Shire (s.2.8(d));
- b. CEO speaks on behalf of the Shire if the President agrees (s.5.41(f));

Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations

CORPORATE CONTEXT

Policy Manual –

- 1.1 – Policy 1.1 Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates
- 1.3 – Elected members – Records capture and management
- 2.3 – Information & Communications Technology Usage

Employee Code of Conduct

POLICY STATEMENT

1. This Policy applies to all employees and volunteers of the Shire who access social media for professional or social purposes whether via personal devices or those supplied by the Shire.
2. To the extent permitted by law, this Policy also applies to elected members and members of committees.
 - a. Under Policy 1.1 Code of Conduct, clause 8(1) and clause 8(2), a councillor must ensure that their use of social media complies with the code of conduct and they must adhere to council policies.
 - b. Councillors have qualified privilege only i.e. can only debate matter before council for consideration. Cannot defame or libel another person.



2.4 Communications and Social Media

APPLICATION

3. Definitions

Social media means forms of electronic communication (e.g. web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (e.g. videos). Some examples include (but are not restricted to) Facebook, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, and Foursquare.

4. Scope

The scope of this policy is to –

- a) Communications initiated or responded to by the Shire of Victoria Plains with our community; and
- b) Elected members when making comment in either their role as an elected member role or a personal capacity.

5. Official Communications

The purposes of the Shire's official communications include:

- a) Sharing information required by law to be publicly available.
- b) Sharing information that is of interest and benefit to the community.
- c) Promoting Shire and community events and services.
- d) Promoting Public Notices and community consultation / engagement opportunities.
- e) Answering questions and responding to requests for information relevant to the role of the Shire.
- f) Receiving and responding to community feedback, ideas, comments, compliments and complaints.

The Shire's official communications will be consistent with relevant legislation, policies, standards and the positions adopted by the Council. Our communications will always be respectful and professional.

The Shire will use a combination of different communication modes to suit the type of information to be communicated and the requirements of the community or specific audience, including:

- a) Website;
- b) Advertising and promotional materials;
- c) Media releases prepared for the Shire President, to promote specific Shire positions;
- d) Social media; and



2.4 Communications and Social Media

- e) Community newsletters, letter drops and other modes of communications undertaken by the Shire's Administration at the discretion of the CEO.

6. Speaking on behalf of the Shire of Victoria Plains

The President is the official spokesperson for the Shire of Victoria Plains and may represent the Shire in official communications, including; speeches, comment, print, electronic and social media. [s.2.8(1)(d) of the Local Government Act 1995].

Where the President is unavailable, the Deputy President may act as the spokesperson. [s.2.9 and s.5.34 of the Local Government Act 1995].

The CEO may speak on behalf of the Shire, where authorised to do so by the President. [s.5.41(f) of the Local Government Act 1995].

The provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* essentially direct that only the President, or the CEO if authorised, may speak on behalf of the Local Government. It is respectful and courteous to the office of President to refrain from commenting publicly, particularly on recent decisions or contemporary issues, until such time as the President has had opportunity to speak on behalf of the Shire.

Communications by elected members and employees, whether undertaken in an authorised official capacity or as a personal communication, must not –

- a) bring the Shire into disrepute,
- b) compromise the person's effectiveness in their role with the Shire,
- c) imply the Shire's endorsement of personal views,
- d) imply the elected member or employee is speaking on behalf of the Shire, unless authorised to do so; or
- e) disclose, without authorisation, confidential information.

Social media accounts or unsecured website forums must not be used to transact meetings which relate to the official business of the Shire.

Elected member communications must comply with the Code of Conduct and the Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007.

7. Responding to Media Enquiries

All enquiries from the media for an official Shire comment, whether made to an individual elected member or employee, must be directed to the CEO or a person authorised by the CEO. Information will be coordinated to support the President or CEO (where authorised) to make an official response on behalf of the Shire.

Elected members may make comments to the media in a personal capacity – refer to clause 13 below.



2.4 Communications and Social Media

8. Website

The Shire will maintain an official website, as our community's on-line resource to access to the Shire's official communications.

9. Social Media

The Shire of Victoria Plains uses social media to facilitate interactive information sharing and to provide responsive feedback to our community. Social media will not however, be used by the Shire to communicate or respond to matters that are complex or relate to a person's or entity's private affairs.

The Shire may also post and contribute to social media hosted by others, so as to ensure that the Shire's strategic objectives are appropriately represented and promoted.

The Shire seeks ideas, questions and feedback from our community however, we expect participants to behave in a respectful manner. The Shire will moderate its social media accounts to address and where necessary delete content deemed to be –

- a) Offensive, abusive, defamatory, objectionable, inaccurate, false or misleading;
- b) Promotional, soliciting or commercial in nature;
- c) Unlawful or incites others to break the law;
- d) Information which may compromise individual or community safety or security;
- e) Repetitive material copied and pasted or duplicated;
- f) Content that promotes or opposes any person campaigning for election to the Council, appointment to official office, or any ballot;
- g) Content that violates intellectual property rights or the legal ownership of interests or another party; and
- h) Any other inappropriate content or comments at the discretion of the Shire.

Where a third party contributor to a Shire's social media account is identified as posting content which is deleted in accordance with the above, the Shire may at its complete discretion block that contributor for a specific period of time or permanently.

10. Use of Social Media in Emergency Management and Response

The Shire may use social media to communicate and advise our community regarding emergency management.

11. Record Keeping and Freedom of Information

Official communications undertaken on behalf of the Shire, including on the Shire's social media accounts and third party social media accounts must be created and retained as local government



2.4 Communications and Social Media

records in accordance with the Shire's Record Keeping Plan and the State Records Act 2000. These records are also subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1992.

Elected member communications that relate to their role as a elected member are subject to the requirements of the Shire's Record Keeping Plan and the State Records Act 2000. Elected members are responsible for transferring these records to the Shire's administration. Elected member records are also subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1992.

12. Personal Communications

Personal communications and statements made privately; in conversation, written, recorded emailed, texted or posted in personal social media, have the potential to be made public, whether intended or not.

On the basis that personal or private communications may be shared or become public at some point in the future, elected members should ensure that their personal or private communications do not breach the requirements of this policy, the Code of Conduct and the Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007.

13. Elected member statements on Shire of Victoria Plains matters

A elected member may choose to make a personal statement publicly on a matter related to the business of the Shire of Victoria Plains.

Any public statement made by a elected member, whether made in a personal capacity or in their Local Government representative capacity, must –

- a) Clearly state that the comment or content is a personal view only, which does not necessarily represent the views of the Shire.
- b) Be made with reasonable care and diligence;
- c) Be lawful, including avoiding contravention of; copyright, defamation, discrimination or harassment laws;
- d) Be factually correct;
- e) Avoid damage to the reputation of the local government;
- f) Not reflect adversely on a decision of the Council;
- g) Not reflect adversely on the character or actions of another elected member or employee;
- h) Maintain a respectful and positive tone and not use offensive or objectionable expressions in reference to any elected member, employee or community member.

A elected member who is approached by the media for a personal statement may request the assistance of the CEO.

14. Social Media Use for Shire Purposes



2.4 Communications and Social Media

The CEO may authorise specified employees to use social media for Shire purposes.

If an employee is provided with express permission by the CEO to use social media they must –

- provide information that is truthful, accurate and in the interests of the Shire,
- must not disclose anything that is financial or technical information, commercially sensitive information, personal information about employees, or any information about customers, suppliers or members of the general public.

Employees who use social media in the course of their work must –

- a) Use spell check and proof read each post;
- b) Understand the context before entering any conversation;
- c) Know the facts and verify the sources;
- d) Be respectful of all individuals and communities with which the person interacts with online;
- e) Be polite and respectful of other opinions;
- f) Seek to conform to the cultural and behavioural norms of the social media platform being used;
- g) If a mistake is made, the person must correct it quickly by disclosing it was a mistake (including the particulars of the correction) and inform their supervisor; and
- h) Understand and comply with any directions given by the CEO on topics that are not to be discussed for confidential, operational or legal reasons.

A person authorised to use social media should always be aware that the Shire may be liable for any posts made. Guidance should be sought from the Chief Executive Officer if about stating or responding to something on a social media site.

15. Personal / Private Use of the Shire's Corporate sites

A person cannot comment on behalf of the Shire unless expressly authorised by the President (elected members) or the CEO (all other persons). If the person wishes to broadcast something (either as an initial broadcast or a response) then a request to the CEO (or authorised delegate) must be made.

An person is able to share links that the Shire has posted on the social media sites, or submitting a "like" action, or comment on an event, initiative or program, provided that it is in the best interests of the Shire.

16. Personal / Private Use of Non-Shire Sites

Employees are permitted reasonable use of social media for personal / private purposes on the condition that it does not interfere with the performance of their work.



2.4 Communications and Social Media

Employees who use social media for personal / private purposes must not infer or state they are speaking on behalf of the Shire and are reminded that any inappropriate postings or actions carried out on social media may result in disciplinary action.

Use of sites to comment on issues relating to the Shire of Victoria Plains or to bully, harass, discriminate against another employee, may be subject to disciplinary action

17. Consequences of breach of policy

Comments which become public and which breach this policy, the Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations, may constitute a minor breach of the Local Government Act 1995 and may be referred for investigation to –

- a) as an elected member, to the Standards Panel of the Department of Local Government, Sporting and Cultural Industries,
- b) as an employee, face disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Where a person breaches this Policy –

- a) the Shire may also be obligated to refer the breach to an external agency where a person may be held personally liable for their actions, and
- b) may also be personally liable for their actions, through private action.

NOTES

WA Local Government Association –

- Communications and Social Media Policy, 9 May 2018 (for elected members and employees)
- Draft Guidelines – Elected Members Use of Social Media, 1 March 2018

Office Use Only				
Relevant delegations	Nil			
Initial Council adoption	Date	18 July 2018	Resolution #	
Last reviewed	Date	25 May 2022	Resolution #	2205-05
Next review due	Date	March 2024		



2.5 Managing Unreasonable Conduct by Members of the Public

Responsible Areas	Council/Governance
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Affected Personnel	All

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the management and handling of unreasonable conduct by members of the public.

STATUTORY CONTEXT

Local Government Act 1995 –
s.2.7(2)(b) – Council to determine the local government policies

Work Health and Safety Act 2020 – Part 2, Division 2 – Primary duty of care;

Meeting Procedures Local Law – Clauses 6.7(12), 6.9 (5), 6.12(5) – person failing to comply with direction by the presiding member during public question time/deputations/committees, and clause 6.71 Prevention of disturbance – persons addressing/observing a meeting can be removed if they continue to cause a disturbance.

CORPORATE CONTEXT

None

POLICY STATEMENT

The Shire recognises that most members of the public act reasonably and responsibly in their interactions with the Shire, even when experiencing high levels of distress, frustration or anger about their particular enquiry, request, concern or complaint.

However, a minority of the members of the public behave in ways that are unreasonable and/or inappropriate and otherwise unacceptable.

Unreasonable conduct by members of the public can consume a disproportionate amount of the Shire's time and resources, and cause serious stress to employees, elected members, volunteers and witnesses. In these situations, the Shire will take steps to manage the effects of such conduct so as to reduce or eliminate the excessive diversion of resources and disruption to the work of the Shire that such conduct entails.

However, even when a person's behaviour may be unreasonable, their complaint or concern will be impartially assessed on its merits. If their complaint or concern is found to be valid, it will be handled appropriately, in accordance with the Shire's adopted values and in line with the standards set out in the Shire's Code of Conduct and Customer Service Charter.

This policy has drawn extensively on guidance relating to unreasonable conduct that has been published by the Ombudsman's Office of Western Australia and the Ombudsman offices of other states in Australia.



2.5 Managing Unreasonable Conduct by Members of the Public

APPLICATION

Definitions

Members of the public means any external person or organisation that the Shire has dealings with. Person or any word or expression descriptive of a person includes a public body, company, or association or body of persons, corporate or unincorporated.

Scope

This policy applies to all situations involving interactions between those individual members of the public who engage in unreasonable conduct and the Shire, whether through its elected members, employees, consultants or contractors who are engaged to provide services to the Shire.

Policy Outcomes

Equity and Fairness:

Ensuring all customer complaints, requests and concerns are dealt with equitably and fairly and resources are allocated on the basis of genuine need and merit.

Efficiency: Improving overall efficiency by having an appropriate process and allocating sufficient time and resources to deal with unreasonable conduct.

Health and Safety:

Complying with work health and safety requirements and duty of care obligations associated with managing impacts of unreasonable conduct on employees' health, safety and security, and implementing measures to mitigate or control those risks.

Transparency

Publishing clear expectations for interactions between members of the public and employees, volunteers and elected members including definitions of unreasonable conduct and the actions that will be taken when such conduct is encountered.

Unreasonable Conduct

Unreasonable conduct is any behaviour which, because of its nature or frequency raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for elected members, employees, volunteers, contractors or other service users. For the purposes of this policy, unreasonable conduct is divided into five categories:

Type of Conduct Examples

Unreasonable persistence persisting with a request, concern or complaint even though it has been comprehensively considered by the Shire, and all avenues of review have been exhausted reframing a request, concern or complaint in an attempt to get it taken up again showing an inability to accept a final decision, explanation or recommendation harassing the Shire with phone calls, visits, letters and emails when not warranted or after repeatedly being asked not to do so.

Unreasonable demands

Insisting on outcomes that are unattainable wanting what is not possible or appropriate (such as copies of sensitive or confidential documents and names and contact details of employees etc) issuing instructions and making demands about how a complaint, request or concern should be



2.5 Managing Unreasonable Conduct by Members of the Public

handled harassing employees with unnecessary and excessive phone calls, letters and emails making inappropriate or unreasonable demands on employee time and Shire resources, which are out of proportion to the seriousness of the issue seeking regular and lengthy phone contact when this is not warranted.

Shopping for a sympathetic ear in the Shire

eg demanding to talk to a supervisor or the manager personally requesting out of date information that has been superseded or expired, or action to address these issues, where the information or action is no longer relevant

Unreasonable lack of cooperation

Presenting a large quantity of information which is not organised, sorted, classified or summarised, where the person is clearly capable of doing this focusing on principles rather than substantive issues changing the complaint, request or concern and raising new issues while that complaint, request or concern is in the process of being considered displaying unhelpful behaviour, such as withholding information, being dishonest, misquoting others Unreasonable arguments applying irrational beliefs interpreting facts in a clearly irrational or unreasonable way and insisting this interpretation is the correct one insisting on the importance of an issue that is clearly trivial.

Unreasonable behaviour

Displaying confrontational behaviour such as rudeness, anger, aggression, verbal abuse, threats or harassment sending rude, confrontational or threatening letters displaying manipulative behaviour such as behaving in an overly ingratiating manner and making veiled threats.

The Shire values its employees and customers, and safety is paramount to this commitment. Shire employees therefore have the discretion to terminate any interaction, where the employee reasonably perceives that they are at risk as a result of the person's behaviour, whatever the nature of that and particularly where the employee is being threatened or harassed or the behaviour of the person is aggressive.

In order to ensure that members of the public are dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively, and that work health and safety responsibilities and common law duty of care obligations are met, the Shire may restrict, withhold or withdraw the provision of services to persons engaging in unreasonable conduct in the manner set out in this policy.

The decision to restrict, withhold or withdraw contact with the Shire will only be made by the CEO.

The CEO will take such action with the aim of managing the impacts of a person's conduct, rather than punishing the person.

The rationale and decision is to be documented and the person is to be advised in writing of the reasons for the decision, what restrictions apply and how long they will apply for.

The CEO may decide to take one or more of the following courses of action –

Restricting the person to communicating with a sole contact person within the Shire



2.5 Managing Unreasonable Conduct by Members of the Public

Where a person changes the nature of their complaint, request or concern repeatedly, reframes it or raises an excessive number of complaints, requests or concerns it may be appropriate to restrict their access to a single employee who will exclusively manage their complaints, requests or concerns and their interactions with the Shire.

Where a person is restricted to a sole contact person, the CEO will assign an alternative contact, and notify other staff of the alternative contact for times when the primary contact is unavailable (such as on leave or unavailable for an extended period of time).

Restricting the subject matter of communications that will be considered

Where a person repeatedly sends written communications, letters, emails or online forms that raise trivial or insignificant issues, contain inappropriate or abusive content that has already been comprehensively considered and/or reviewed by the Shire, it may be appropriate to restrict the issues or subject matter that the person may raise with the Shire in the future or to restrict the kinds of correspondence that the Shire will respond to in the future. Such restrictions may include:

- refusing to respond to correspondence that has already been dealt with comprehensively, that raises a trivial issue, or that is not supported by evidence or any clear evidence;
- restricting the person to one complaint, request or concern per month. Any attempts to circumvent this restriction may result in modifications or further restrictions being placed on their access;
- returning correspondence to the person and requiring them to remove any inappropriate content before the Shire will agree to consider its contents. The Shire will keep a copy of the inappropriate correspondence to identify repeat/further unreasonable conduct incidents.

Limiting when and how a person can contact the Shire

If a person's telephone, written or face-to-face contact with the Shire places an unreasonable demand on Shire time and/or Shire resources because it is overly lengthy or affects the health, safety and security of employees because it involves behaviour that is persistently rude, threatening, abusive or aggressive, the Shire may limit when and/or how that person can interact with the Shire. This may include:

- limiting their telephone calls or face-to-face interviews to a particular time of the day or week;
- limiting the length or duration of telephone calls, written correspondence or face-to-face interviews; and
- limiting the frequency of their telephone calls, written correspondence or face-to-face interviews.

Limiting face-to-face interviews to secure areas

If a person is or has been violent or overtly aggressive, unreasonably disruptive, threatening or demanding in interactions with the Shire or makes frequent unannounced visits to the Shire's offices, the Shire may consider restricting face-to-face contact with that person. These restrictions may include:

- restricting access to particular secured premises or areas of the office;
- restricting their ability to attend the premises to specified times of the day or week;
- allowing them to attend offices on an 'appointment only' basis and only with specified employees; and
- refusing the person entry to the premises altogether, to be replaced by some other medium of communication, such as writing-only or telephone-only contact.



2.5 Managing Unreasonable Conduct by Members of the Public

Contact through a representative only

In cases where the Shire cannot completely restrict contact with a person and their conduct is particularly difficult to manage, the Shire may restrict their contact with the Shire by permitting it only through a support person or representative, nominated by the person and approved by the CEO. When assessing a representative's suitability, the CEO should consider that person's competency and literacy skills, demeanour or behaviour and relationship with the person. If the CEO determines that the representative may worsen the situation with the person then the CEO will ask the person to nominate someone else.

Completely terminating a person's access to services

In rare cases, and as a last resort when all other strategies have been considered or attempted, the CEO may decide that it is necessary to terminate all contact with the person and deny the person access to the Shire's services.

A decision to terminate contact with a person will only be made if it appears that the person is unlikely to modify their conduct and/or their conduct poses a significant risk for employees or other parties because it involves one or more of the following types of conduct:

- acts of aggression, verbal and/or physical abuse, threats of harm, harassment, intimidation, stalking or assault;
- damage to property while on Shire premises;
- threats with a weapon or common office items that can be used to harm another person or themselves;
- physically preventing an employee from moving around freely either within their office or during an off-site visit;
- behaving in a way that is otherwise unlawful.

The procedures to be followed when deciding to restrict, withhold or terminate a person's contact with the Shire and/or access to the Shire's services are as follows:

Consulting with relevant employees, volunteers or elected members

When the CEO becomes aware of unreasonable conduct he or she will discuss the incident with the relevant employee, volunteer or elected member, including:

- the circumstances that gave rise to the incident;
- the impact of the person's conduct on the Shire, the Shire's resources and the relevant employee(s), volunteer(s) or elected member(s);
- the person's responsiveness to any warnings or requests to stop the behaviour;
- the actions that have been taken to manage the person's conduct;
- the suggestions made by the relevant employees, volunteer(s) or elected member(s) on ways that the situation could be managed.

Following consultation with the relevant employees, volunteer(s) or elected member(s) the CEO will decide on the appropriate course of action. The CEO may suggest formal or informal options for dealing with the person's conduct which may include one or more of the strategies provided in this policy.



2.5 Managing Unreasonable Conduct by Members of the Public

Issuing a warning letter

Unless a person's conduct poses a substantial risk to the health and safety of employees, volunteer(s) or elected member(s) the CEO will issue the person with a written warning about their conduct in the first instance. The warning letter will:

- specify the date, time and location of the incident(s);
- explain why the person's conduct is problematic;
- list the types of access changes and/or restrictions that may be imposed if the behaviour continues;
- provide clear and full reasons for the warning being given;
- provide the name and contact details of the employee who they can contact about the letter.

Issuing a notification letter

If the unreasonable conduct continues after a person has been given a warning letter or in extreme cases of overt aggression, violence, assault or other unlawful or unacceptable conduct, the CEO has the discretion to send a notification letter immediately restricting that person's access to the Shire's services. The notification letter will:

- specify the date, time and location of the incident(s);
- explain why the person's conduct is unacceptable;
- identify the change and/or restriction that will be imposed and what it means for the person;
- provide clear and full reasons for this restriction;
- specify the duration of the change or restriction imposed, which will not exceed 12 months;
- indicate a time period for review;
- provide the name and contact details of the employee whom they can contact about the letter.

Notifying relevant employees about access changes or restrictions

The CEO will notify relevant employees about any decisions to change or restrict a person's access to the Shire's services, in particular reception and security staff in cases where a person is prohibited from entering the Shire's premises.

The CEO will also update the system with a record outlining the nature of the restrictions imposed and their duration.

Continued monitoring/oversight responsibilities

Once a person has been issued with a warning or notification letter, the CEO will review the person's record of restriction every three months, or on request by an employee, or following any further incidents of unreasonable conduct that involve the restricted person to ensure that they are complying with the restrictions and that the arrangement is working.

If the CEO determines that the restrictions have been ineffective in managing the person's conduct or are otherwise inappropriate the CEO may decide to either modify the restrictions, impose further restrictions or terminate the person's access to the Shire's services altogether.

Appealing a decision to change or restrict access

A person is entitled to appeal a decision to change or restrict their access to the Shire's services. This review will be undertaken by a senior employee who was not involved in the original decision to change or restrict the person's access.



2.5 Managing Unreasonable Conduct by Members of the Public

Recording and reporting incidents of non-compliance

All employees are responsible for recording and reporting incidents of non-compliance with restrictions by a restricted person. This should be recorded in a file note and a copy forwarded to the CEO who will decide whether any action needs to be taken to modify or further restrict the person's access to the Shire's services.

Period for review

Decisions made under this policy will be reviewed every 3 months or 6 months (depending on the nature of the service provided) and not more than 12 months after the service change or restriction was initially imposed or continued.

Notifying the person of an upcoming review

The CEO will invite all restricted persons to participate in the review process unless they determine that this invitation will provoke further unreasonable conduct from the person.

The invitation will be given and the review will be conducted in accordance with the restrictions that apply to the particular person (eg if contact has been restricted to writing only then the invitation to participate will be done in writing).

Criteria to be considered during a review

When conducting a review the CEO will consider:

- whether the person has had any contact with the Shire during the restriction period;
- the person's conduct during the restriction period;
- any information or arguments put forward by the person for the purposes of the review; and
- any other information that may be relevant in the circumstances.

Notifying a person of the outcome of a review

The CEO will notify the person in writing of the outcome of their review. The review letter will:

- briefly explain the review process;
- identify the factors that have been taken into account during the review; and
- explain the decision or outcome of the review and the reasons for it.

If the outcome of the review is to maintain or modify the restriction the review letter will also:

- indicate the nature of the new or continued restriction;
- state the duration of the new restriction period; and
- provide the name and contact details of the employee who the person can contact to discuss the letter.

Recording the outcome of a review and notifying relevant employees

The CEO is responsible for keeping a record of the outcome of the review, and notifying all relevant employees of the outcome of the review including where the restriction has been withdrawn.

Consequences of breach by employee

An employee in breach of instructions of the CEO given in relation to this policy, may be liable to disciplinary action.



2.5 Managing Unreasonable Conduct by Members of the Public

NOTES

Ombudsman Western Australia Guidelines 'Dealing with unreasonable complainant conduct' are not mandatory. However, close adherence is recommended.

Office Use Only				
Relevant delegations				
Initial Council adoption	Date	19 December 2018	Resolution #	
Last reviewed	Date	25 May 2022	Resolution #	2205-05
Next review due	Date	March 2024		



2.6 Standards for CEO Recruitment, Performance and Termination

Responsible Areas	Council
Responsible Officer	Human Resources/Governance Officer
Affected Staff	CEO

Policy 2.6 is in a separate document to this Policy Manual.

Office Use Only				
Relevant delegations				
Initial Council adoption	Date	3 May 2021	Resolution #	
Last reviewed	Date	25 May 2022	Resolution #	2205-05
Next review due	Date	May 2024		



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

Responsible Areas	Council
Responsible Officer	CEO
Affected Staff	Nil

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the Shire of Victoria Plain's (Council's) approach to Community Engagement and commitment to use appropriate, effective and inclusive engagement practices to support meaningful conversations with our communities and stakeholders.

Community engagement is not only good business practice, but it is also important to good government. For this reason, the Council is committed to engaging with the communities within the Shire.

Community engagement is about involving the community in decisions which affect them and it is critical to the successful development and implementation of acceptable policies and decisions and for improving services by being responsive to the needs of the community.

Community engagement does not mean achieving consensus. However, it does involve seeking broad, informed agreement and the best possible solution for Council and the community.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

To provide a clear statement of Council's commitment to best-practice community and stakeholder engagement as it applies to decision making;

To define the guiding principles that will ensure appropriate, effective and inclusive community and stakeholder engagement is achieved consistently across the Shire; and

To outline the required mechanisms to be established and continually reviewed to ensure best practice engagement practices are integrated into strategic and operational planning.

DEFINITIONS

Community Engagement: A deliberate process with the specific purpose of working with individuals and groups across a community to encourage active involvement, open dialogue, feedback and participation and to align decision making processes appropriately to actions undertaken to a problem, opportunity or outcome.

Community: Referring to residents, ratepayers, business and land owners and people who have an interest in decisions made by Council.

Consultation: Seeking feedback or advice on a select topic or project.

IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement: Refers to the International Association of Public Participation engagement framework with its scale ranging from providing information (low level of engagement) to active participation (very high level of engagement).



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

Stakeholders: Individuals or organisations which affect or can be affected by project decisions. Stakeholders can include interest groups, clubs, associations, service providers, government departments/agencies, media, business and industry.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Shire of Victoria Plains Councillors, staff, consultants and contractors that manage projects, plans and initiatives that impact stakeholders in our community, as well as consultants appointed to manage these on the Shire's behalf.

This policy applies to the engagement strategies managed through the Shire's traditional methods, and increasingly online engagement as the Shire continues to develop this platform.

This policy is not intended to replace legal and statutory obligations. It should, however, guide business unit specific practices and procedures.

PRINCIPLES

This Community Engagement Policy is informed by the Shire of Victoria Plains Community Engagement Principles as outlined in the Community Engagement Framework for which Council will have regard to the following when undertaking community engagement:

- Engagement will be targeted, open and easily understood
- We will allow sufficient time and opportunity for participation
- We recognise that there is diversity in the activities and projects Council undertakes and that the type of engagement should vary accordingly
- We will approach engagement from an impartial perspective
- Engagement activities will be inclusive, accessible and actively seek a diverse range of perspectives
- We will be upfront about how much opportunity there is to influence a decision
- We will actively identify those affected by or interested in a decision and make every effort to support and encourage participation in the decision-making process
- We will define the community's role in any community engagement process using the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum
- We will provide information to support meaningful community participation and we will encourage each other to listen to perspectives to recommend appropriate solutions
- We will listen and provide feedback about how the information gathered will be used to inform the outcome
- We will learn from each experience to review and improve our practice

WHY WE CONSULT AND ENGAGE

We utilise deliberative engagement to:

- a) Strengthen decision making by Council that reflects the interests and needs of all sections of community.



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

- b) Increase the involvement and participation of all community groups in engagement activities and mitigate any barriers to engagement.
- c) Be deliberate inclusive and intentional with targeted engagement practices to ensure that hard to reach individuals and communities are heard to provide access and equity.
- d) Centre the importance of the need of all populations in the community within the context that they live.
- e) Elevate and encourage new voices and ideas to welcome differing lived experience and perspective.
- f) Reinforce community understanding and confidence in Council.
- g) Create and maintain opportunities for Council to collaborate with its stakeholders

When we will engage and consult:

- On developments or changes with potential to impact residents and ratepayers
- When required by legislative requirements
- To obtain input into long-term and strategic plans of the Shire
- On major projects and strategic issues
- When requested by the community or Council

The Shire of Victoria Plains will take a planned and purposeful approach when engaging with stakeholders and the community and will use tools such as the IAP2 Spectrum (Appendix 1).

We recognise the skills required to undertake community engagement and will provide staff with opportunities for further skill development and training. We also recognise that from time to time we may need to retain professional consultants to assist with certain engagement strategies.

When we may not engage and consult

There are some situations when it may not be effective or appropriate to seek feedback from the community and stakeholders, for example when:

- Legal constraints exist
- The Shire is required to act in a timeframe which prevents consultation
- The matter is delivering a policy-driven decision where previous engagement with the community and stakeholders has occurred
- A decision has already been made or the Shire is not the decision-maker and has no ability to influence the decision



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

- The matter concerns public safety or is an emergency.

REFERENCES

Strategic Community Plan

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Customer Service Charter

Freedom of Information Act 1982

Local Government Act 1995

Regulations Health Act 1911 and associated regulations

Local Town Planning Scheme

Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015

Heritage of WA Act 1990

Environmental Protection Act 1986

Bush Fires Act 1954

Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1984

Privacy Act 1998

Disability Services Act 1993

Equal Opportunity Act 1984

Office Use Only				
Relevant delegations				
Initial Council adoption	Date	15 December 2022	Resolution #	
Last reviewed	Date	25 May 2022	Resolution #	2205-05
Next review due	Date	March 2024		



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

APPENDIX 1 IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<i>Goal</i>	To provide the membership with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain member feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions	To work directly with the members throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the members in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the members
<i>What does this look like?</i>	We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy



COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Our Vision <i>A Place to Grow</i>	Our Mission	
<p>PURPOSE The purpose of this Communications Strategy is to guide Councillors and staff in the sharing of information, the gathering of views and opinions, being customer centric and promoting the Shire.</p>		
<p>OUR COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a positive image of the Shire Council through our communication platforms and wider media • Improve quality, consistency and management of our publications and platforms • Allocate resources to deliver our strategy • Utilise social media to communicate clearly and consistently to Council's audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase positive perception of Council • Promote social inclusion and community cohesion • Improve Council decision-making and service delivery • Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction • Attract business and residents to the area 		
WHO WE ARE	TARGET AUDIENCE	
<p>Comprising over 2,500km², the population of the Shire of Victoria Plains was 921 (2016 Census). There are 510 dwellings in the Shire. Townsites within the district include Bolgart, Calingiri, Yerecoin, Piawaning, Gillingarra and Mogumber, as well as the New Norcia community (monastic town). In 2016 47% of the population of the Shire was under 45yrs. The median age of the Shire is 46.2yrs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents - Local businesses and employees - Developers relevant to us - Surrounding communities - Wider Perth metro area - State Government, it's agencies and politicians - Federal Government, it's agencies and politicians - Media – both local and mainstream 	



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

<p>compared to 37.2yrs for the rest of Australia. Majority of the population was born in Australia, only 3.3% speaks a language other than English at home. Main industry is agriculture. Approximately 75% of dwellings have internet access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff - WALGA - DLGSC - Wheatbelt Development Commission - RDA Wheatbelt - Progress Associations - Clubs and associations - Suppliers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prospective visitors and event attendees - Prospective new residents and investors - Volunteers - Funding bodies - Potential employees
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COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

<p>Young People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use clear, simple and informal language, free from jargon and acronyms - Consider incentives - Use channels they are already familiar with - Use existing relationships e.g. schools 	<p>Older People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use large print for written materials - Choose accessible venues - Use existing relationships e.g. seniors group 	<p>Working Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider timing and childcare needs - Consider venue options that are appropriate for children 	<p>Farmers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider seasonal impacts - Use existing relationships e.g. grower groups
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<p>People with a Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use clear and simple language, free from jargon and acronyms - Avoid long periods of concentration - Encourage participants to bring a support person 	<p>Indigenous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite and encourage involvement of respected elders - Use clear and simple language, free from jargon and acronyms - Use existing relationships 	<p>CALD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use clear and simple language - Consider use of interpreters - Translate printed material - Respect cultural difference - Invite respected community leaders
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2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure adequate lighting - Avoid or reduce background noise whenever possible - Repeat and rephrase as required 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider dietary requirements
OUR ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES		OUR COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS
Attending and/or holding stalls at local events Attending local community group and committee meetings Workshops Information sessions Public participation at council meetings Annual electors meetings Forums Media releases Advertisements Shire website Electronic and printed newsletters Signage and banners Distribution of flyers and brochures Information boards Surveys Social media		Facebook Page Email distribution list Telephone Street banners Signage Notice boards Face-to-face Emails Printed material SMS Shire and Community Newsletter Community workshops Website Radio Twitter Annual Budget SCP and CBP Annual report Our community preferences: Facebook, website, SMS, email and XX
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES		
The Shire of Victoria Plains official communications will be consistent with relevant legislation, policies, standards and the positions adopted by the Council. Our communications will always be respectful and professional. Official communications undertaken on behalf of the Shire of Victoria Plains, including on the Shire's Social Media accounts and third party social media accounts must be created and retained as local government records in accordance with the Shire's Record Keeping Plan and the State Records Act 2000. These records are also subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1992.		
Councillors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have the responsibility to encourage active community member participation in community engagement activities - Listen to, understand and consider feedback - Be advocates of the Shire and its communities - The Council has a statutory obligation to disseminate 	CEO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage Councillors and staff to undertake best practice community engagement - Ensure Council adequately resources community engagement and the communications strategy - Receive feedback and translate it to Council or take action 	Office Manager and Customer Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adhere to the IAP2 Public Spectrum - Provide feedback to participants when they contribute feedback and engagement - Commit to continually improve the Shire's community engagement efforts
CDO or Governance Officer		



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

information to the public and ensuring there is an effective means with which to provide the message received by the relevant necessary parties	- Encourage the community to engage with the Shire		
VALUES THAT UNDERPIN OUR COMMUNICATION		KEY MESSAGES	

OUR COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

1. INFORM	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS
1. Develop key messages for Council priorities and service areas to demonstrate our purpose and value		
2. Annually identify and define campaigns on major projects, key deliverables and initiatives and prepare messaging		
3. Produce regular media releases that share Shire news, updates and decisions		
4. Promote the Shire's website and social media pages as primary sources of information		
5. Use social media, email and SMS as cost effective communication platforms for various target groups		
6. Regularly update the Shire's website and review its functionality for users		
7. Distribute monthly Shire and Community newsletter		
8. Distribute quarterly progress report on our SCP		
9. Develop a Signage Strategy to inform consistent fit-for-purpose and user-focussed signage		



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

10. Develop a Social Media content schedule		
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2. CONSULT	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS
1. Engage with the community during Strategic Community Plan minor and major reviews		
2. Feedback forms and mechanisms are available on the website and in the Shire Administration Office		
3. Train staff and Councillors in the Community Engagement Policy		
4. Continually update the Customer Service Charter, promote it and train staff to deliver upon it		
5. Consult and respond through digital media platforms		

3. INVOLVE	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS
1. Gather feedback from the community on matters that impact them		
2. Council meetings in various towns		
3. Respond to feedback when it has been requested and advise the respondents as to how the information will be used		
4. Promote voting in the local government election process		
5. Promote nominations for Council		

4. COLLABORATE	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS
1. Maintain a media contact list		
2. Councillors and senior staff represent and attend various community groups		
3. Councillors nominated as delegates to Committees		
4. Annual grants scheme		



2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy

5. EMPOWER	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS
1. Advertise the Annual Meeting of Electors		

Author:

Adopted:

Reviewed:



2.8 Use of Logo

Responsible Areas	Council
Responsible Officer	CEO
Affected Staff	Nil

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of the Shire of Victoria Plains suite of logos. The Shire of Victoria Plains recognises that it is important to establish a framework for the use of its logo to ensure that a consistent and professional image of the Shire is promoted publicly.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Shire of Victoria Plains has one suite of logos. No other logos are approved to be used. The logo is as illustrated:



General Usage

The Shire of Victoria Plains wishes to highlight a distinction between the role of the Council and the Organisation through the use of the official logo of the Shire of Victoria Plains for Council, Councillor functions and for operational activities.

Below is a table that clarifies the different uses.

COUNCIL	OPERATIONAL
President/Councillor correspondence	Staff business cards, letterheads, esignatures
Council policies	Shire vehicles/plant
Rates Notices	Entry doors to offices, administration centre/depot



2.8 Use of Logo

Councillor name badges and business cards	Community consultation
Council plaques	Website
Websites	Promotional material
Council related banners	Banners marketing/organisational
Shire street signage	Approval by third party for use of Logo

Usage of Logo by External Groups

Where an external group requests permission to use the logos on printer and other materials, the following conditions will apply:

- i) All applications to use the Shire of Victoria Plains logo must be made in writing to the CEO and include details of the purpose, form and extent of the proposed use and the reason for such use. Although permission to use the logo in the first instance is to be referred to the CEO, he/she may delegate this assessment to another employee. The artwork for the promotional material must be supplied for assessment against this policy.
- ii) Approval may be granted providing the group:
 - a. is based in the area and provides a service to the Shire of Victoria Plains residents; and
 - b. has a direct relationship with the Shire, either through funding or operational arrangements.
- iii) Eligible groups will be advised in writing that approval has been granted to use the logo, which must be in accordance with the Shire of Victoria Plains corporate standards.
- iv) Ineligible groups will be advised in writing that approval has not been granted to use the logo and provided with an explanation under the guidelines of this policy.
- v) No fees will be charged for the use of the Shire of Victoria Plains logo but eligible groups will be responsible for any costs associated with artwork, design and production.
- vi) The Shire of Victoria Plains may exercise its right to withdraw any authorisation at any time if the approved user is deemed to be not complying with the conditions as set out in this policy.

Prohibited Usage of Logo

The logo shall not:

- be computer enhanced (e.g. represented in 3D perspective)
- be used in a visually congested or confined manner (e.g. surrounded by a border or tightly positioned with other material).
- be used by a third party unless written approval has been given by the CEO.
- be used for any purpose during a Local Government Election that seeks to promote an



2.8 Use of Logo

individual candidate over another candidate. This inappropriate use includes candidate based promotional ballot papers, fliers, advertising, posters, letters or any other form of electoral material. A breach of this section will be considered a breach of copyright as outlined in Section 3.

CONSEQUENCES

This policy represents the formal policy and expected standards of the Shire. Any unauthorised use of any Shire of Victoria Plains logo is a breach of copyright as well as this

POLICY APPLICATION

The application of this policy is to be in conjunction with all Councillors and employees.

Policy adopted: June 2017

Review Date: June 2019

Office Use Only				
Relevant delegations				
Initial Council adoption	Date	June 2017	Resolution #	
Last reviewed	Date	June 2019	Resolution #	
	Date	25 May 2022		2205-05
Next review due	Date	March 2024		

Note: Formerly Policy 11.4