



Council Briefing Sessions Policy

1. BACKGROUND AND PRINCIPLES

It is important to establish a clear operating framework to ensure that there is clarity and transparency associated with the conduct of Council Briefing Sessions.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Councillors (including the Mayor) and employees of McKinlay Shire Council.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objective of this policy is to establish guidelines for the conduct of non-decision making discussion forums, which create an opportunity for:

- Councillors and officers to discuss matters and obtain and exchange information; and
- Councillors to otherwise better inform themselves as to:
 - a) the implementation of previous decisions of Council;
 - b) the ongoing operations of Council; and
 - c) matters coming before future Council meetings.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Intent

4.1 There are no formal decisions made at Council Briefing Sessions.

4.2 Any matters requiring a Council decision (i.e. matters not able to be dealt with by a Council Officer under delegated authority) will be reported by the responsible officer to a meeting of Council for determination.

Councillors shall deal with conflicts of interest (COI) and material personal interests (MPI) in the same manner as at a Council Meeting; by leaving the meeting and not taking part in the content or discussion of the subject matter.

Schedule

4.3 Council Briefing Sessions are generally scheduled on the first Tuesday of the month.



Council Briefing Sessions Policy

4.4 The Briefing Session held on the first Tuesday of the month shall nominally be for the purpose of discussing business in all departments.

4.5 The Mayor or CEO may call briefing sessions as necessary for discussion of emergent matters.

Participants

4.6 Council Briefing Sessions are generally attended by all Councillors, the CEO (or a delegate of the CEO), the Directors, any Managers who have an interest in an item on the agenda and any other relevant officers.

4.7 External persons may attend Council Briefing Sessions upon invitation.

Administration

4.8 For each agenda item, the Agenda shall state the title of the item, the name of the officer who will lead the discussion and whether a briefing note is attached.

4.9 A copy of the Agenda and any briefing notes/attachments shall be circulated to Councillors at least two (2) working days prior to the Briefing Session.

4.10 Where (due to urgency or a Council resolution) no briefing note or agenda has been circulated in accordance with paragraph 4.9, the responsible Director shall provide hard copies of the briefing note to each Councillor at the briefing session with an additional copy provided to the Office of the Mayor and CEO to distribute to Councillors not present at the Briefing Session.

4.11 Agenda items relevant to the department/s to which the briefing session is nominally assigned shall receive precedence over agenda items submitted by other departments with the exception of agenda items from the Office of the Mayor and CEO which can be included on any agenda and which take precedence over all other agenda items.

4.12 The Mayor shall chair the Briefing Sessions. In the event that the Mayor is not present, the Deputy Mayor shall chair the Briefing Session. In the event that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are absent, Councillors shall appoint a chair.

4.13 Minutes or notes of discussion at the Briefing Session will not be recorded as Briefing Sessions are an informal meeting and no decisions are taken.

4.14 If an external person (for example a consultant, contractor or guest) is to be present at the Briefing Session, the person's name, title and company shall be included on the Agenda.



Council Briefing Sessions Policy

4.15 An external person who will be attending a Briefing Session shall only be present at the Briefing Session during discussion of the agenda item that their name appears next to on the agenda.

4.16 If a Director believes it is necessary to schedule a Briefing Session with Councillors outside of the scheduled Briefing Sessions, the Director shall liaise with the Mayor and CEO who shall decide whether to call a Briefing Session.

4.17 In the event that a Briefing Session is cancelled, the Office of the Mayor and CEO shall advise Councillors of the cancellation as soon as practicable.

4.18 Information presented or discussed at a Briefing Session shall be considered confidential.

5. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2009.

6. DEFINITIONS

CEO refers to a person who holds an appointment as Chief Executive Officer of McKinlay Shire Council, under section 194 of the Local Government Act 2009. This includes a person acting in this position.