

1. Heads of Power

Crime and Corruption Act 2001 (Qld)

Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)

Local Government Regulation 2012 (Qld)

Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (Qld)

Queensland Audit Office (QAO) Fraud Management Guidelines

Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) Fraud and Corruption Control Best Practice Guide

Independent Assessor Regulation 2018 (Qld)

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to prevent, detect, and respond to fraud and corruption within Aurukun Shire Council (**Council**), ensuring compliance with Queensland legislation and promoting integrity, transparency, and accountability in Council operations.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees, Councillors, contractors, consultants, volunteers, and any individual or entity engaged in business with Council.

4. Definitions

Fraud: Any dishonest activity causing actual or potential financial loss to Council, including theft, deception, misuse of position, or deliberate misrepresentation.

Corruption: Dishonest or unethical conduct that involves a breach of trust, misuse of power, or an attempt to gain an undue advantage.

Public Official: A person employed by, or associated with, Council who is subject to the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001 (Qld)*.

Corrupt Conduct: Conduct by a person that adversely affects the honest and impartial performance of Council functions, including bribery, extortion, and collusion.

Reasonable Suspicion: A belief based on facts that a fraud or corruption offence may have occurred.

Office of the Independent Assessor (OIA): An independent statutory body responsible for receiving and assessing complaints about the conduct of councillors under the *Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)*.

5. Policy Statement

Council is committed to:

- A zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption.
- Establishing effective prevention, detection, and response mechanisms.
- Complying with legislative requirements and integrity frameworks.
- Encouraging ethical behaviour and transparency within all Council operations.
- Protecting whistleblowers and ensuring confidentiality in reporting suspected fraud or corruption.

6. Fraud and Corruption Prevention

Council will implement the following measures to prevent and mitigate fraud and corruption risks:

6.1. Governance and Leadership

- The CEO and Executive Leadership Team (**ELT**) are responsible for fostering a culture of integrity.
- Fraud and corruption risk assessments will be conducted periodically.
- A Fraud and Corruption Control Plan will be maintained in accordance with CCC and QAO guidelines.

6.2. Internal Controls

- Council will establish clear financial, procurement, and asset management controls to prevent fraudulent activities.
- Conflict of interest disclosures will be required for all Councillors and employees.
- High-risk transactions will be subject to increased scrutiny.

6.3. Employee Responsibilities

- Employees must report any suspicions of fraud or corruption immediately.
- Mandatory fraud awareness training will be provided to all employees.
- Employees must adhere to the Code of Conduct and Public Sector Ethics Principles.

6.4. Third-Party Engagement

- Contractors and suppliers must comply with Council's fraud and corruption prevention standards.
- Due diligence checks will be conducted before engaging vendors.

7. Reporting and Investigating Fraud and Corruption

7.1. Reporting Obligations

- Suspected fraud or corruption must be reported to:
 - CEO (or delegated officer)
 - Crime and Corruption Commission (**CCC**) if the matter involves corrupt conduct
 - Queensland Police Service (**QPS**) for criminal fraud cases
- Reports can be submitted via email, in person, or through the confidential reporting hotline.

7.2. Confidentiality and Whistleblower Protection

- Council will protect individuals who report fraud or corruption in good faith.
- Whistleblower disclosures will be handled under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 (Qld)*.

7.3. Investigation Process

- The CEO will initiate an internal review or refer the matter to an external authority.
- Investigations will be conducted impartially and in accordance with legal requirements.
- Disciplinary action will be taken where allegations are substantiated.

8. Reporting Councillor Involvement

Where suspected fraud or corruption involves a councillor, the matter may constitute misconduct or corrupt conduct under the *Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)*. In such cases, the matter must be referred to the OIA and/or the CCC, as appropriate. Council staff must not investigate such matters internally.

9. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- Fraud and corruption risks will be reviewed annually.
- Policy effectiveness will be assessed against best practice guidelines.
- Updates will be made in response to legislative or operational changes.

10. Related Documents

- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Code of Conduct for Councillors
- Fraud and Corruption Control Plan
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Complaints Management Framework

11. Document Controls

Council will review this policy every two years or as required by changes in law or best practice.

12. Policy Owner

Legal and Governance.