

LOCAL AUTHORITIES POLICY

GOV30

Policy Title:	GOV30 Local Authorities		
Policy Type:	Governance		
Policy Custodian:	Chief Executive Officer		
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Purpose

Local Authorities are established under the *NT Local Government Act 2019* to assist West Daly Regional Council (WDRC) to achieve effective integration and involvement of local communities in the system of local government, to ensure that the community has a strong voice and is actively engaged in their local community affairs.

This policy has been developed to ensure that Local Authorities are run in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act (Act)* and associated Guideline 1.

Scope

This policy applies to all West Daly Regional Councils Local Authorities. This Policy includes areas, delegations, functions, membership and roles and responsibilities of Local Authorities.

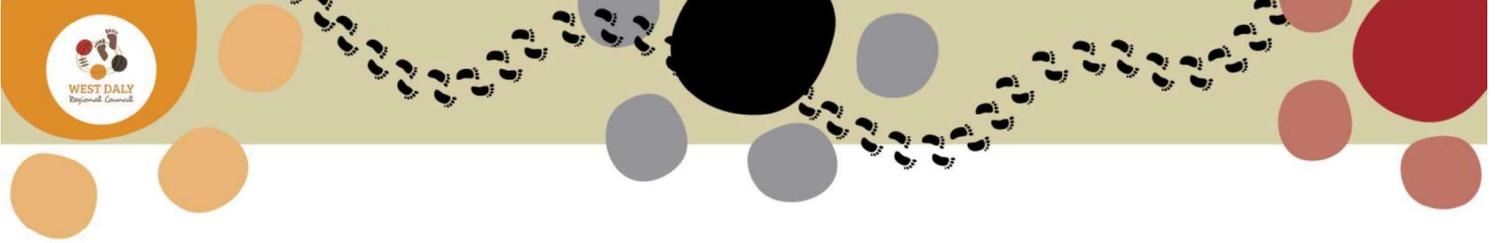
Local Authority Areas – The three Local Authorities areas are: (Wadeye) Thamarrurr/Pindi Pindi, (Palumpa) Nganmarriyanga and (Peppimenarti) Tyemirri.

Policy Statement

1. Policy Principles

1.1. The Local Authority established within the boundaries of the West Daly region shall:

- 1.1.1. Advise West Daly Regional Council (WDRC) on service delivery plans including infrastructure requires for communities and associated Homelands, or local region or wards, and to contribute to the development of Councils Regional Plan and Regional Management Plans.
- 1.1.2. Be actively supported by Council to ensure opportunities exist for residents to meaningfully engage in local government processes.
- 1.1.3. Alert and advise WDRC on new and emerging issues within the scope of WDRC activity.



- 1.1.4. Provide advice on specific Council, community and social projects that impact on community or region.
- 1.1.5. Advise and support the WDRC staff on local implementation of the Regional Plan, particularly in the area of cross-cultural best practice in the governance and service delivery.
- 1.1.6. Respond to identified community needs, if appropriate, by participating and organising activities such as community events, youth, community safety, housing and community planning and infrastructure development.

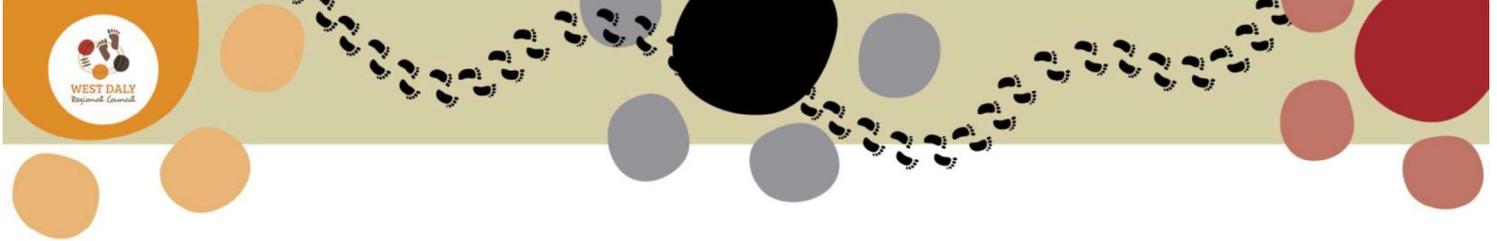
Principles

2. Roles and functions of a Local Authority

- 2.1. The Local Authority shall be a voluntary group that provides advice and recommendation to WDRC on their communities' issues. Recommendations made at Local Authority meetings are not 'final' decisions as Council needs to decide on all issues or requests from all communities.
- 2.2. The function of a Local Authority include:
 - a) To involve local communities on issues related to local government.
 - b) Advocate and provide a voice for their community
 - c) To ensure that local communities are given an opportunity to express their opinions on questions affecting local government.
 - d) To allow local communities a voice in the formulation of policies for the locality as well as policies for the area and the region.
 - e) To take the views of local communities back to Council and act as advocates on their behalf.
 - f) To take Council information and decisions back to the community.
 - g) To contribute to the development of the Regional Plan

3. Membership

- 3.1. The size of the Local Authority should reflect the community size and structure representing key groups in the community.
- 3.2. The membership of the Local Authority will include community members, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and Ward Councillors, for their respective wards.
- 3.3. In accordance with Guideline 1, the number of community members that a Local Authority should have is a minimum of six (6) and up to a maximum of fourteen (14).
- 3.4. During the initial meeting of Council, following a General Election, the Council will pass a resolution to determine the number of Local Authority Members for each Local Authority.
- 3.5. Vacancies will be determined based on that number.
- 3.6. Where a vacancy exists, the CEO will call for nominations as soon as practicable.
- 3.7. Call for nominations will be advertised throughout the local community and on Councils website.
- 3.8. Nominations will remain open for at least 21 days.
- 3.9. People nominated for Local Authority membership are to be approved by the Council at the next Ordinary Council meeting after nominations have closed.



4. Period of membership

- 4.1. Local Authority members will be appointed for the term of Council being four (4) years. Following a General Election. Once the new Council is elected, Council will fix the number of members for the Local Authority.
- 4.2. The previous members will be eligible for default reappointment and will be confirmed in the first meeting of Council following a General Election.

5. Eligibility for membership

- 5.1. Community residents over 18 years of age who live in the ward, for the majority of the time, can nominate or be nominated for the Local Authority membership.
- 5.2. Employees of WDRC are permitted to be members, however, must declare a conflict of interest.
- 5.3. To become a Local Authority member, the candidate needs to fill in a Local Authority nomination form. Nomination forms are available from the Community Service Manager (CSM). The completed nomination form can be handed directly to the CSM or tended at the next Local Authority meeting.
- 5.4. The CSM will submit the Nomination Form to the Governance Officer.
- 5.5. The Governance Officer will submit the nomination form to Council to deliberate on at the Ordinary Meeting of the Council. Council will have the final say on Local Authority membership.
- 5.6. Council will have the final say on Local Authority membership and appointments will be made by way of resolution on the basis that there is a vacancy to be filled.

6. Membership termination

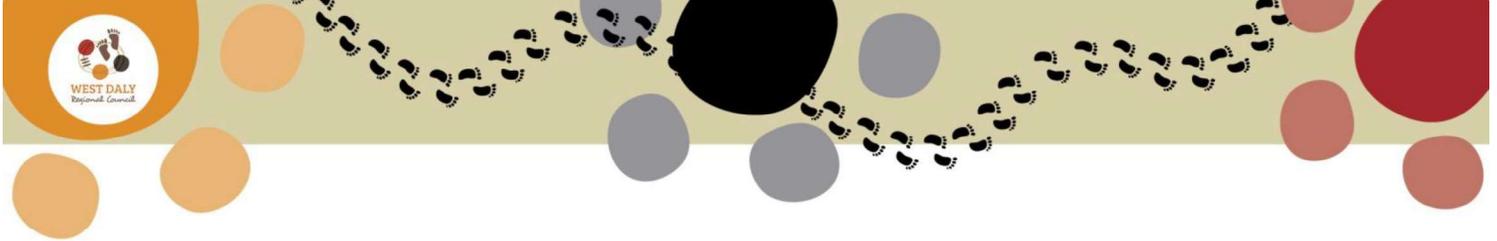
- 6.1. Local Authority members stop being members if they:
 - 6.1.1. Resign in writing (written resignations are handed to the CSM);
 - 6.1.2. Do not attend two (2) consecutive meetings without an apology;
 - 6.1.3. Breach the Code of Conduct
 - 6.1.4. Convicted of a serious offence or are sent to prison (Council can use its discretion)

7. No Proxies

- 7.1. A member of a Local Authority may not be represented by a proxy (substitute person) during a meeting or provisional meeting.

8. Local Authority meetings

- 8.1. The following points cover the running of Local Authority meetings.
- 8.2. A Local Authority:
 - 8.2.1. Shall hold a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of six (6) meetings per year;
 - 8.2.2. Shall elect a permanent chairperson at the first meeting of the Local Authority following a General Election
 - 8.2.3. The quorum for a Local Authority meeting will be half of the membership plus one of the nominated members;
 - 8.2.4. Supported by the staff of WDRC who will provide the Local Authority secretariat and act as advisor to the chairperson and membership but will not run the meeting;



- 8.2.5. Are advertised through meeting notices with draft agendas provided at least three (3) days before the meeting;
- 8.2.6. Follow and adopt the draft agenda suggested by Council or CEO.

9. When reporting to and from the Local Authority

- 9.1. Local Authority members will advise on strategic, not operational matters. Operational matters are the responsibility of the CEO and Council employees.
- 9.2. The Council discusses both the Local Authority reports and the management responses and decides on action;
- 9.3. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Ward Councillors will report to Local Authorities on Council decisions and take the views of the Local Authority to Council;
- 9.4. Local Authority report to their community about their advice to Council and take community views to Council.
- 9.5. Each new Local Authority will receive training at its first meeting on roles and responsibilities, meeting procedures, council responsibilities and separation of powers.
- 9.6. Anyone wishing to make a deputation to a Local Authority must seek permission from the Local Authority chairperson in writing at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

10. Provisional meeting where quorum not present

In the event that a quorum is not present for a meeting, but the majority of appointed member are present, the members that are in attendance may hold a provisional meeting.

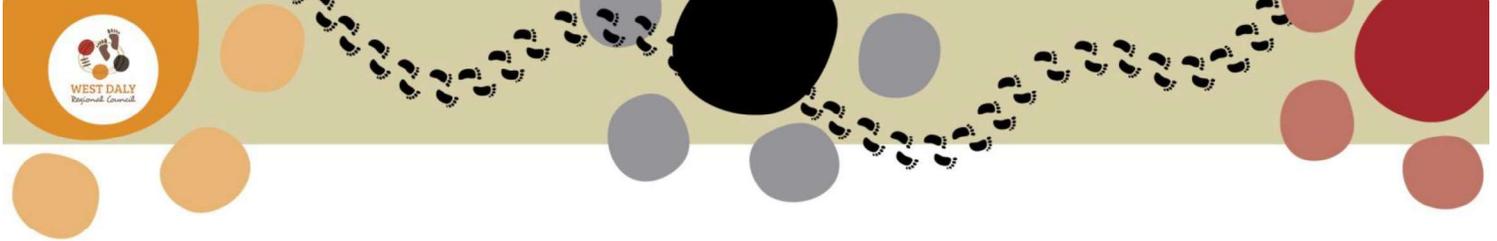
- a) During a provisional meeting, all agenda items may be discussed and minutes must be kept.
- b) Members at the provisional meeting may, by majority vote, make recommendations to the Council, including Local Authority projects, provided any such recommendation is specifically qualified as being a recommendation of a provisional meeting, that than a Local Authority.
- c) A provisional meeting may not approved the minutes of a Local Authority meeting, but Local Authority may approve the minutes of a provisional meeting.
- d) A provisional meeting does not have the powers or functions which a Council may have delegated to a Local Authority.

11. Administrative support and secretariat

- 11.1. Local Authority meetings are convened by the CEO, the Governance Officer is responsible for coordinating the Local Authority meetings.
- 11.2. Relevant CSM's or staff under the CSM will provide administration support as required for creating and distributing agendas, recording minutes and organising meeting venue.
- 11.3. The Governance Officer will be a central depository and will be responsible for keeping records of Local Authority member's details, agenda, minutes and attendance.

12. Community meetings

- 12.1. Community meetings can be called at any time.
- 12.2. Community meetings are different from Local Authority meetings and these types of meetings will determine their own procedures.
- 12.3. Decisions made at these meetings may be used to advise the Local Authority.



13. Local Authority member allowances

- 13.1. Appointed Member’s allowances will be transferred by WDRC into the member’s nominated bank account by two working days after the meeting or approved LA business has taken place (note that banking processing times mean it may not reach the member’s bank until a later date).
- 13.2. Local Authority member allowance is a sum of money provided to the Local Authority member when they attend a Local Authority meeting or provisional Local Authority meeting. The appointed Members allowance will be set out annual in the Council Regional Plan.
- 13.3. West Daly Regional Council will provide Local Authority member allowance to the member in a manner that adheres to the Local Government Act and subordinate legislation.
- 13.4. WDRC staff attending a Local Authority meeting, as a Local Authority member within that staff members normal hours of work, will not be paid a Local Authority member allowance. If a meeting is held outside the staff members normal hours of work, that staff member, who is a Local Authority member, will be entitled to the Local Authority member allowance.
- 13.5. Elected Members and Council staff are not entitled to a sitting fee for attending a Local Authority meeting or provisional meeting.

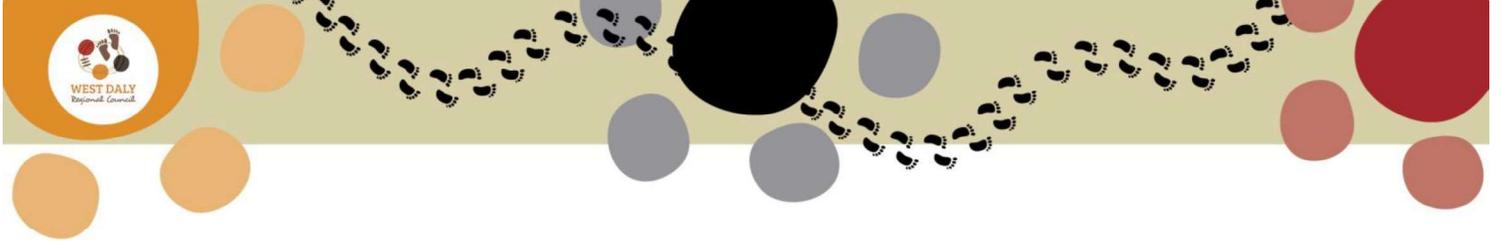
Terminology and references

- Appointed member** - means a local authority member who has been appointed.
- Member** – includes appointed members and non-appointed members.
- Non-appointed member** – means a person who is a local authority member by virtue.
- General Election** - means an election for a local government council, which is a periodic general election, held on the fourth Saturday in August every four years, as mandated by law.
- Provisional meeting** – means, at the time and place set for a local authority meeting when a quorum has not be established, a majority of appointed members are present being one third of membership.

References

Local Government Act 2019
Guideline 1: Local Authorities

Review History				
Version Number	Approval Date	Policy Number	Policy Name	Minutes ref./ resolution no.



4.0	30/01/2019	GOV30	Local Authorities	013/2021
5.0	26/09/2025	GOV30	Local Authorities	OCM-2025/66

Endorsement	
Signature:	 <small>John Thomas (26/09/2025 13:11:06 GMT+9.5)</small>
Date:	26/09/2025
Name and Position:	John Thomas, Chief Executive Officer