

Policy number	Policy 023
Policy title	Provision of information and services – Elected members
Strategic outcomes supported	<p>CL1 – Everyone receives appropriate information in the most efficient and effective way for them.</p> <p>CL7 – People have positive exchanges with the Town that inspires confidence in the information and the timely service provided.</p> <p>CL8 – Visionary civic leadership with sound and accountable governance that reflects objective decision making.</p>

POLICY OBJECTIVE:

This policy is to identify the process and expectations for the provision of information and services to elected members.

POLICY SCOPE:

This policy applies to all elected members and officers of the Town. This does not apply to requests made during a Council meeting or informal forum.

DEFINITIONS:

requests include asking for further information, asking a question, seeking clarity on an issue, which require a response, or actioning.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. To preserve the integrity of the decision-making process, the Town is committed to consistency and equity in the provision of information and services to its elected members.
2. To ensure that all elected members are equally informed regarding queries, issues or any concerns raised, particularly on matters requiring a Council decision, this policy sets the direction regarding appropriate etiquette and methods of information provision to all elected members.
3. While elected members are only to direct the Chief Executive Officer, certain services, mostly administrative in nature, are provided to elected members to support the performance of their roles. This policy sets out such administrative services, and the manner in which they are provided.

Provision of information

4. Section 5.92 of the *Local Government Act 1995* states that an elected member can access information held by the Town that is relevant to the performance of their functions under the Act, or any other relevant legislation.

Requests from elected members

5. To ensure consistency and integrity in the way requests from elected members are dealt with, the following principles apply:
- a. Requests for information are limited to information that is relevant to the performance of elected members' functions under the Act.
 - b. Elected members are to make their requests for information in writing or by email to the Chief Executive Officer, and copied to the Governance email address.
 - c. The Chief Executive Officer shall determine who is to respond to the request.
 - d. All requests for information are to be responded to within three working days, unless further time is required, in which case within one working day the request will be acknowledged, and an estimated time of final response provided.
 - e. Except for requests made in confidence to the Chief Executive Officer, all final responses provided to all requests will be sent to all elected members, and copied to the Governance email address. Elected members must indicate that a request is being made in confidence for responses to not be sent to all elected members.
 - f. Elected members shall not request information in accordance with this policy relating to operational matters. Elected members will make every endeavour to obtain information that is available on the Town's website, or by direct enquiry to the Town's customer service officers or via the admin@vicpark.wa.gov.au email address.
 - g. The Chief Executive Officer may reject a request for information if the request is not considered relevant to the performance of elected members' functions under the Act, or is considered to be frivolous or vexatious, or the resources required to respond to the request are considered to impose an unfair and excessive burden on the administration.
 - h. If an elected member's request for information is rejected in accordance with 5g, the Chief Executive Officer shall provide written reasons for the rejection within two working days.

Register of elected member requests for information

- 5A. A register of elected member requests for information shall be maintained by the Chief Executive Officer, recording the details of all requests for information made by an elected member, including the date of the request, the name of the requesting elected member, a description of the information requested, the date of the response to the request and the name of the officer who responded to the request.

Methods of providing information

6. The accepted methods for the provision of information from the administration to elected members, as well as exemptions, are as follows:

Method	Criteria
Email	<p>Emergency or urgent situations within the Town. Matters that are considered to be high risk and imminent, are deemed to be out of the ordinary or are irregular in nature.</p> <p>Other allowable emails are enquiries about availability to attend meetings or events, responses to media enquiries and proactively published media releases, and responses to requests from elected members, and administrative matters dealt with by the Governance area.</p>
Councillor portal	<p>Items of a routine nature that are purely for noting by elected members where no feedback is expected, such as updates on usual business, progress of key projects and progress towards advocacy priorities.</p> <p>Matters in which feedback is sought from elected members. This could include draft documents that will require a Council decision such as policies, strategies and plans. Elected members are to be given at least one week to provide their feedback.</p> <p>Elected members may request that an item be presented at a concept forum if deemed to be complex or require further discussion.</p>
Concept forum	<p>Complex matters in which a consensus outcome is sought from elected members to help guide an officer report that will be presented for an eventual Council decision.</p> <p>No 'information only' or 'update' items to be provided when<u>unless otherwise requested by an elected member or approved by the Chief Executive Officer. These should only be on topics that are contentious, high risk or have significant community impact.</u></p>

Provision of services

7. Pursuant to Regulation 10 of the Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007, elected members are only to direct the Chief Executive Officer. It is the Chief Executive Officer's responsibility to direct the administration in ensuring that the needs of elected members are being met. That being said, it is acknowledged that elected members require some provision of administrative services to support the performance of their roles.
8. Such provision of services, and/or administrative requests, from elected members are to be sent and resolved through the Governance email. These requests include, but are not limited to:
- general governance advice
 - declaration of gifts received
 - reimbursement claims

- d. management of event invitations (to elected members)
 - e. training and conference requests
 - f. support in relation to Council meetings
 - g. IT support
 - h. support in the attendance of external meetings relevant to their role
9. Email in response to provision of services will not be sent to all elected members.
10. The Chief Executive Officer shall endeavour to consult all elected members by email or telephone prior to any decision being made to cancel or reschedule the date or time of any committee meeting, concept forum, workshop, training or other event scheduled for the purpose of elected member involvement, that elected members have been invited to attend.
11. Other types of administrative support may be provided as determined by the Chief Executive Officer. Administrative requests are to be acknowledged within one working day with a proposed time of resolution.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

[Local Government Act 1995](#)

[Local Government \(Rules of Conduct\) Regulations 2007](#)

