




**Policy Title:            ACCEPTABLE REQUESTS GUIDELINES**

**Policy Type:            STATUTORY**  
 (Statutory, Financial, Administrative, Human Resources)

**Policy Number:        S001**

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<b>Approved by CEO/Director:</b>	<b>Bernie McCarthy – CEO</b>	 ..... Signature.	
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<b>Implementation Department</b>		<b>Officer Position</b>	
Chief Executive Office		Chief Executive Officer	
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## 1. Policy Background/Scope

### Councillor/staff interaction protocol

To provide guidelines for the interaction between Councillors and staff and, requests from Councillors relating to the provision of information, advice and assistance.

This applies to Councillors and Staff (including contractors and volunteers) of Aurukun Shire Council.

This is to set out clearly the guidelines as described in Sections 170, 170A, 171 and 171A of the *Local Government Act 2009* which Council must make and adopt by resolution to cover the interaction between Councillors and Employees of the Aurukun Shire Council to allow elected representatives to ask for help and advice from officers other than the Chief Executive Officer

## 2. Policy Provisions

While it would be preferable for Councillors to commence any request for information at the Chief Executive Officer (or their respective EAs) level, such may not always be practical, therefore:

A request from a Councillor for -

1. Information that would be as a matter of course provided to a member of the general public, either free of charge or at a cost, can be provided to the Councillor as soon as possible, e.g. copy of a council report; strategic document or the like.
2. Information or comment about Capital Works Items should be directed to either the relevant Director or the nominated project supervisor.
3. Information relating to a Council programme or operational matters should be directed to either the relevant Director or the nominated officer (planner/engineer etc.)

Such requests should wherever possible be via an email. The reply provided by the staff shall also be provided by email whenever practical within 24 hours. However, it is understood that most requests would be verbal, and details of that request should be recorded by the employee and the response be given by email to the enquirer copying in the CEO and responding verbally to the enquirer/councillor.

If the request is of an urgent nature, then such should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer, or Director.

If a request from the Councillor relates to a matter outside the Councillor's area or relates to matters which are of a whole of Council significance or relevance, then all the Councillors will be copied into the reply. *e.g. a request about a pothole would be provided to the Councillor only; however, a request for information about the status of the housing programme would be provided to all Councillors.*

Where a Councillor, acting on behalf of a member of the public, refers the matter to an officer and requests a reply, then the officer will respond to the member of the public direct but will also keep the Councillor in the loop. To assist the officer, where appropriate, a copy of the original email or letter if available, should be attached.

When a Councillor makes a verbal request and the reply is unable to be provided during the course of that conversation, then the practice shall be that the reply is provided via email and verbal response generally within two working days. A copy of this email will be placed on the relevant file.

As a follow up, when a verbal reply is provided, it shall be at the discretion of the staff member as to whether they need to confirm the outcome of the conversation and information in an email back to the Councillor(s) and management respectively. A copy of this email will be placed on the relevant file.

The *Local Government Act 2009* does not provide the authority for Councillors to direct any local government employee. However, there are many circumstances where they can seek assistance from an officer to ensure quality, timely service response.

Acceptable examples of direction:

*“Would you mind calling Mrs Resident to talk to her about what is happening in her street?”*

Unacceptable example of giving direction:

*“Stop doing what you are doing, and I want this piece of work done instead”*

Useful points to consider when requesting advice or assistance from a member of staff:

- 1. Where feasible or practical a Councillor should lodge their request for assistance as a Customer Request*
- 2. In the first instance seek assistance from the relevant Director or the CEO's personal assistant*
- 3. In making a request for assistance or advice be mindful of the potential impact on staff and available resources.*

Any complaints received by a Councillor will be dealt with in writing through the Council's

Councillors are also reminded of their obligation to ensure that any correspondence with a member of the community in relation to a Council service or activity should be recorded in Council's document management systems.

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

### **3. Related Documentation**

*Local Government Act 2009*