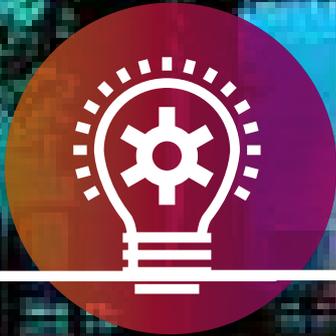




2030

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK



Acknowledgement of Country

City of Darwin acknowledges the Larrakia people as the traditional owners of all the land and waters of the Greater Darwin region.

To the Larrakia, Darwin is known as Garramilla. The original language of the Larrakia is Gulumirgin (pronounced Goo-loo-midgin).

Often referred to as “Saltwater People”, the Larrakia lived, loved, birthed, hunted and survived a life on pristine coastal and inland areas. Established ‘song lines’ connecting Larrakia people to Country penetrate throughout their land and sea, allowing stories and histories to be told and retold for future generations.

The Larrakia culture and identity is rich and vibrant. In the footsteps of the Larrakia people, City of Darwin will continue to foster this culture and identity by creating a vibrant community together.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LARRAKIA NATION





Contents

Message from the Chief Executive Officer	4	Principle 2 - Roles and Relationship	21
Introduction	6	Lord Mayor and Elected Members	22
What is Governance ?	6	Role of the Chief Executive Officer and Staff	23
What is Good Governance?	6	Working relationships between Elected Members and Staff	24
Good Governance Characteristics	6	Advocacy and Partnerships	25
Benefits of Good Governance	8	Community Engagement	26
Our Governance Framework	10	Principle 3 - Decision-making and Management	27
Legislative Framework	14	Legislative Decision Making Framework	27
Principle 1 - Vision and Culture	16	Integrated Quality Management System (IQM)	30
Darwin 2030 – City for People. City of Colour. Strategic Plan	16	Project Management Framework	29
Community Values	17	Principle 4 - Accountability	36
Elected Member Code of Conduct	17	Statutory Delegations Framework	36
City of Darwin Strategic Planning Framework	18	Corporate Performance Management and Reporting Framework	36
Long Term Asset Management Plans	19	Integrity and Disclosures Framework	37
Leadership	19	Financial Management and Reporting	38
Staff Values	20		
Staff Code of Conduct	20		

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

The City of Darwin Governance Framework is essential in underpinning our Darwin 2020 – City for People. City of Colour. Strategic Plan.

It sets out the governance principles and the standards for accountability that we will demonstrate as we go about delivering on our strategic directions and services for Darwin.

The Governance Framework provides a comprehensive but high-level account of how we apply the following four key principles to achieve good governance outcomes:

1. Vision and Culture
2. Roles and Relationships
3. Decision Making and Management
4. Accountability

Elected Members and staff must demonstrate a commitment to applying the governance principles in undertaking the duties of their roles. Effective governance practices, strong ethical leadership and decision making, accountability and role clarity underpin our governance controls.

This framework will help us to achieve and implement sound governance practices and will ensure our stakeholders and the Community can be confident in the integrity and good governance of the City and the quality of our services to the community.

SCOTT WATERS
Chief Executive Officer

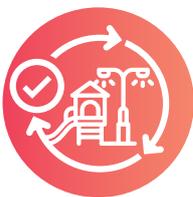




Our Strategic Planning Framework

Darwin 2030 *City for People. City of Colour.*

DELIVERED THROUGH FIVE KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND TARGETS:



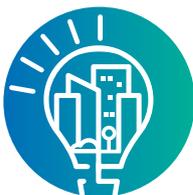
TARGET: By 2030, a number of strategic infrastructure projects will be developed and delivered



TARGET: By 2030, Darwin will be a safer place to live and visit
TARGET: By 2030, Darwin will be increasingly recognised as a liveable city



TARGET: By 2030, Darwin will be recognised as a clean and environmentally responsible city



TARGET: By 2030, Darwin will be recognised globally as a Smart City
TARGET: By 2030, Darwin will have attracted and retained more residents



TARGET: By 2030, Darwin will be recognised as an iconic destination
TARGET: By 2030, Darwin will be a more connected community and have pride in our cultural identity

UNDERPINNED BY FOUR GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES:



Introduction

What is Governance?

Governance comprises all the policies, processes and practices that enable Council to make good decisions and meet the strategic direction and performance standards set by legislation and our community.

Governance is important for ensuring that Council meets its legal and ethical compliance obligations, delivers services and demonstrates good corporate social responsibility.

Good Governance
leads to public
value, confidence
and trust.

What is Good Governance?

Good governance is more than just complying with minimum requirements and having clearly documented arrangements in place. It involves continually embedding the right practices in the right way into all areas of council and understanding that everyone plays a role in this.

Governance should be enduring, not just something done from time to time. It is important to recognise that implementing a set of processes and procedures will not deliver good governance unless they are accompanied by a good governance culture. The attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours of leaders must support good governance.

Through good governance, overall performance will be improved, and council will deliver better value to the community

Good Governance Characteristics

Organisations that demonstrate good governance can be characterised by:

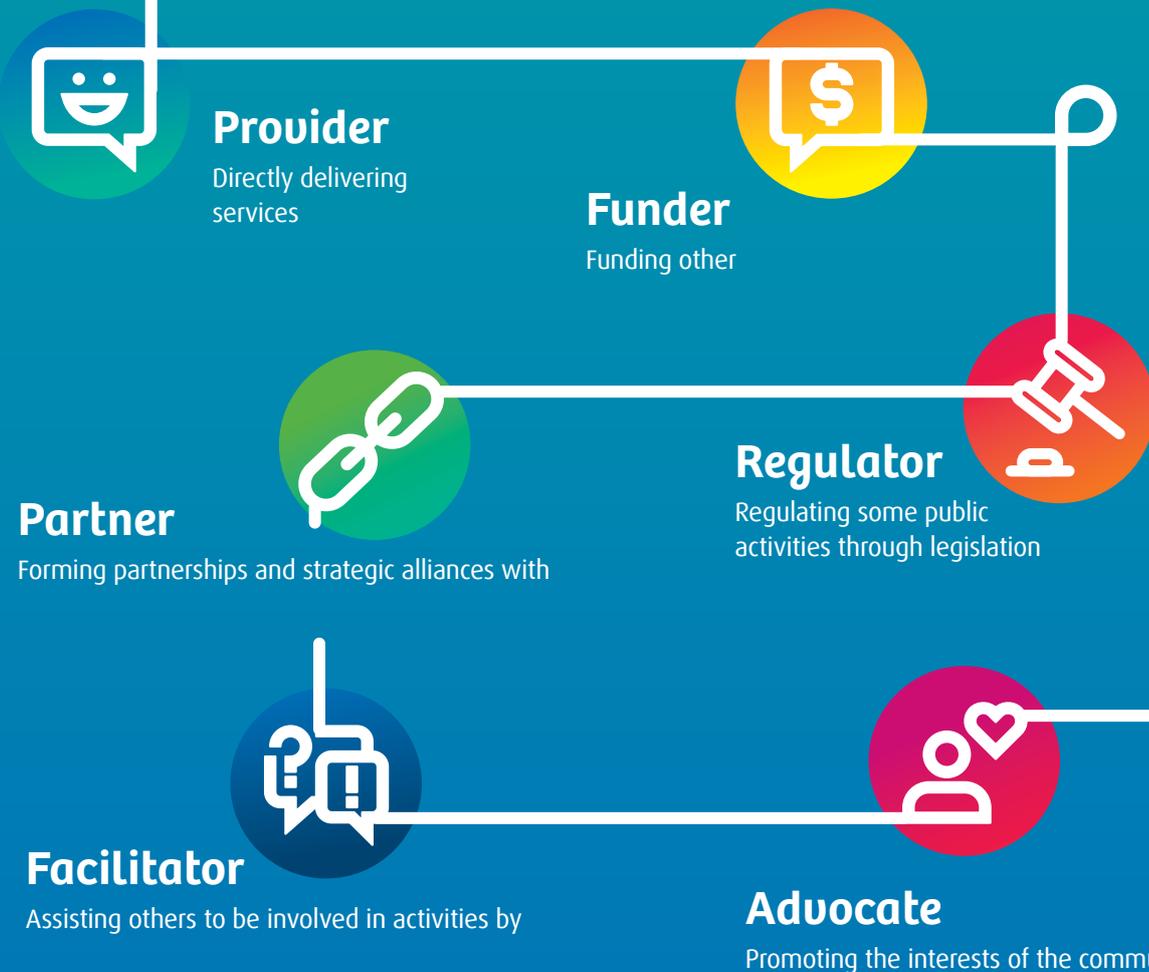
- having a clear vision and positive organisational culture,
- clarity of roles and responsibilities,
- implementing robust management practices and systems which support both internal and external accountability, and
- proactively providing public access to decision-making and information.

These characteristics inform the four principles that are the foundation of City of Darwin's Governance Framework.

Our Strategic Role

Council fulfills a number of important roles in being responsive to the needs, interests and aspirations of the community. Council can be a provider, a funder, a regulator, a partner, a facilitator, or an advocate.

CITY OF DARWIN'S STRATEGIC ROLES ARE:



Benefits of Good Governance

Promotes community confidence

People are more likely to have confidence in Council if decisions are made in a transparent and accountable way. The community should be able to follow and understand the decision-making process.

This means that they will be able to clearly see how and why a decision was made, what information, advice and consultation council considered, and which legislative requirements council considered.

With good governance, the community will feel that Council acts in a way that is in their overall interest of the community and in accordance with the appropriate legislative requirements.



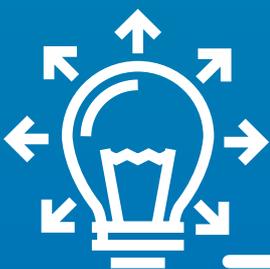
Provides Elected Members and Staff with reassurance

Elected Members and staff are confident about their roles when good governance and compliance is practised. Elected Members can be sure they are across the issues, that they can trust the advice they are given and that their views will be respected, even if not everyone agrees with them.

Staff will feel more confident to provide frank and fearless advice that is acknowledged and respected by Elected Members and fosters informed decision-making.

Ensuring we are compliant and held to account ensures that we are meeting our basic legal obligations. It provides Elected Members and staff with the tools to ensure they act with high ethical standards within the scope of their powers and the powers of Council.

Good governance provides guidance to Elected Members and staff to be equitable, fair and consistent in their dealings with the community.





Leads to better decisions

Decisions that are informed by good information and data, by stakeholder views and by open and transparent debate will generally reflect the broad interests of the community.

Even if they don't agree with the decisions, the community is more likely to accept the outcomes of decisions if the process has been robust and consistent. Council will always try to serve the needs of the entire community, while balancing competing interests in a timely, appropriate and responsive manner.



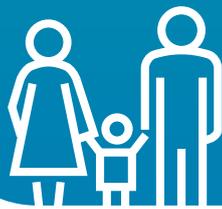
Supports ethical decision-making

Good governance creates an environment where when making decisions, Elected Members and staff ask themselves, 'Am I doing the right thing, in the right way?'

Having to account for choices in an open and transparent way encourages detailed consideration of those choices. Differing philosophical frameworks can mean the answer to 'What is the right thing to do?' is not always the same.

Anyone affected by a decision should have the opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision.

Community members should be able to see and understand where their interests have been considered in council's decision-making process. This means that all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, should have opportunities to participate in the process. Carrying out meaningful community engagement and fostering positive relationships both internally and externally with our community.



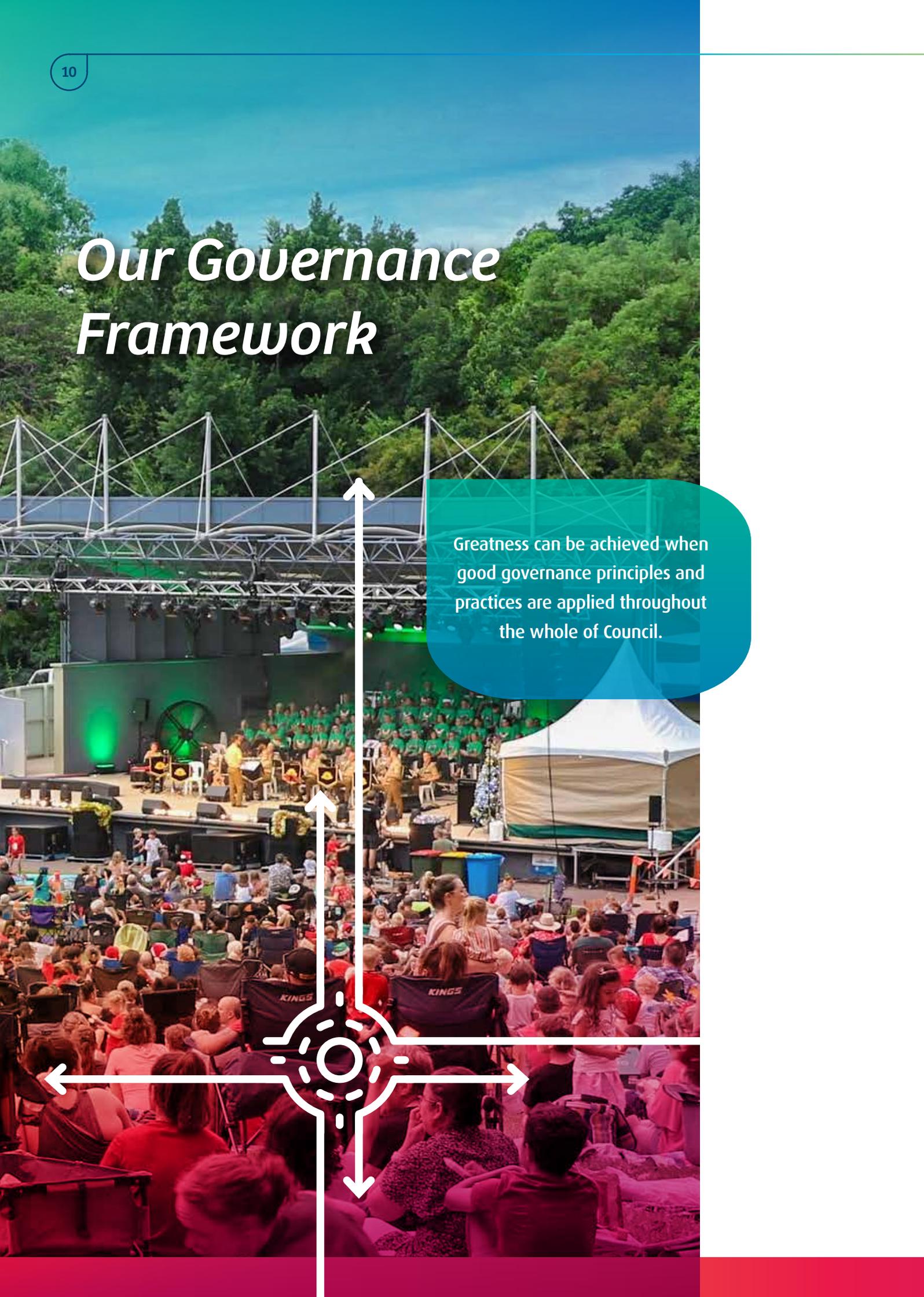
Improves accountability

Council has an obligation to report, explain and be answerable for the consequences of decisions it makes on behalf of the community it represents. It is important that ways to ensure responsibility are embedded into the organisation, and that decisions are delegated to the right people with the right authority.

Council is committed to organisational and individual performance to ensure we are effective and efficient in working toward our corporate goals. Decisions should be implemented and follow processes that make the best use of time.

Our Governance Framework

Greatness can be achieved when good governance principles and practices are applied throughout the whole of Council.





This Governance Framework gives context to City of Darwin's good governance practices and guides our compliance with our responsibilities outlined in the Local Government Act 2019 and other legislation.

The framework is designed to inform Elected Members, staff, the community and stakeholders of the policies and practices that we have in place to ensure we meet our governance responsibilities. City of Darwin's Governance Framework delivers on our requirements to be accountable to our community and stakeholders and ensures that:

- Council and staff acts ethically;
- Council and administrative decisions are made in the best interests of our stakeholders and the community; and
- Council and staff act and behave as good corporate citizens.

By implementing this Governance Framework, it will:

- provide clear guidelines for the roles of the Council, the Chief Executive Officer and staff and ensure that all responsibilities are properly allocated and discharged by those accountable;
- develop a culture of best practice in relation to governance processes;
- assist the Council and the Chief Executive Officer in delivering good governance and meeting its compliance requirements;
- outline Council's strategic planning framework; and
- provide a tool to use internally to inform staff of Council's governance practices

City of Darwin will report on its performance in achieving the annual deliverables against the City of Darwin Governance Framework each November in the City of Darwin Annual Report.



Our Governance Principles

The City of Darwin's Governance Framework consists of four key principles that together provide the foundation for delivering services that achieve good public value and increase public trust in how we operate and make decisions. It is the framework by which Council will measure its performance and implement actions to continually improve governance practices.

The elements that make up our four governance principles are outlined below and work together in an integrated manner to achieve good governance.

Vision and Culture

Darwin 2030 – City for People. City of Colour. Strategic Plan

Community Values

Elected Member Code of Conduct

City of Darwin Strategic Planning Framework

Long Term Asset Management Plans

Leadership

Staff Values

Staff Code of Conduct



Roles and Relationships

Lord Mayor and Elected Members

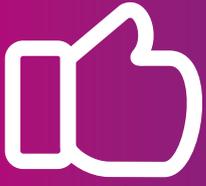
Role of the Chief Executive Officer and Staff

Advocacy and Partnerships

Working relationships between Elected Members and Staff

Community Engagement





Decision Making and Management

- Legislation and Decision Making Framework
- Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)
- Project Management Framework

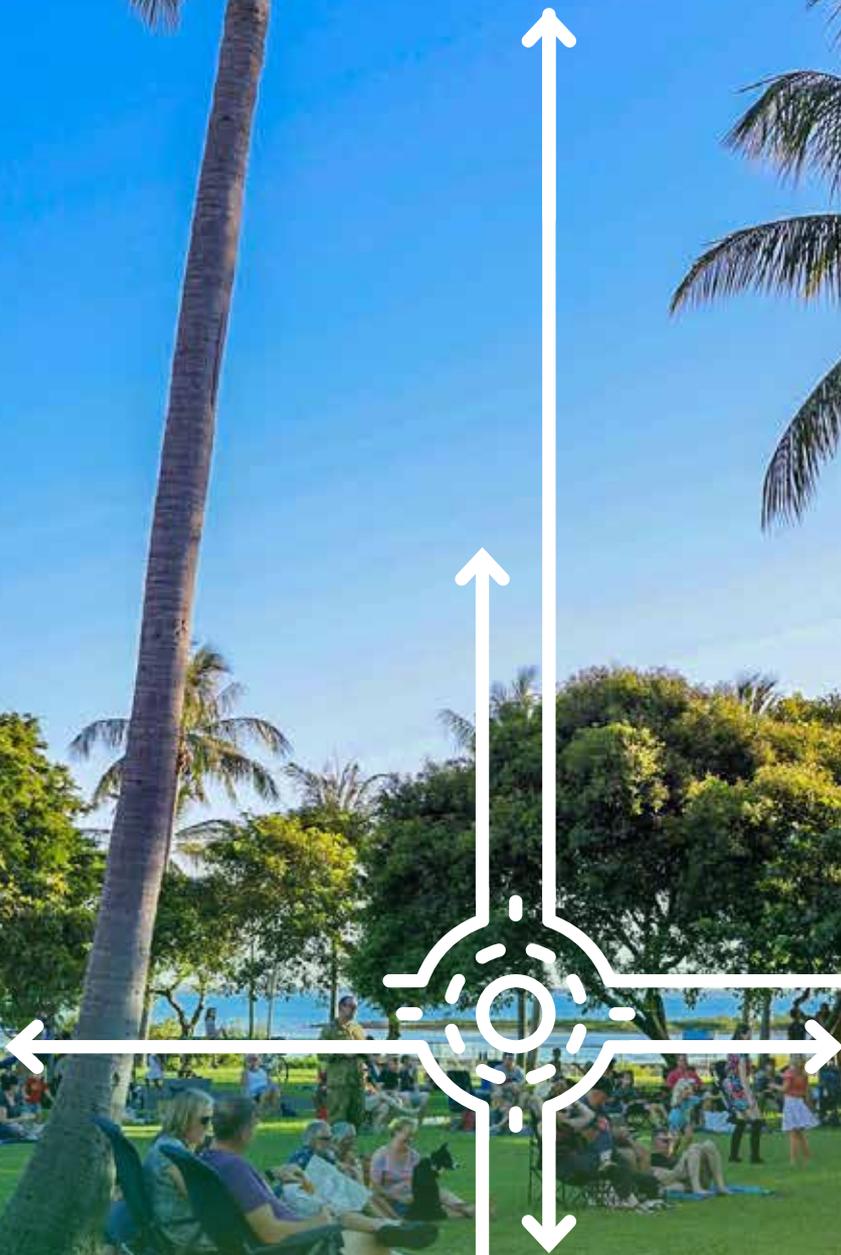


Accountability

- Statutory Delegations Framework
- Corporate Performance Management and Reporting Framework
- Integrity and Disclosures Framework
- Financial Management and Reporting



Legislative Framework





Legislative Framework

Local government is the third tier of government (after federal and state levels). City of Darwin provides essential community services such as roads and public open spaces, waste management, animal management, playgrounds and recreational facilities and libraries. We work hard to ensure that the we provide infrastructure and community services that are both valued and rated highly by the community.

The Local Government Act 2019 (the Act) provides the legislative basis for the establishment of the City of Darwin. The City also complies with legislation at a Northern Territory and Federal Government level such as Information Privacy, Environmental Protection and Disability Acts to name a few.

The Act sets out the functions of local government bodies in the Northern Territory as:

- to plan for the future requirements of its area for local government services;
- to provide services and facilities for the benefit of its area, its residents and visitors;
- to provide for the interests and well-being of individuals and groups within the council area;
- to carry out measures to protect its area from natural and other hazards and to mitigate the effects of such hazards;
- to manage and develop council facilities and services in its area in a sustainable way;
- to manage and develop for the benefit of its area all the resources available to the council;
- other functions assigned to the council under this or any other Act.

The Act also sets out that council's may, if they choose to:

- promote its area as a location for appropriate industries or commerce or as an attractive tourist destination;
- establish or support organisations or programs that benefit the council area.



Principle 1 - Vision and Culture

Principle	What it looks like	Achieved through
Vision and Culture	<p>There is a positive culture, developed through promoting the corporate values, of openness and honesty, in which constructive and respectful questioning is encouraged and accountability is clear.</p> <p>There is a clear vision and strategic plan that is produced through a comprehensive and inclusive consultation process, which provides an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to be involved.</p>	<p>Darwin 2030 – <i>City for People. City of Colour.</i> Strategic Plan</p> <p>Community Values</p> <p>Elected Member Code of Conduct</p> <p>City of Darwin Strategic Planning Framework</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>Staff Values</p> <p>Staff Code of Conduct</p>

VISION – CITY FOR PEOPLE. CITY OF COLOUR.

The Darwin 2030 Strategic Plan is Council's long-term plan and sets the vision for the next 10 years. It draws on community wisdom, existing strategies and plans, Council's commitments to and with key stakeholders and states clearly where we want Darwin to be by 2030. Community wisdom is drawn from the outcomes of the Living Darwin 2030 Summits held in 2019 and Living Darwin 2030 Report. This report was wholly developed by the community through a national first deliberative democracy engagement process made up of randomly selected residents, visitors and businesses.

City of Darwin's mission: we will work with the community and partners, provide leadership, and deliver services that create opportunities to enhance the economic, cultural and environmental sustainability of Darwin.

The Darwin 2030 vision is underpinned by this Governance Framework and will be achieved through five strategic directions:

- A capital city with best practice and sustainable infrastructure,
- A safe, liveable and healthy city,
- A cool, clean and green city,
- A smart and prosperous city,
- A vibrant and creative city.



COMMUNITY VALUES

Diversity and Acceptance

Embrace our identity through building on our multicultural and local heritage, creating a sense of belonging.

Choice of Lifestyle

Maintain our unique laid-back lifestyle, through a connected, active and safe community.

Environment

Integrated long-term planning, including sustainable and renewable energy resources, recycling and economically sound initiatives.

Sense of Community

Recognise, enhance and celebrate our identity through active participation within the community.

Equality

Leadership that adopts and maintains collaborative and transparent decision making, involving listening and responding to the community as a whole.

ELECTED MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

The Local Government Act 2019 outlines the Code of Conduct for Elected Members and members of Council's Risk Management and Audit Committee and other Council Committees. The Code of Conduct outlines the standards and expected behaviours of Elected Members to undertake their day to day role as a representative of the community. The Code of Conduct provides a framework by which Elected Members can exercise judgement to make decisions and build public trust and confidence.

Council Policy 094 provides a process by which members of the public can lodge a complaint of alleged contravention of the Code of Conduct. Policy 094 is available on Council's website.

Elected members have a right to request information that will enable them to perform their role. Not all Council information is accessible to some or all Elected Members for reasons of privacy, confidentiality, legal restraint or conflict of interest. Council has a policy that establishes the protocols to be followed to enable Elected Members to gain access to information through the appropriate channels.

The standards and behaviours expected of Elected Members will enable elected members to achieve the following outcomes in performing their roles:

- Honesty and Integrity
- Care and Diligence
- Courtesy
- Conduct towards Council staff
- Respect for Cultural Diversity
- Conflict of Interest
- Respect for confidences
- Gifts
- Accountability
- Interests of municipality to be paramount.

The full code of conduct is outlined in schedule 1 of the Local Government Act and published on Council's website.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

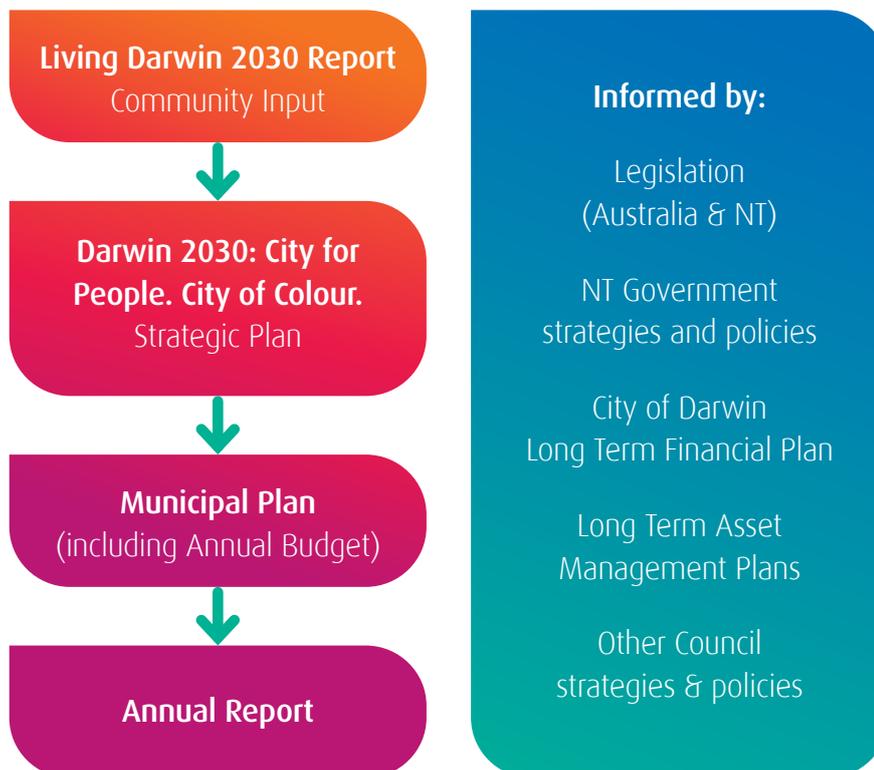
City of Darwin's Strategic Planning Framework is founded on community engagement and underpinned by this governance framework. The Strategic Planning Framework comprises a hierarchy of cascading and interconnecting documents, which when taken together allows council to turn its long-term aspirations, strategies and plans into reality. It assists in planning for a sustainable future for the council, the community, the environment and the economy. It also ensures methodologies are in place for measuring performance against desired outcomes.

The process of strategic planning brings together council and community interests in a coherent plan for the whole municipality. It is critical to achieving good governance, as it provides accountability to the community for council activities and provides a mechanism for public participation. It takes into account the external environment and resource limitations and integrates community objectives with financial and asset management planning.

Darwin 2030 - *City for People. City of Colour.* delivered through five strategic directions guides all that we do. The *Local Government Act 2019* requires councils in the Northern Territory to develop an annual plan. In the case of the City of Darwin it is called the Municipal Plan. The annual Municipal Plan connects actions to budgets and outlines the major projects that Council will undertake, its annual capital works plan and any new initiatives that are planned each year. The five organisational Departments operationalise these plans through internal department business plans.

The Municipal Plan progress is monitored via quarterly reports and monthly financial reporting. Quarterly reports also inform the preparation of the Annual Report.

COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK





LONG-TERM ASSET MANAGEMENT

City of Darwin recognises that assets exist to provide services and value to the community and this recognition underpins Council's asset management policy and practices. Council will apply a total asset management approach as one of its key strategies in demonstrating effective governance

The principle objective of asset management is to ensure the best use of assets when delivering services to the community through ensuring adequate provision is made for the long-term management and replacement of major assets.

Asset management plans describe the process of the whole of the asset's life cycle from planning, purchase, operation and maintenance to disposal. They consider the desired service outcomes, the long-lived nature of many assets and the finances available.

Council is committed to implementing a systematic asset management methodology in order to apply appropriate asset management best practices across all areas of the organisation. This includes ensuring that assets are planned, created, operated, maintained, renewed and disposed of in accordance with Council's priorities for service delivery.

LEADERSHIP

City of Darwin is governed by a Lord Mayor and 12 elected members (known as Aldermen) across four Council Wards. The four wards are Waters Ward, Lyons Ward, Richardson Ward and Chan Ward.

The Lord Mayor is elected democratically by the community and the Deputy Lord Mayor is appointed by Council. General elections for the whole of Council are held every four years on the last Saturday in August.

Elected Members demonstrate leadership and a commitment to City of Darwin's Governance Framework by adhering to the role, functions and objectives of Council as outlined in the *Local Government Act 2019*. The overarching principles for achieving this include:

- to act as a representative, informed and responsible decisionmaker;
- to act in the interests of the community at all times;
- to allocate resources in a fair, socially inclusive, and sustainable way;
- to develop a strong and cohesive social life for its residents;
- to encourage and develop initiatives for improving quality of life;
- to provide and coordinate public facilities and services; and
- to represent the interests of its area to the wider community

STAFF VALUES

Staff values help shape an organisation's culture and are the fundamental beliefs that the Council and staff considers to be important; are relatively stable over time; and have an impact on how staff behave and interact in performing their roles.

City of Darwin staff values are articulated with the acronym CARES.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

We make customers and the community the focus of all we do; our service is fair, flexible, reliable and innovative



ACCOUNTABILITY

We honour our commitments and take responsibility for our actions



RESPECT

We seek and value the contribution of others, listen before we talk and treat others as we would like to be treated



EXCELLENCE

We strive for the highest quality in our work and dealings with community members, Aldermen, colleagues and business partners. We go over and above, consistently doing more than is expected



SOLIDARITY

We work together as one team; there is strength in unity and together we achieve great things. We are united in our decisions and actions

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Staff have an endorsed Code of Conduct which guides the standards and expected of staff to undertake their day to day jobs. The Codes of Conduct provide a framework by which staff can exercise judgement to make decisions and build public trust and confidence.

City of Darwin's staff Code of Conduct centralises a number of staff related ethical requirements into one document that addresses:

- Staff behaviours and responsibilities
- Learning and Development
- Interests and disclosures
- Corporate image
- Leave entitlements and obligations
- Work Health and Safety
- Social media
- Information management
- Staff complaints
- Staff performance management and evaluation
- Competency and continued development
- Information Management and communications
- Use of Council resources and secondary employment



Principle 2 - Roles and Relationships

Principle	What it looks like	OAchieved through
Roles and Relationships	<p>There is clarity about the roles of local government and there exists a robust and consistent approach to defining and implementing these roles.</p> <p>Consultation should be undertaken that is appropriate to the scope and potential impact of the matter. Such consultation should respect the position and opinion of all stakeholders with the outcomes of the consultation considered when the decision is made and feedback should be provide to those who participated.</p> <p>There are effective working relationships that are promoted and supported within and between the Council Members, CEO and Administration.</p>	<p>Lord Mayor and Elected Members</p> <p>Role of the Chief Executive Officer and Staff</p> <p>Advocacy and Partnerships</p> <p>Working relationships between Elected Members and Staff</p> <p>Community Engagement</p>

LORD MAYOR AND ELECTED MEMBERS

Open, honest and transparent relationships between Elected Members and staff is a foundation of good governance.

The Lord Mayor and Elected Members are elected by the community to represent the community. Their role is to set the vision and strategic direction for Council and the Chief Executive Officer and Strategic Directions Group are charged with implementing it.

The Lord Mayor is the principle spokesperson for Council. The role of the Lord Mayor is to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of Council and preside at meetings of Council. In this role the Lord Mayor must be able to assist other Elected Members to understand the structures, processes and policies of Council so that they are able to represent the interests of the entire community, not just their Ward.

Elected Members are to focus on outcomes, policy and strategy, and in so doing, are expected to:

- be representative of and advocate on behalf of their constituents at the Council level
- facilitate communication between Council and the community
- debate the issues in an open, honest and informed manner to assist the decision-making process
- keep the entire community in mind when considering and addressing issues and focus on the 'big picture'
- educate and involve the community in all local government activities and processes
- work together, cooperate and respect diversity
- provide model leadership.



ROLE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND STAFF

City of Darwin is led by a Chief Executive Officer who is accountable to the Council.

In accordance with section 167 of the Local Government Act 2019 the role of the functions of the Chief Executive Officer include:

- to ensure that the council's policies, plans and lawful decisions are implemented and to ensure council reviews council's policies, plans and decisions in a timely manner; and
- to undertake the day-to-day management of the council's operations, including the management of the council's staff; and
- to ensure that the appointment of the council's staff is properly managed within the budget allocated to staffing expenditure approved by the council; and
- to ensure that the management of the council's operations are properly managed within the budget allocated to non-staffing expenditure approved by the council; and
- to provide or obtain for the council the information and advice the council reasonably requires for effectively carrying out its functions; and
- to ensure that the council's constituency is kept properly informed about council policies, programs and decisions and to ensure that appropriate and prompt responses are given to specific requests for information; and
- to ensure that the council's assets and resources are properly managed and maintained; and
- to ensure that proper standards of financial management are maintained, including proper controls over revenue and expenditure; and
- to ensure that financial and other records are properly made and maintained; and
- to appoint, manage and, if necessary, terminate the appointment of the council's staff (other than the CEO); and
- to ensure that the council's policies on human resource management are adhered to.

City of Darwin's organisational structure consists of five departments, led by General Managers.

The Chief Executive Officer together with the General Managers form Council's Strategic Directions Group.

The five departments are:

- Community and Regulatory Services
- Corporate Services
- Engineering and City Services
- Government Relations and External Affairs
- Innovation, Growth and Development Services

The Strategic Directions Group sets the strategic direction of the City of Darwin and is accountable for:

- Implementing Council's Strategic Plan
- Setting Council's Municipal Plan and Budget
- Steering the City of Darwin's capital program and major projects
- Strategic and Operational Risk Management
- Work Health and Safety performance as officers of the PCBU
- Setting and implementing Departmental Business Planning
- Leading major change and organisational alignment
- Setting the Corporate Governance Framework
- Considering and making decisions on high level operational matters

In carrying out their duties, Council staff achieve good governance when:

- they reflect the positive values and standards of behaviour the City expects
- their duties are performed and conducted in a professional way
- information is managed and maintained appropriately, and records are kept of their duties, decisions and work-related activities
- resources of the City, including information, is used efficiently and effectively; not misused; and waste is to be minimised
- conflicts of interest are identified and reported including disclosure of gifts and benefits obtained from certain parties.

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ELECTED MEMBERS AND STAFF

Communication between Elected Members and Council staff must adhere to relevant Codes of Conduct and be conducted:

- in a respectful, reasonable and professional manner
- in accordance with the law and the local government principles
- in accordance with Council's policies, guidelines and procedures
- in accordance with Council's organisational CARES values
- in good faith.

In circumstances where staff are unsure whether they should provide information to, or respond to a request from, an elected member, they should refer the matter to their General Manager or to the CEO.



ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS

As a capital city Council, it is important that Council is able to demonstrate its advocacy platforms and program to its community.

For Elected Members, it is important that Council's platform is clear and able to be a tool in engagement with the community. It is also important that a plan that outlines how Council advocates and what Council advocates for on the community's behalf.

Council's strategic plan Darwin 2030: City for People. City of Colour. outlines the roles that Council takes in the way that it delivers against its strategic actions.

The Advocacy and Partnerships Strategy sets 5 objectives and 5 principles that guide the way in which Council advocates.

They are:

Advocacy Objectives

- Promote council's advocacy agenda and its priorities;
- Positively influence the Darwin economy and influence job creation and statutory or policy outcomes for the community;
- Increase funding for infrastructure or services from other levels of government to benefit the community to meet their needs and aspirations;
- Influence Australian and Northern Territory legislation and social policy to improve community wellbeing; and
- Keep our community informed about our advocacy agenda and activities through council performance reporting.

Advocacy Principles

- **Engaging our community** - understanding needs and aspirations;
- **Government for Darwin** - leading as the Territory's largest LGA;
- **Leveraging our role** - partnerships with Australian and Northern Territory Governments to collaborate to achieve the best outcomes for our community;
- **Innovative and agile** - lead in local government space to develop innovative solutions; and
- **Open and transparent** - open and transparent in our advocacy objectives and priorities and our reporting to the community.

City of Darwin has developed an Advocacy and Partnerships Priority Projects 2021-2023 plan.

This plan will guide where Council focusses its attention to advocate, build and strengthen relationships and partnerships over the coming years.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A core principle of good governance is involving the community in decision making. City of Darwin is committed to engaging with the community to inform effective planning, policy development and decision-making processes to best serve the Darwin community.

The Community Engagement Policy aims to build the organisation's capacity to:

- Better serve the community by understanding and valuing their needs, aspirations and knowledge
- Deliver efficient and effective outcomes for the community through better, more informed planning, policy development and decision making
- Build trust and positive relationships with the community and stakeholders

Council has adopted four levels of engagement with the community:

- Inform (tell)
- Discuss (create understanding)
- Consult (ask)
- Involve (work together)

The level of community engagement undertaken will relate to the nature, complexity and impact of the issue, plan or strategy. Throughout a community engagement process these levels will often complement and overlap each other.



Principle 3 - Decision Making and Management

Principle	What it looks like	OAchieved through
Decision Making and Management	<p>There are effective decision-making processes in place that reflect the transparency and accountability which underpin excellence in local government.</p> <p>There should be robust and transparent financial management established and maintained to meet the City's accountability to its stakeholders, particularly in terms of stewardship of community assets, both now and into the future.</p> <p>An effective approach to the identification, assessment, monitoring and management of risks should be established and maintained.</p> <p>Effective delegation of authority should be implemented and maintained.</p>	<p>Legislative and Decision Making Framework</p> <p>Integrated Quality Management System (IQM)</p> <p>Project Management Framework</p>

LEGISLATIVE AND DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK

By-laws

Under the *Local Government Act 2019* and as part of its legislative functions, Council is able to make laws that apply locally. These are called by-laws and are a way of providing good governance to the community which reflect current community standards.

The Act outlines the process by which the Council may adopt by-laws. This legislative role allows the Council to adopt a regulatory regime that may be enforced through the courts, by the issue of infringement notices or by performing other executive functions to enforce the by-laws. When adopting local by-laws, the Council must be aware that they operate with the force of legislation and the Council has a duty to enforce all of its by-laws equally.

Council Meeting Structure

The primary decision making body for City of Darwin is the Council which is made up of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen.

The *Local Government Act 2019* requires that Council must meet to make decisions a minimum of once per month. This is called the Ordinary Meeting. Council generally holds two Ordinary Meetings per month. The times and cycle of Ordinary Meetings, Committee Structures and memberships are normally determined at the first meeting of each term of Council.

City of Darwin may appoint Committees which may be Executive or Advisory in nature. Executive Committees may have delegation to make decisions whereas Advisory Committees provide strategic advice on specific subject matter. Council's committee structure, agendas and minutes can be found on Council's website.

City of Darwin Policy 043 - Meetings supplements the legislative requirements for the conduct of meetings at City of Darwin. It guides meeting procedure and the process of decision making in Council and committee meetings.

Each Committee has Terms of Reference. Terms of Reference outline the roles, functions and meeting cycles of each committee and are also available on Council's website.

Elected Members represent the City of Darwin on a number of outside committees.

Outside committees include:

- The Council of Capital City Lord Mayors
- Northern Australia Capital City Committee
- Top End Regional Organisation of Council's (TOPROC)
- Local Government Association of the Northern Territory and
- Locally formed committees such as the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

Sound decision making practices improve the transparency and accountability of council and increases the likelihood that council decisions are in the best interests of the entire community. The use of sound decision making processes will help council decisions to withstand scrutiny by regulators, courts, the media, and those affected by decisions

Elected members most important function is their contribution to the decision-making process of council. Decisions made by council give direction and authority for the Chief Executive Officer and staff to act upon.

City of Darwin has effective decision-making processes in place that promote transparency and accountability which underpin excellence in local government.



Council Policy Framework

Council Policies are statements, formally adopted by council that describe the council's position or statement of intent on an issue for the Darwin community. All Council policies are consistent with the Darwin 2030 Strategic Plan and legislative requirements and provide guidance for future action by clearly stating the purpose, scope and responsibilities for policy implementation.

Council policies are included in a register that is made publicly available on Council's website. Each policy is reviewed a minimum of once per term of Council, in response to legislative change or to respond to community need.

The Chief Executive Officer has established a formal process for reviewing, amending and rescinding policies including a four year review schedule which is reviewed by Council at the commencement of each term.

Project Management Framework

The City of Darwin's approach to Project Management is based on PMBOK principles and was developed to assist all staff involved in the management or delivery of projects, to undertake project management effectively and efficiently.

The framework is tailored to council's project management needs and supports the consistent application of sound project management to the wide range of projects in the council's portfolio of capital and corporate programs.

Adoption of an overarching project management framework provides the following benefits:

- The consistent application of project management practice by all of the departments within council,
- The effective integration of relevant departments' needs in the early phases of a project,
- The effective transfer and sharing of information at the end of project delivery,
- An increased project management capability and capacity within the City of Darwin,
- The promotion and support of the continuous improvement of project management.

INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (IQMS)

City of Darwin is developing an Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) to continuously identify and monitor hazards and control risks while and to ensure that risk controls are effective.

For City of Darwin, the elements may vary depending on requirements, however, will generally consist of safety and culture policies, WHS, risk management, document control policy and procedures, emergency response, environmental management systems, internal audit, change management and privacy. The IQMS is based on ISO principles and the elements that make up the system are broadly outlined in the diagram below.





WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Council is committed to meeting its obligations under the Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 and regulations and has developed an overarching work health and safety commitment statement which outlines management's obligations and commitment to safety. The PCBU (Person Conducting Business or Undertaking) includes the Chief Executive Officer, all General Managers and all Executive Managers which demonstrates the broader leadership commitment to ensuring the health and safety of our workers, contractors, visitors and other persons in the workplaces.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Management Framework

The City is responsible for providing a wide and diverse range of services to its community. All of these activities involve some form of risk, which must be managed to ensure that aims and objectives are achieved, services are delivered and that opportunities to deliver better and more cost-effective services are realised. If the City is not aware of, or has not adequately assessed or managed some risks, it could result in financial loss, threats to public or employee safety or lead to substantial adverse publicity

The City is committed to ensuring that effective risk management remains central to all its operations while delivering its range of services to the community and the practice of risk management is recognised as being a core component of the City of Darwin's Governance Framework.

Risk management requires a proactive approach to management and achieving a balance between the costs of managing risks and the anticipated benefits.

Insurance

City of Darwin maintains a robust insurance program that supports management of public liability claims, third party property damage claims, motor vehicle and plant damage claims and council property damage claims. Workers compensation insurance is managed by council's Human Resource and Safety Department.

The following insurance covers are in place to protect council and its employees:

- Public Liability
- Industrial Special Risks (Infrastructure and Assets)
- Motor Vehicle
- Personal Accident (Employees & Volunteers)
- Personal Accident (Elected Members)
- Business Travel

Fraud & Corruption

City of Darwin has an established organisational culture which ensures that effective fraud and corruption prevention is an integral part of all Council activities and a core management capability. Established policies are consistent with the Council's Code of Conduct policies for elected members and staff and relevant legislation and in accordance with the Australian Standard 8001-2008 Fraud and Corruption Control.

This Policy and associated Fraud and Corruption Control Procedure create City of Darwin's Fraud Protection Plan framework as required under Regulation 10 of the Local Government (Accounting) Regulations.

Council commits to rigorously manage the risk of fraud and corruption, and to investigating and prosecuting cases of fraud or corruption affecting the council, to the fullest extent possible under the law.

The Fraud policy outlines council's approach to the prevention, detection and reduction of fraud and corruption in both internal and external dealings.

INTERNAL DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

The Internal Document Management system ensures a consistent organisational approach to the management of internal policy, procedures and internal documents for all elements within the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS).

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Emergency and Disaster Management

Council's emergency management function serves to increase the resilience of the City of Darwin in the event of a significant emergency or disaster within the city and provides the framework for Council to respond quickly and efficiently to a disaster event.

Effective coordination of emergencies and disaster response involves the implementation of all relevant plans, processes and procedures, integrated with the NT Governments Emergency Management procedures.

The primary aim if or when the City of Darwin's responds to an emergency is to ensure that the community can return to normal functioning as quickly as possible following a disaster event. This involves ensuring that critical infrastructure and essential services are restored as soon as possible, providing longer-term psycho-social support and welfare to those in need, minimising and redressing environmental impacts and facilitating recovery of the business sector.



Business Continuity Management (BCM)

Council recognises the importance of organisational resilience to ensure the uninterrupted availability of all key business resources and critical business functions. Effective business continuity management helps to prevent and mitigate the severity of potential business interruptions on the organisation and its stakeholders.

In the event of a significant business interruption, council will:

- ensure key critical business functions are restored and maintained as soon as possible
- endeavour to ensure the confidence of staff, the community and stakeholders
- fulfil regulatory and contractual requirements and obligations
- mitigate financial, legal/regulatory, service delivery, well-being and reputation/brand consequences.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

As part of its approach to integrated quality management City of Darwin will develop and implement systems that will ensure the environment is central to project management, decision making and operations.

INTERNAL AUDIT

that council's controls are designed to manage council's risks and achieve objectives by operating in an efficient, effective and ethical manner.

The primary objectives of the Internal Audit Unit are to evaluate council's systems of internal control in order to provide assurance that:

- council is achieving its goals and objectives efficiently, effectively and in an ethical manner
- financial and operating information produced is accurate, timely and complete
- there is compliance with relevant laws, regulations and other external requirements and with council policies, directives and other internal requirements
- council's assets and liabilities are competently managed and protected against loss or other negative consequences

The Risk Management and Audit Committee (RMAC)

The Risk Management and Audit Committee has been established to monitor compliance with:

- (i) compliance by the council with proper standards of financial management; and
- (ii) compliance by the council with these regulations and the Accounting Standards; and
- (b) whose Chairperson must not be a member of council or a member of the council's staff.

PRIVACY MANAGEMENT

The protection of personal information which can identify an individual is a matter of great significance to Council and Council is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals in all circumstances.

The council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the collection, use, disclosure and handling of all personal information by council complies with all relevant legislation.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

City of Darwin is committed to ensuring all records retained are complete and accurate and can be identified, accessed and retrieved in a useable format that preserves the record's evidential integrity.

Under the Information Act 2002 any member of the public can access certain information held by the Council, but there is not an unfettered right of access to the information. Council applies the provisions of the Information Act 2002 when assessing requests for access to information.





Principle 4 - Accountability

Principle	What it looks like	Achieved through
Accountability	<p>The City must account for its activities and have systems that support accountability. The City has an active performance management system in place that enables the City to be openly accountable for its performance to the Community and its stakeholders.</p> <p>The City should establish internal structures that provide for independent review of processes and decision-making to assist the Council meet its accountability to stakeholders.</p>	<p>Statutory Delegations Framework</p> <p>Corporate Performance Management and Reporting Framework</p> <p>Integrity and Disclosures Framework</p> <p>Financial Management and Reporting</p>

STATUTORY DELEGATIONS FRAMEWORK

Delegations form part of the City's decision-making approach. Delegations entrust certain types of decisions to the CEO, staff or committees.

Under the *Local Government Act 2019*, both Council and the CEO are given certain functions and duties to be discharged. Council may delegate authority to the CEO to perform some of its functions and duties on its behalf. The use of delegated authority means that the large volume of routine work of Council can be effectively managed and acted on promptly, which in turn facilitates efficient service delivery to the community.

Delegated authority allows Council to concentrate on policy development, representation, strategic planning, and community leadership.

The CEO may delegate to any other employee the authority to perform functions and duties that are exercisable by the CEO under the Act or that have been delegated to the CEO by Council (with the exception of the power to delegate).

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Annual Reporting

Council is required to compile an annual report each year that assesses the Council's performance against the delivery of the annual municipal plan and strategic plan. The report must be presented to the Minister for Local Government no later than 15 November each year.

The Annual Report is a valuable tool by which Elected Members and Council can market achievements to potential investors and city partners and demonstrates to stakeholders that the council has delivered against community expectations.



INTEGRITY AND DISCLOSURES FRAMEWORK

Conflict of Interests

Elected members must, if possible, avoid conflict of interest between the member's private interests and official functions and responsibilities. Where a conflict in fact exists, the member must comply with the member's statutory obligations of disclosure.

The CEO must record the disclosure in a register of interests register of interests to be kept under section 74(2) of the Act and the register must contain:

- (a) the name of the member making the disclosure; and
- (b) the nature of the interest that gives rise to the conflict of interest; and
- (c) the nature of the question on which the conflict of interest arises

Disclosures

Each year, Elected Members and Key Management Staff are required to submit an Annual Return of Interests. Completion of interest forms is noted by the Finance Department.

Gifts and Benefits

An Elected Member must not:

- solicit or encourage gifts or private benefits from any person who may have an interest in obtaining a benefit from City of Darwin
- seek or accept a bribe or other improper inducement
- by virtue of his or her position, acquire a gift or benefit which has a monetary value, other than one of a nominal or token value

An Elected Member must not seek or accept any payment, gift or benefit intended or likely to influence, or that could be reasonably perceived by an impartial observer as intended or likely to influence an Elected Member to:

- act in a particular way (including making a particular decision)
- fail to act in a particular way
- otherwise deviate from the proper exercise of his or her statutory duties

An Elected Member may accept gifts or benefits of a nominal or token value that:

- do not create a sense of obligation on his or her part; and
- that would not be reasonably perceived by an impartial observer to be intended to or likely to influence him or her in carrying out their statutory duty.

An Elected Member must never accept an offer of money, regardless of the amount.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Financial Reports

Financial reporting includes monthly budget reports, quarterly variations to budgets and the annual financial statements. Council must prepare a financial statement for each financial year which conform with the accounting standards and include:

- the council's revenue and expenditure for the financial year; and
- the council's assets and liabilities as at the end of the financial year.

Council's general-purpose financial statements are prepared pursuant the Local Government Act 2019 and other prescribed requirements. The statements must accurately reflect council's financial performance and position for the financial year, must be prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, must present a true and fair view of the council's financial position and of its financial performance and cash flows for the financial year ended on that date.

Long-Term Financial Planning

Long-term financial planning is an essential governance tool, which supports:

- fiscal responsibility and financial sustainability,
- transparency and accountability to the local community and other stakeholders,
- appropriate levels of inter-generational equity,
- the delivery of reporting against financial targets and goals,
- the capacity of managers to effectively plan and deliver their services,
- the development of performance measures (qualitative and quantitative
- targeted service levels, and
- the development of council's annual budget

Robust and transparent financial management plans must be established and maintained to meet local government's accountability to its stakeholders, particularly in terms of stewardship of community assets, both now and into the future.

The financial planning and management is reflected in the Municipal Plan that outlines the City of Darwin's approach to delivering infrastructure and services to the community in a financially sustainable and affordable manner.

Budget and Financial Management

LCity of Darwin's annual budget is derived from the Long -Term Financial Plan. It outlines who rates are levied and the distribution of funds each year across Council's various services, programs and projects.

The annual budget is monitored each month. Quarterly budget reviews enable Council to respond to external impacts and changes in priority throughout the year. Budget performance is reported annually in Council's Annual Financial Statements.



Procurement Management

Council maintains a Procurement Policy and Procedures to ensure transparency and accountability in the procurement of all goods and services. Council is committed to obtaining the best possible value for money through the implementation and management of an accountable and transparent purchasing system based on established publicly available assessment criteria. This policy and associated operational policies and procedures set out Council's framework for the acquisition of goods and services.

The purchasing of all goods and services must comply with Council's statutory obligations under the *Local Government Act 2019*.

The principles of Council's procurement are:

- **Securing value for Darwin** – recognising that value for money is more than price paid, it is overall benefit to the local economy.
- **Working together to achieve outcomes** – providing a flexible procurement framework that responds to the diverse needs of the community.
- **Leaders in procurement practice** – recognising Darwin's role as the capital city of the Territory, collaborate and provide leadership for procurement in the local government sector.
- **Integrity, probity and accountability** – ensuring procurement is undertaken with integrity, that probity is appropriately managed, and that accountability for outcomes is maintained.
- **Renewing Council's Commitment to Climate Action** – achieving positive environmental outcomes through sustainable procurement practices.



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