

Local Authority



Policy

Policy Number:	Gov016
Policy Type:	Council
Policy Owner:	Governance
Resolution/Approval Date:	20 August 2025
Resolution Number:	-
MagiQ Doc ID:	-
Review Schedule:	2 years
Legislative Reference:	<i>Chapter 5 -Local Authorities, Local Government Act 2019</i>
Related Documents:	<i>Local Government Guideline No.1 – Local Authorities (NT)</i> <i>Report and Determination No.1 of 2025 – Allowances for Members of Local Government Authorities</i>

1. Purpose

The object of this policy is to enable Local Authorities (LAs) to achieve effective integration and involvement of local communities in the system of local government.

The Minister has identified Groote Archipelago Regional Council must establish and maintain local authorities in the following area:

- Angurugu
- Milyakburra
- Umbakumba

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council's Local Authorities and associated stakeholders.

3. Functions of a Local Authority

A Local Authority is a group that provides advice and recommendations on their communities' issues to Council. Recommendations made at Local Authority meetings are not 'final' decisions as Council needs to decide on all issues or requests from all communities.

The functions of a local authority are:

- to involve local communities more closely in issues related to local government; and
- to ensure that local communities are given an opportunity to express their opinions on questions affecting local government; and
- to allow local communities a voice in the formulation of policies for the locality as well as policies for the area and the region; and
- to take the views of local communities back to the council and act as advocates on their behalf; and
- to contribute to the development of the relevant regional plan; and
- to make recommendations to the council in relation to:
 - the council's budget; and
 - the part of the council's area within which the local authority performs its functions; and
- to endorse the cemetery plan and cemetery policies for each public cemetery and community cemetery located within the authority's area; and
- to perform other functions assigned to the local authority by the Minister, in accordance with any guidelines that the Minister may make.

A local authority must comply with ministerial guidelines and is also subject to control and direction of the council in accordance with the given ministerial guidelines.

4. Membership

4.1. Membership Size

The size of the Local Authority should reflect the community size and structure, representing key groups in the community. The membership of Local Authority includes at least one (1) ward Councillor, as well community members.

The number of members that a Local Authority should have is a minimum of six (6) members and up to a maximum of fourteen (14). The council must decide by resolution the exact number of members.

4.2. Period of Membership

Local Authority members will be appointed for the term of Council. Once a new Council is elected, it will call for new nominations or approve the current membership. The previous members are eligible for continuing their Local Authority membership.

4.3. Eligibility of Membership

Community residents who live in the Ward, or other such persons with sufficient connection to the community in the Local Authority's area, can nominate or be nominated for Local Authority.

4.4. Nomination

To become a Local Authority member the candidate needs to fill in a Local Authority nomination form. The nomination form can be handed directly to Council Office or e-mailed to governance@groote.nt.gov.au.

The nomination period shall comprise of a minimum of 21 days. The call for nominations shall be distributed electronically on Council's website and social media.

It is Council will that determines Local Authority membership and appoints nominees.

4.5. Vacancy

In the event of a vacancy existing on a Local Authority, the Chief Executive Officer shall, as soon as practicable, call for nominations from members of the Authority's community who are interested in becoming appointed to the Local Authority.

4.6. Assessment of Nominations

Nominations shall be assessed by Council itself at its first meeting after the nomination period closes. Upon assessment of nominations, Council shall appoint the most suitable candidate to the vacancy via resolution

4.7. Membership Termination

Local Authority members shall have the same character and integrity requirements as Elected Members. Local Authority members cease being members if any of the s47(1) Local Government Act 2019 prescribed criteria becomes applicable to them with the exception of s47(1)(d).

Furthermore, Local Authority members may have their membership rescinded by Council under the following circumstances:

- If they fail to attend two (2) consecutive meetings without their apology being tendered and accepted by the Local Authority, or by Council;
- If Council believes that the member is not performing their duties to an acceptable standard, or if it loses confidence in the member's ability, commitment, or performance; and
- For breaching Council policy, or for conduct which brings the Local Authority or Council into disrepute, or any other conduct which is inconsistent with the public interest.

The final decision to appoint persons to a Local Authority as appointed members rests with Council, which may rescind its decision and appointment if it believes it is in the public interest to do so.

4.8. No Proxies

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

5. Code of Conduct

Local Authority members must abide by the Council's Code of Conduct (Elected Members) Policy.

6. Meetings

6.1. Frequency and Administration

A Local Authority:

- shall hold a minimum of four (4) meetings per financial year, subject to the direction and control of Council;
- shall elect a chair at the first meeting of the Local Authority;
- the quorum for a Local Authority meeting will be of half plus one (1) of the members;
- a provisional meeting will consist of one third of Local Authority members;
- is supported by the Council staff who will provide the Local Authority's secretariat and act as advisor to the chair and members;
- are advertised through meeting notices with draft agendas at least three (3) days before the meeting; and
- are subject to the direction of Council who has override provisions.

6.2. Agenda

The agenda for the local authority meetings must be prepared in consultation with the chairperson of the local authority and include the following:

- a) Any declarations of conflicts of interests by members;
- b) Items requested by members;
- c) Any reports on services delivery issues in the local authority area;
- d) Any responses from the council to matters raised at a previous local authority meeting or provisional meeting;
- e) A written report from the CEO (or a delegate) on current council services in the local authority area;
- f) After a council meeting that has considered local authority projects – a written report from the CEO (or a delegate) on what projects have been approved or the reasons why projects have not been approved;

- g) A current financial report of the local authority area;
- h) Visitor presentations;
- i) Any relevant petitions affecting the local authority area; and/or
- j) General business.

Once in a financial year, a local authority agenda must include a review of:

- The council's annual report for the previous financial year; and
- The council's proposed regional plan for the next financial year; and
- The council's budget for proposed projects for the local authority area of the next financial year; and
- Any relevant community plan of the council or local authority.

6.3. Provisional Meeting (when no quorum present)

If a quorum is not attained for a meeting, but at least one third of members are present, the members that are in attendance may hold a provisional meeting:

- During a provisional meeting, all agenda items may be discussed, and minutes must be kept.
- 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, rather than the Local Authority.
- A provisional meeting may not approve the minutes of a Local Authority meeting, but a Local Authority may approve the minutes of a provisional meeting.
- A provisional meeting does not have the powers or functions which a Council may have delegated to a Local Authority.

6.4. Deputations

Anyone wishing to make a deputation to a Local Authority must seek permission from the Council, in writing at least ten (10) business days prior to the meeting. The procedures for deputations and request to attend a Local Authority meeting can be found on the Council website.

Deputations will be received by the Local Authority after all official business of the Local Authority is concluded and will be limited to five (5) minutes per deputation unless the Local Authority Chairperson decides otherwise.

Written material attracts printing costs as prescribed in the Fees and Charges.

6.5. Special Meetings

The Part 6.1 provisions of the Local Government Act 2019 pertaining to Special Meetings of Council **do not** apply to Local Authorities.

Local Authority Meetings are convened by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with a decision of Council (via resolution), or upon request of the Local Authority Chairperson.

External parties may request a Local Authority Meeting to be held for special purposes. However, such a meeting shall be convened as an additional meeting of the Local Authority rather than a Special Meeting as applicable to Council.

Any additional meeting of a Local Authority is subject to the ordinary Local Government Act 2019 requirements, including agenda items / contents, minutes, and deadlines.

External bodies requesting an additional meeting for special purposes may be required to reimburse costs of arranging and conducting that meeting.

6.6. Local Authority Member Allowances

Local Authority member allowance is a sum of money provided to the Local Authority member when a member attends a Local Authority meeting.

Council will provide Local Authority member allowance to the member in a manner that adheres to the Local Government Act 2019 and its statutory instruments.

Council 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.

Local Authority member allowances are processed as soon as practicable after the meeting occurs.

7. Version Control

Version	Amendment History
1.0	-

8. Acknowledgement

All Local Authority Members are required to understand and adhere to this policy.

Member Name	Signature	Date