



ESTABLISHING FORMAL POSITIONS OF COUNCIL POLICY

DOCUMENT TYPE: Council policy

DOCUMENT STATUS: Approved

POLICY OWNER POSITION: Chief Executive Officer

INTERNAL COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT: Not applicable

APPROVED BY: Council

DATE ADOPTED: 23/04/2024

VERSION NUMBER: 1

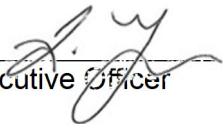
REVIEW DATE: 23/04/2025

DATE RESCINDED:

RELATED STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS, POLICIES OR PROCEDURES:

RELATED LEGISLATION: Local Government Act 2020

EVIDENCE OF APPROVAL:

Signed by Chief Executive Officer 

FILE LOCATION: K:\EXECUTIVE\Strategies policies and procedures\Policies - adopted PDF and Word\POL Establishing Formal Positions of Council Policy v1.docx

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This document is available in alternative formats (e.g. larger font) if requested.

1 PURPOSE

Council is frequently asked to indicate its position on specific matters occurring locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. In doing so, Council is also asked to undertake advocacy in line with that position.

Often matters are deeply heart felt and immensely complex. They may also be the subject of formal processes occurring at State or Federal Government levels, and many are very remote from the Loddon Shire and the documented priorities of Council.

In most instances, Council has little or no authority to determine the outcome of the matter and often it can have little impact on the views of those making the decisions.

While wide-ranging in nature, a common characteristic of such matters is the significant commitment of Council's financial and human resources that would be needed to establish a well-informed position, and/or to undertake associated advocacy. In a highly resource constrained Council, this then has consequences for the Loddon Shire community by impacting on Council's existing efforts to support it.

Therefore, this policy aims to define when and how Council may, and when it will not, establish a formal position on a specific matter and/or undertake advocacy activities in relation to that matter.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to circumstances in which Council is requested to state its formal position on a specific matter that is not already covered by Council policy, strategy or plans.

Such requests of Council may arise from external parties, Council Officers reports and individual Councillors' Notices of Motion at a Council meeting.

This policy does not apply to:

1. Consideration of requests for letters of support in relation to proposed projects, services and/or initiatives that may directly impact on residents and/or ratepayers in Loddon Shire.
2. Decisions made by Council and/or staff in accordance with legislative obligations and delegated authority.

3 POLICY

- 3.1 Council will not establish a formal position or undertake advocacy on specific matter that is:
 - a. or is reasonably likely to be within the term of the Council, the subject of a referendum at a State or Federal Government level in Australia; and/or
 - b. international in nature and over which Council has no legislated authority or responsibility; and/or
 - c. considered by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer to be too remote from the circumstances of Loddon Shire's ratepayers and residents and therefore, to have relatively low direct impact on them

- 3.2 In addition to Policy Statement 1, Council will not establish a formal position or undertake associated advocacy on any matter where the financial or staffing cost to do so is deemed by Council to be:
- a. prohibitive given the extent of work considered necessary to establish a well-informed position; and/or
 - b. a disproportionate use of ratepayer's funds and/or staff given the:
 - i. likely or anticipated low impact of the advocacy upon the decision makers; and/or
 - ii. existence of other more substantial advocacy efforts that align with Council's likely position; and/or
 - iii. relative low priority of the matter compared with other Council priorities establishes in policies, strategies and plans
- 3.3 In instances beyond those excluded by Policy Statements 1 and 2, Council may deem it appropriate to establish a formal position and to undertake advocacy on a specific matter. In such instances, consideration of the need for, and extent of, community input to establishing that position will be made in accordance with Council's *Community Engagement Policy 2021*.
- 3.4 Any formal position established and/or advocacy undertaken on a specific matter will be consistent with existing adopted policies, strategies and plans of Council to the extent that they apply.

4 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS OR ABBREVIATIONS USED

Term	Definition
Council	The Municipal Council comprising a majority of the elected Councillors
Advocacy	Representation on a matter to relevant decision-makers by Councillors or staff in accordance with formal positions adopted by Council; including those adopted in policies, strategies and plans.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENT

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights Act. Loddon Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees. The Council will formally involve elected employee Health and Safety Representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health and safety of any of its employees.

6 REVIEW

The Chief Executive Officer will review this policy for any necessary amendments no later than 1 year after adoption of this current version.