MORNINGTON SHIRE COUNCIL

Guidelines for the Provision of Councillor Administration Support Staff Policy

Policy Information			
Policy Name	Guidelines for the Provision of Councillor Administration Support Staff Policy		
Policy Number	MSC-STAT-028		
Type	Strategic		
Owner	CEO		
Responsible Officer	Director of Corporate & Communications		
Decision No.	2026/169	**Approval Date**	September 2026
Records No.		**Next Review Date**	September 2029

Document Version Control			
Version	Date	Resolution No.	Details
1	30/09/2026	2026/169	New Issue

This is an official copy of the Guidelines for the Provision of Councillor Administration Support Staff Policy of the Mornington Shire Council, made in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009* Section 170AA, Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland and current Council Policies.

The Guidelines for the Provision of Councillor Administration Support Staff Policy is a Statutory Policy.

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this document is to establish guidelines for Councillors and employees about the provision of administrative support provided to Councillors to assist them to carry out their responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act) strictly in accordance with guidelines made by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

2. Policy Scope

2.1 This policy applies to the Mayor, all Councillors, and all Mornington Shire Council employees.

1 Mission Road, Gununa
Mornington Island QLD 4892
Ph 07 4745 7800
info@mornington.qld.gov.au
mornington.qld.gov.au

3. Background

3.1 In accordance with section 170 of the Act, the Mayor may give a direction to the CEO. No Councillor, including the Mayor, may give a direction to any other local government employee, except in accordance with this guideline made under section 170AA about the provision of administrative support to Councillors.

3.2 Pursuant to Section 170AA of the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld):

1. The Chief Executive Officer may make guidelines about the provision of administrative support by local government employees to a Councillor.

2. The guidelines must include—
   (a) when a Councillor may be provided with administrative support by a Council employee; and
   (b) how and when a Councillor may give a direction to a Council employee in relation to the provision of administrative support; and
   (c) a requirement that a Councillor may give a direction only if the direction relates directly to administrative support to be provided by the Council employee under the guidelines.

3. A direction purportedly given by a Councillor to a local government employee is of no legal effect if the direction does not comply with these guidelines.

4. Local Government Principles

4.1 To ensure the system of local government is accountable, effective, efficient, and sustainable, all administrative support activities must align with the core local government principles of Queensland:

- **Transparent and effective processes**, and decision-making in the public interest.
- **Sustainable development and management** of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services.
- **Democratic representation**, social inclusion, and meaningful community engagement.
- **Good governance** of, and by, local government.
- **Ethical and legal behaviour** of Councillors and local government employees.

5. Policy

5.1 It is acknowledged that Councillors may require administrative support from time to time to efficiently carry out their responsibilities.

5.2 The CEO and Director of Corporate and Communications are the first point of contact for all administrative support requirements from Councillors.

5.3 All administrative support staff are appointed by the CEO and are employees of Council. Staff will be guided by the CEO or Director or Corporate and Communications when prioritising their support to Councillors.

5.4 Councillors are not entitled to make recommendation on which employees provide them support.

5.5 Administrative Support Tasks

5.5.1 The following reasonable administrative support will be provided to all Councillors during business hours only:

- Scheduling appointments, meetings and invitations.
- General office administration, including filing, photocopying, printing, and ordering office stationery.
- Managing travel arrangements and room bookings, including booking meeting rooms for official business.
- Locating public information, legislation, or corporate data from the Council website or open-source repositories.
- Assisting with objective, factual, and informational communication to the community (such as the Mornington Shire Council Newsletter) provided the communication is neutral, strictly related to Council business, and represents an efficient use of public funds.

5.5.2 In addition to the support provided for all Councillors, the following reasonable administrative support will be provided to the Mayor during business hours only:

- Managing correspondence flows and drafting or typing replies to simple correspondence.

6. Councillor Responsibilities

6.1 Councillors are required at all times to comply with the Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland and in accordance with the local government principles. Councillors must treat administrative staff with courtesy, honesty, and professional respect.

6.2 Councillors must not request administrative support staff to attend any internal or external meetings or events with a Councillor to provide administrative support or act as a Councillor's representative.

6.3 Councillors must not ask administrative support employees to carry out tasks not directly related to Council business or provide assistance with political or campaign tasks or private business affairs.

6.4 After Hours Contact: Emergency or out of hours contact is restricted to matter of public safety or critical disaster management, routed through the CEO, or a member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), or Manager.

6.5 If a Councillor is dissatisfied with the responsiveness, performance, or operational support provided by administrative personnel, they must address or report their concerns directly with the CEO:

- The CEO holds sole legislative authority over the management, discipline and daily operations of local government staff.
- In accordance with Section 170 of The Act, Councillors must not directly performance-manage, reprimand or discipline staff.

7. Employee Responsibilities

7.1 Administrative support employees undertaking administrative supports tasks for Councillors are required at all times to comply with the Employee Code of Conduct and act in accordance with the local government principles. Employees must treat Councillors with courtesy, honesty and fairness.

7.2 Administrative support employees should comply with Councillor directions which are provided in accordance with this guideline in a timely and professional manner.

7.3 Administrative support employees are not required to action requests or directions that are not in accordance with this guideline and should inform the CEO if they believe a Councillor has behaved in a manner contrary to this guideline. If employees are unsure if a direction from a Councillor is compliant, they should contact the CEO for advice.

7.4 To maintain institutional integrity, employees must have clear avenues to report non-compliant interactions:

- Right of Refusal: Administrative support staff are under no obligation to action requests or directions that conflict with these guidelines or fall outside the scope of authorized administrative duties.
- Reporting Inappropriate Directions: If an employee receives a direction that they believes is contrary to this policy, they must document the request and immediately escalate it to their direct manager or the CEO.
- Anti-Retaliation Protections: Council processes ensure that employees are fully protected from operational disadvantage, discouragement, or workplace penalties for verifying whether a Councillor's direction complies with this policy.

8. Councillor and Employee Interaction

8.1 It is important that each member of staff is aware of the names of each of the Councillors and their relevant portfolio in order that an appropriate level of service can be provided.

8.2 Where an employee contacts a Councillor in an emergency, the employee should immediately (or as soon as practicable) inform their Executive Manager or CEO accordingly.

8.3 To support the separation of powers as required by Local Government legislation, Councillors, including the Mayor, shall be addressed as "Councillor" or "Mayor" during work time, as per below:

a) Mayor: "Mayor", "Mayor [SURNAME]".

b) Deputy Mayor: "Deputy Mayor", "Deputy Mayor [SURNAME]".

c) Councillor: "Councillor" or "Councillor [SURNAME]".

9. Compliance and Enforcement

9.1 **Monitoring and Compliance:** The CEO will review these guidelines every three years or upon legislative changes, and reserves the right to monitor corporate data systems, workflows, and task assignments to ensure organizational compliance.

9.2 **Consequences of Non-Compliance:** Any failure by a Councillor to adhere to these guidelines constitutes a breach of the behavioural standards prescribed under the *Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland* and may be classified as inappropriate conduct or misconduct under the Act.

9.3 **Employee Breach:** Any suspected breach by employees of the Guidelines for the Provision of Councillor Administration Support may be a breach of the Employee Code of Conduct and will be reported to the CEO who will manage the complaint.

9.4 **External Reporting:** Employees, managers, or members of the community who suspect a breach of this policy or an unauthorized exercise of directional power may lodge a formal complaint with the Office of the Independent Assessor (OIA) for external statutory investigation.

10. Related Documents

- Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Acceptable Request Guidelines Policy