

Mayors' Handbook

2018



Acknowledgements

The Mayors' Handbook was developed by the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) some time ago. In updating it, we would like to thank the Local Government Division for advice on legislation and regulations. Thanks also too to the Local Government Association of Queensland for ideas and quotes generated from their handbook.

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About LGAT

The Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) is the peak body for Local Government in Tasmania and is part of a national network of Local Government associations. Founded in 1911, LGAT is an incorporated body under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

LGAT is the voice of Local Government to other governments, interested stakeholders and the wider community. For over 100 years it has advocated on behalf of Tasmanian councils for fair treatment and to provide for the long-term security and sustainability of Australia's third sphere of government.

Funded by its member councils, and other income earned through projects sponsored on behalf of Local Government, LGAT's roles, as outlined in the Local Government Act, are to:

- protect and represent the interests and rights of councils in Tasmania;
- promote an efficient and effective system of Local Government and
- provide services to member councils, councillors and employees of councils.

To deliver on these roles, LGAT must foster strategic and beneficial relations with the other spheres of government, industry and community stakeholders.

The specialist services that LGAT provides to its member councils include policy and strategic support, information, learning and development for Local Government councillors and officers and procurement of employee relations and insurance services. LGAT also coordinates the Tasmanian Local Government Awards for Excellence, the Annual Tasmanian Local Government Conference and the LGAT Assist Fund.

You can find out more about LGAT's activities on its website at www.lgat.tas.gov.au and on the Member Only extranet¹.

Introduction

The *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) prescribes the functions and powers of councils, councillors, mayors and general managers.

To facilitate flexibility, innovative practices and adaptation to local circumstances and changing conditions, the Act is drafted on the basis of minimum prescription, an approach which is supported by Local Government.

However, this can result in differing interpretations and understandings of the Act.

This handbook provides a commentary on various provisions in the Act and is intended to assist mayors in meeting their duties and obligations, in particular their relationship with other elected members, council staff and the community.

This handbook should be read in conjunction with the LGAT Councillor Resource Kit.

¹ Your general manager can provide you with login information.

Functions and Powers of Council

The functions and powers of councils are prescribed in Section 20 of the Act:

- (1) *The council of a municipal area has the following functions:*
 - (a) *to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the community;*
 - (b) *to represent and promote the interests of the community;*
 - (c) *to provide for the peace, order and good government of the municipal area.*
- (2) *In performing its functions, a council is to consult, involve and be accountable to the community.*

The Act also specifies which of a council's functions and powers can be delegated (Section 22).

Comparisons are often drawn between councils and the board of directors of a company. In terms of expecting high levels of efficiency in the operation of councils and accountability to 'shareholders' (ratepayers), this is a useful comparison. In a similar way to boards, councils set policies and objectives that are implemented by the general manager and staff. Councils are required to prepare annual budgets, Annual Reports and hold Annual General Meetings.

However, there are significant differences. Councils provide essential services and meet the needs of ratepayers. The cost of these services must be met - choice is not a factor and an unprofitable service cannot simply be withdrawn.

From the point of view of the ratepayer, they have no choice whether or not to become a 'shareholder' nor how much they will 'invest'. On the other hand, ratepayers increasingly expect to be consulted on the decisions that will affect their community.

How the Council does business

The *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015* (the Regulations) deals with the fundamental requirements for the conduct of council meetings.

As well as the Regulations, some councils may adopt additional instruments to cover council decision making. These may include council policies and guidelines. Some will refer to relevant external sources, such as the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly or textbooks. Any other instruments adopted must be complementary to Regulations and cannot conflict with the Regulations or the Act. Where there is conflict, the Act or Regulations will take precedence.

In considering which instruments should be adopted to assist in conducting council business, it should be remembered that the Regulations are legally enforceable, while other instruments/documents depend on the goodwill of councillors to operate effectively.

From the point of view of the community, councils are expected to be open and transparent in the way they conduct business.

It is important for councils to have comprehensive policies to demonstrate that their dealings and deliberations are consistent, fair, reasonable and equitable.

Functions of the mayor

Section 27 of the Act sets out the additional functions of the mayor:

- (a) *to act as a leader of the community of the municipal area; and*
- (b) *to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office; and*
- (c) *to promote good governance by, and within, the council; and*
- (d) *to act as chairperson of the council and to chair meetings of the council in a manner that supports decision-making processes; and*
- (e) *to act as the spokesperson of the council; and*
- (f) *to represent the council on regional organisations and at intergovernmental forums at regional, state and federal levels; and*
- (g) *to lead and participate in the appointment, and the monitoring of the performance, of the general manager; and*
- (h) *to liaise with the general manager on –*
 - (i) *the activities of the council and the performance and exercise of its functions and powers; and*
 - (ii) *the activities of the general manager and the performance and exercise of his or her functions and powers in supporting the council; and*
- (i) *any function imposed by an order under section 27A ; and*
- (j) *any other function imposed by this or any other Act.*

“The role of mayor is one of the most challenging in Australia’s federated system of politics... The role requires great leadership, political judgment and tact in order to achieve a suitable balance between community expectations of the role of mayor and the specific legal limitations of that role” (Local Government Association of Queensland).

Whilst these may appear simple statements, there is no doubt that the role of mayor is complex and calls on a wide range of skills. Mayors also have functions and rights as elected members (e.g. voting at meetings), and the balancing of these two roles may be problematic on occasions.

To assist in carrying out their roles and functions, mayors may find it useful to develop their skills by undertaking training in such areas as chairing meetings, negotiating and dealing with the media. Discussions with other mayors or the Local Government Association of Tasmania may also assist in dealing with particularly difficult issues.

The following sections of the handbook give more detail about what might be involved in each of these functions.

Leader of the community

Provision 27(a) and (b) gives legislative recognition to the fact that the mayor is regarded as, and accorded the status of, the most senior elected member of a council by other levels of government, by business leaders and by the community in ceremonial or business dealings.

While the mayor cannot make unilateral decisions, the whole council collectively must do this, the mayor's leadership role critically underpins the council's ability to make decisions which benefit the community. A good, professional working relationship is required between the mayor, general manager and councillors in order to deliver positive outcomes.

The role involves:

- Being the figurehead of the council in dealings with the community, community groups, governments and business.
- Representing the council at public and civic events.
- Receiving delegations and deputations. Generally this would be in the company of the general manager or a senior officer approved by the general manager.
- Being the political interface between other bodies, governments and the council, preferably in the company of the general manager.
- Leading delegations to political and business leaders.

A mayor's leadership style will be determined by many factors but must be adapted to different circumstances. Day-to-day leadership style may be different than that required when dealing with a major challenge.

On occasions, tasks may be delegated to other elected members. Councils may consider it useful to have a protocol covering such situations.

“Leadership is not just about being in charge or achieved by merely having a title. Leadership is a personal quality that involves taking charge, taking responsibility, making decisions based on credible information, understanding the interests of the community, exercising good judgment, being fair and respecting others” (Mayors Handbook, State of Alaska).

It could reasonably be expected that the mayor (or delegate) would report to other councillors, on a regular basis and in a timely manner, about such meetings and delegations, including the nature and content of any discussions and relevant documentation.

In fulfilling the role of 'leader' a mayor should be well briefed on all issues of local importance, should know how to deal with the media and be visible and accessible as much as time allows.

To promote good governance within the Council

It is important councillors understand and practice good governance because it supports them to make decisions and to act in the best interests of the community. Good governance gives the community confidence in its council and improves the faith councillors have in their own council and its decision-making processes.

Good governance enables councils to make good decisions in a timely manner and ultimately ensures councils effectively lead and provide services to their communities. As the council figurehead it is important that the mayor models and promotes good governance within the council.

More information on good governance can be found on the [Local Government Division](#) website in the [Good Governance Guide](#).

Chairperson of the Council

As chairperson, the role of the mayor is to ensure that meetings of the council are conducted in an efficient manner by:

- Being familiar with the business listed on meeting agendas, through regular briefings with the general manager and other staff (when the general manager considers it appropriate). The mayor may consider inviting the deputy mayor or other elected members to attend briefings when appropriate.

Note: The *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulation 2015*, regulation 8 requires that the agenda be prepared by the general manager. Mayors and councillors outside a formal meeting cannot give instructions on whether or not business is listed on an agenda or the form of its presentation.

- Ensuring that meetings are conducted in accordance with the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulation 2015*.
- Ensuring the council's meeting procedures policy, codes of conduct and any other relevant policy or document are observed.
- Ensuring all councillors are treated fairly and equitably and are encouraged to participate in discussion. The mayor should set the tone of the meeting (fair, firm and friendly).
- Ensuring that the meeting keeps to time and is orderly.
- Guiding councillors as necessary to ensure the efficient and practical handling of formal business.
- Ensuring that the council (i.e. the elected body in session) remains focused on what is within its prime functions and powers. This can be achieved by having policies which direct decision-making and a system of reporting that enables councillors to monitor implementation of various policies, decisions and programs against performance indicators. A council should not become involved in matters of administrative, operational or managerial detail.



Meetings must also be effective in that they:

- progress the development and implementation of council's strategic and operational plans, programs and policies.
- address key issues of concern to residents and the community.

In relation to chairing council committees or other meetings (e.g. with the community), the same principles apply.

Other councillors might chair committees and other meetings and it may be useful for councils to have a protocol for determining how such tasks are allocated.

More information on Council Meeting Procedures can be found on the Information Sheet produced by the Local Government Division². See www.dpac.tas.gov.au/lgd/publications.

Obligations of the Chair of Council meetings

- To put motions to the vote and to announce the vote.
- To stick to the agenda.
- To reconvene abandoned meetings within 14 days and give notice if it is more than 2 days.
- To exclude members of the public and others as determined from closed meetings.
- To not allow debate until a motion has been moved and seconded.
- To consider a procedural motion before anything else.
- To consider a point of order as soon as it is called.
- To advise council when it is acting as a Planning Authority.
- To allow at least 15 minutes for public question time every meeting.
- To vacate the Chair if moving or seconding a motion.

(Lynn Mason)

Spokesperson and representative for the Council

The Act designates the mayor as the spokesperson for the council and as well as representative for the council on regional organisations and at intergovernmental forums at regional, state and federal levels. This involves:

- Issuing press statements and giving media briefings on council decisions and policies.
- Responding to media enquiries on behalf of council.
- Representing the council at Local Government policy forums and workshops.
- Representing the council at regional meetings of councils or such other bodies as the council resolves to participate in.
- Representing the council at official meetings with community and other groups. With the knowledge and approval of the council, meet with political and business leaders, preferably in the company of the general manager.
- Represent the council on regional organisations and at intergovernmental forums at regional, state and federal levels.

As the spokesperson for the council, the mayor is expected to be articulate, coherent and considered in presenting their views. Regular briefings are likely to be an important tool in order to be informed and ready to comment on issues at any time.

² Another good Local Government resource (ignoring specific Queensland legislation) is *Making the Most of Meetings* (Department of Infrastructure and Planning) see <http://www.dlqp.qld.gov.au/resources/guideline/local-government/making-the-most-of-meetings.pdf>

It is also important that mayors develop and maintain good working relationships with elected officials in other spheres of Government. It should be remembered that while public criticism of other governments is a legitimate tactic, it is best left as a last resort rather than a first approach.

On occasions, these tasks may be delegated to other elected members or the general manager. Councils may consider it useful to have a policy covering such situations.

“One of the major trends in the Local Government sector over the past decade has been the embracing of regional cooperation among councils on planning, infrastructure and service delivery... It is important for the mayor to be present at these regional meetings that other mayors attend - otherwise, you and your Council are at somewhat of a disadvantage... They are great opportunities to network, glean information, learn from and influence your peers” (Local Government Association of Queensland).

Leading the appointment and performance review of the general manager.

One role of the mayor is to lead and participate in the appointment and monitoring of the performance of the general manager.

Contracts of employment³ are for a maximum five years duration. Recent changes to the Act have included the provision allowing the Minister to make an order in relation to the appointment and functions of a general manager and that a council must appoint a person in accordance with that order. At the time of writing no orders have been enacted.

Once a council has decided its direction, strategy and policies it delegates authority to the general manager for implementing these decisions and managing day-to-day operations. This involves responsibility for the management of the council's resources and assets.

In order to assess the performance of the general manager council determines systems for monitoring performance, including specifying performance goals, key performance indicators and evaluation methods in the general manager's contract of employment.

Liaison with the general manager

The relationship between the mayor and the general manager is fundamentally important to a well performing council.

Provision 27 (h) of the Act gives a mayor the responsibility of liaising with the general manager in relation to council activities and the performance of its functions and exercise of its rights as well as the activities of the general manager and the

³ LGAT with Local Government Professionals (Tasmania) have developed a template contract for general managers for use by member councils which is available on the extranet.

performance of his or her functions and powers in supporting the council. This includes:

- Encouraging a strong working relationship between the mayor and the general manager.
- Ensuring that the mayor is informed about key activities of the Council as well as its functions and powers.

The functions of the general manager are clearly and separately defined in the *Local Government Act 1993* (see later section).

Recent changes to the Act have included provisions allowing the Minister to make an order to clarify the functions of the mayor or impose on mayors new functions as the Minister considers appropriate. At the time of writing no orders have been enacted.

“In every term of Local Government, a small number of councils will experience a renegade councillor or councillors - someone who consistently seeks to work outside the accepted norms of behaviour. It is incumbent on a mayor, as painful as it might be, to attempt to find out why the councillor/s concerned are behaving badly. It is important to get to the heart of their frustrations, real or imagined and seek to remedy them. Every effort needs to be taken to bring them back inside the fold, noting that realistically the most reasonable and genuine overtures will fail with some renegade councillors” (Local Government Association of Queensland).

Functions of the deputy mayor

Section 27 of the Act sets out the functions of the mayors and deputy mayors:

- (1A)** *The mayor or deputy mayor is to represent accurately the policies and decisions of the council in performing the functions of mayor or deputy mayor.*
- (2)** *The deputy mayor is to act in the position of mayor and exercise the powers and perform the functions of mayor if –*
- (a)** *the mayor is absent from duty as mayor or from the State, otherwise unavailable for duty as mayor or unable to perform the functions of mayor; and*

If the mayor is absent from the council area for in excess of a week and/or is not contactable it would be usual for him or her to request the deputy mayor to be acting mayor until he or she returns or is contactable.

- (b)** *The mayor or the council, by notice in writing, appoints the deputy mayor to act in the position.*

A proforma letter could be used, inserting the appropriate dates and details appointing the deputy as acting mayor. This appointment should be forwarded (delivered, faxed or mailed) simultaneously to the deputy mayor and general manager. The general manager should keep the other councillors appropriately informed of acting appointments.

The council may effect an appointment of the deputy as acting mayor if the mayor is incapacitated or otherwise unable to discharge the duties of office.

Councils may also determine that when a Deputy mayor is acting for an extended period, it is appropriate for them to receive compensation equivalent to the mayoral allowance.

- (2A)** *The mayor, by notice in writing, may delegate for a specified period –*
- (a) either or both of the functions referred to in subsection 1(e) and (f) to the deputy mayor, a councillor or the general manager; and*
 - (b) any power or function of the mayor, other than the function referred to in subsection 1(d), to the deputy mayor for a specified period.*

A proforma letter could be used, inserting the appropriate dates and details of delegations to the deputy mayor. This delegation should be forwarded (delivered, faxed or mailed) simultaneously to the deputy mayor and general manager. The general manager should keep the other councillors appropriately informed of delegations.

- (3)** *An appointment under subsection (2) remains in force –*
- (a) for the period specified in the notice; or*
 - (b) until sooner revoked.*

Except when empowered by the mayor, the deputy mayor has virtually the same role as other councillors. However, in practice, the mayor will include the deputy mayor in a range of activities and matters to enable the holder of the office of deputy to take over from the mayor as required.

Functions of councillors

Section 28 of the Act sets out the functions of councillors:

- (1)** *A councillor, in the capacity of an individual councillor, has the following functions:*
- (a) to represent the community;*

This may comprise:

- Considering the interests of the community in forming views and judgements on business before the council.
- Retaining an open mind and considering all evidence and information.
- Requesting relevant information on the matter, in writing, to the general manager as specified in Section 28A of the Act.
- Recognising that decisions will not always have the unanimous support of all elected members or the community.

(b) to act in the best interests of the community;

By:

- listening to individual constituents, interest groups and lobbying bodies, making decisions that are fair and equitable and in the interests of the whole community.

(c) to facilitate communication by the council with the community;

Through:

- Taking whatever actions are reasonable to enable the views and opinions of citizens to be heard and considered.
- Accurately and succinctly reporting and conveying the decisions of council.

(d) to participate in the activities of the council;

(e) to undertake duties and responsibilities as authorised by the council.

(2) *The councillors of a council collectively have the following functions:*

(a) to develop and monitor the implementation of strategic plans and budgets;

(b) to determine and monitor the application of policies, plans and programs for –

(i) the efficient and effective provision of services and facilities; and

(ii) the efficient and effective management of assets; and

(iii) the fair and equitable treatment of employees of the council;

(c) to facilitate and encourage the planning and development of the municipal area in the best interests of the community;

(d) to appoint and monitor the performance of the general manager;

(e) to determine and review the council's resource allocation and expenditure activities;

(f) to monitor the manner in which services are provided by the council.

Councillors need to be provided with access to information to enable them to fulfil their functions and should expect reasonable turnaround of requests within council resourcing capabilities and relative priorities.

Individual councillors have no authority to act or make decisions on behalf of council unless specifically authorised by council to do so. The mayor can act for the council (as outlined earlier) but does not make decisions on behalf of the council.

“...it is important to understand that individual councillors have no decision-making power. This lies with the collective group which is the council.”

Functions of the general manager

Section 62 of the Act prescribes the functions of the general manager:-

- (1) *The general manager of a council has the following functions:*
 - (a) *to implement the policies, plans and programs of the council;*
 - (b) *to implement the decisions of the council;*
 - (c) *to be responsible for the day-to-day operations and affairs of the council;*
 - (d) *to provide advice and reports to the council on the exercise and performance of its powers and functions and any other matter requested by the Council;*
 - (e) *to assist the council in the preparation of the strategic plan, annual plan, annual report and assessment of the council's performance against the plans;*
 - (f) *to coordinate proposals for the development of objectives, policies and programs for the consideration of the council;*
 - (g) *to liaise with the mayor on the affairs of the council and the performance of its functions;*
 - (h) *to manage the resources and assets of the council;*
 - (i) *to perform any other function the council decides.*
- (2) *The general manager may do anything necessary or convenient to perform his or her functions under this or any other Act.*

Recent changes to the Act have included provisions allowing the Minister to make an order to clarify the general functions of the general manager as well as specifically relating to general managers' function to liaise with the mayor. At the time of writing no orders have been enacted.

It is normal for the contract of employment with a general manager to include additional functions and responsibilities.

Section 63 of the Act prescribes the following power to the general manager in relation to employees.

- (1) *The general manager of a council may:*
 - (a) *Appoint persons as employees of the council.*
 - (b) *Allocate duties to employees.*
 - (c) *Control and direct employees.*
 - (d) *Suspend or dismiss employees.*
- (2) *The general manager is to develop human resource practices and procedures in accordance with policies of the council to ensure employees of the council receive fair and equitable treatment without discrimination.*

Section 64 of the Act also gives the general manager power to delegate his or her functions:

The general manager, in writing, may delegate to an employee of the council –

- (a) any functions or powers other than this power of delegation; and*
- (b) any functions or powers delegated by the council which the council authorised the general manager to delegate.*

Section 65 of the Act places a responsibility and obligation upon the general manager to ensure advice is properly given by either himself/herself or other employees or agents of the council.

The Section provides:

- (1) A general manager must ensure that any advice, information or recommendation given to the council or a council committee is given by a person who has the qualifications or experience necessary to give such advice, information or recommendation.*

- (3) A council or council committee is not to decide on any matter which requires the advice of a qualified person without considering such advice unless the general manager certifies in writing that such advice was obtained and taken into account in providing general advice to the council or council committee.*



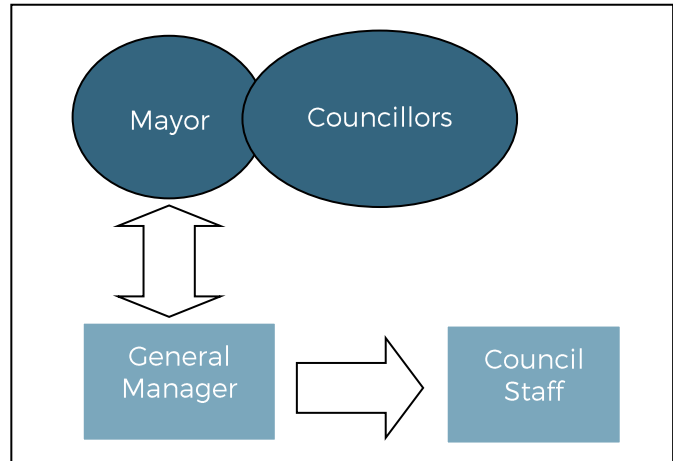
Relationship between a council and the general manager

General managers are appointed by the council (or a council committee) for up to five years on performance-based contracts.

Contracts of employment with the general manager should define the relationship between the council and general manager and contain provisions dealing with accountability.

Whilst the functions of general manager in Section 62 and Section 63 of the Act and, with respect to meetings, in *the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulation 2015* indicate an extent of autonomy in the role, this does not mean that the general manager should undertake his or her functions in isolation from the council and councillors. It is necessary that the council be kept appropriately informed, and in a timely manner, on all relevant matters.

What is relevant is dependent on the reporting arrangements agreed by the council and the general manager.



In summary, the general manager:

- Carries out council instructions.
- Implements policy and reports progress.
- Provides information on performance.
- Must remain accountable.
- Is obliged to disclose relevant information to councillors.

Relationship between the mayor and the general manager

Although the general manager is appointed by the council, it is essential that a sound working relationship be established between the mayor and the general manager to ensure that the council operates effectively. As well as addressing accountability to the council, employment contracts should include a provision setting out the fundamental relationship between the mayor and the general manager.

To discharge the role effectively, it is necessary that the mayor has regular and open dialogue with the general manager. In particular, there should be discussion on matters to go before the council to enable the mayor to better manage the business of the council and ensure sound decision making. The mayor and general manager should also review and discuss any problems in relation to the implementation of council decisions and requests.

The Mayor acts as an agent between council and the General Manager.

The general manager may at his or her discretion raise with, or advise the mayor on matters of administrative or managerial detail.

Mayoral entitlements

Schedule 5 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires each council to develop a policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses incurred for travel, telephone and child care. The Act also makes provision for the payment of allowances to mayors and elected members. The *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015*, Regulation 42(2) specifies the allowances payable to councillors and mayors and deputy mayors. The allowances payable are set out in Schedule 4 of the Regulations.

The Local Government Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet has developed an information sheet in relation to councillor Allowances and this can be accessed on their website: <http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/>

It is not expected that the mayor should incur personal expenses in the normal discharge of duties, so the provision of additional resources and support are necessary for the role of mayor to be performed effectively.

Following is a check list of support services and resources that a mayor may require:

- (1) Transport for council business both within and outside the council area. This can be either the provision of a pool car, allocation of a dedicated vehicle or agreement to use own vehicle with appropriate recompense. On some civic and ceremonial occasions, it may be necessary to provide access to a vehicle with a driver.
- (2) A private office within the Council Chambers, including access to:
 - Telephone
 - Secure filing drawer
 - Facsimile
 - Email
 - Secretarial support
- (3) Home telephone rental
- (4) A mobile phone
- (5) Facsimile access at office and residence

Optional support may include computer and internet facility at work and home office; dedicated internet/facsimile line at residence; dedicated administrative officer (for larger councils); entertainment facility at Town Hall/Council Chamber; special mayoral stationery; dedicated parking space for motor vehicle and credit card for council expenses.

The extent to which these requirements are met does depend on the capacity of a council to provide them and also the personal circumstances of the mayor.

Other areas for consideration

Media

- Be prepared to undertake training to improve your skills in dealing with the media.
- Build a relationship – it builds respect for you and your opinions.
- Prepare well, especially for television or radio. Try to anticipate likely questions. Be sure to check the subject matter, audience and format before you begin.
- Identify two or three key messages. Write them down. Get them across early.
- Rehearse if you have time.
- Take it seriously.
- Remember that you represent the council, and not yourself.

Monitoring your own performance

For all councillors, but especially the mayor, taking the time to assess your own performance is a wise move.

This can be as simple as allowing the opportunity for self-reflection or through informal or formal feedback from the other mayors, your general manager or your fellow councillors.

Things to consider might include:

- How well are you managing your statutory functions?
- Is your leadership style still appropriate?
- How can you strengthen processes and outcomes for your council?
- What have you been doing well and how can you maintain that?

Changes to *Local Government (General) Regulations* made in August 2018 mean that the Declaration of Office now includes a commitment to professional development. Mayors should lead the way in this area and be open to reviewing and, if necessary, improving their own performance.

Code of conduct

Each council has adopted the *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2016* to help guide councillor behaviour. The Code of Conduct covers 8 main standards to be followed:

1. Decision making – bring an open and unprejudiced mind to all decisions – make decisions in the best interests of the community
2. Conflict of interest – manage private, personal interests so that they don't influence, and aren't perceived to influence decisions
3. Use of office – use office to serve the community
4. Use of resources – use council resources appropriately
5. Use of information – use information appropriately and maintain confidentiality
6. Gifts and benefits – be transparent and responsible

7. Relationships – be respectful in all your dealings with people
8. Representation – Represent council appropriately – distinguish between individual and council views.

A mayor should abide by these standards and seek to provide leadership to councillors.



Key Documents

- Mission Statement
- Strategic Plan
- Annual Plan
- Long Term Financial Plan/ Annual Budget
- Asset Management Plans/Major Works Program
- Organisational Chart
- Most recent Annual Report
- Code of Conduct
- Disclosure of Financial Interest and Returns
- Disclosure of Conflict of Interest
- Meeting Procedures
- Council Meeting Guidelines/protocols
- Agenda Format
- Meeting Schedule
- Copies of Minutes from recent meetings
- Council Delegations
- Good Practice Guidelines for Annual General Meetings
- Council Policies
- Allowances
- Related Parties Declaration

Key Legislation

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015*
- *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015*
- *The Local Government (Content of Plans and Strategies) Order 2014 (S.R. 2014, No. 35)*
- *The Local Government (Audit Panels) Order 2014 (S.R. 2014, No. 34)*
- *The Local Government (Management Indicators) Order 2014 (S.R. 2014, No. 36)*
- *Local Government (Building and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993*
- *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*
- *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*
- *Building Act 2000*

Other Statutory Mechanisms

- Council by-laws
- Guidelines 1-5 for making by-laws
- Council Planning Scheme

The best advice for new mayors is to be aware of and admit what you don't know, apologise when you get it wrong and don't make the same mistake twice.

Where can I get more information?

YOUR COUNCIL

Your general manager can answer questions and provide you with lots of information you need.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA

Phone the general number (03) 6233 5966, outlined your query and we'll put you in touch with the right person.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DIVISION

The Local Government Division is able to provide advice and information on legislation and regulations relating to Local Government. You can contact the office by phoning (03) 6232 7022.

OTHER MAYORS

Other more experienced mayors can be a wonderful source of information and support. It's a great idea to use any opportunities you have to develop a peer support network. The LGAT runs several professional development events throughout the year where you will be able to meet other new and more experienced councillors. Keep an eye on opportunities on the extranet.

