

Roles and Responsibilities of the Mayor and Councillors

Port Stephens Council local government area is divided into three (3) Wards – West, Central and East.

The Mayor is popularly elected by the Community along with three (3) Councillors in each Ward

Local Government elections are generally held in September every four years.

Mayor and Councillors are bound by the Code of Conduct. The General Manager is responsible for the day to day administration of the Council, including staffing matters.



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Port Stephens Roles and Responsibilities

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The role of the Mayor

The mayor is commonly regarded as the leader in the community.

As part of the leadership role, the mayor is involved in advancing community cohesion and promote civic awareness, and the principal member and spokesperson of the governing body, including representing the views of the council as to its local priorities.

The mayor can also exercise, in cases of necessity, the policy-making functions of the governing body of the council between meetings of the council, preside at meetings of the council, and to ensure that meetings of the council are conducted efficiently, effectively and in accordance with this Act.

To ensure the timely development and adoption of the strategic plans, programs and policies of council, and to promote the effective and consistent implementation.

In addition to advising, consulting with and providing strategic direction to the general manager in relation to the implementation of the strategic plans and policies of the council, the mayor promotes partnerships between the council and key stakeholders.

In conjunction with the general manager, the mayor is to ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between the council and the local community.

The mayor is to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office, and to represent the council on regional organisations and at inter-governmental forums at regional, State and Commonwealth level.

In consultation with councillors, to lead performance appraisals of the general manager, and to exercise any other functions of the council that the council determines.

The role of a Councillor

Councillors are elected by the community to represent the collective interests of residents, ratepayers and the local community and to facilitate communication between the local community and the governing body.

As an elected representative a councillor is to be an active and contributing member of the governing body, and to make considered and well informed decisions as a member of the governing body.

A councillor is to participate in the development of the integrated planning and reporting framework, and to uphold and represent accurately the policies and decisions of the governing body.

To make all reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform the role of a councillor.

A councillor is accountable to the local community for the performance of the council.

The role of the governing body (Council)

The role of the governing body is:

- (a) to direct and control the affairs of the council in accordance with this Act,
- (b) to provide effective civic leadership to the local community,
- (c) to ensure as far as possible the financial sustainability of the council,
- (d) to ensure as far as possible that the council acts in accordance with the principles set out in Chapter 3 and the plans, programs, strategies and policies of the council,
- (e) to develop and endorse the community strategic plan, delivery program and other strategic plans, programs and policies of the council,
- (f) to determine and adopt a rating and revenue policy and operational plans that support the optimal allocation of the council's resources to implement the strategic plans

(including the community strategic plan) of the council and for the benefit of the local area,

(g) to keep under review the performance of the council, including service delivery,

(h) to make decisions necessary for the proper exercise of the council's regulatory functions,

(i) to determine the process for appointment of the general manager by the council and to monitor the general manager's performance,

(j) to determine the senior staff positions within the organisation structure of the council,

(k) to consult regularly with community organisations and other key stakeholders and keep them informed of the council's decisions and activities,

(l) to be responsible for ensuring that the council acts honestly, efficiently and appropriately.

The governing body is to consult with the general manager in directing and controlling the affairs of the council.

