



Councillor information sheet: Your role as a Councillor

As a Councillor, it is your role to contribute to the strategic direction of the council, participate in decision-making and represent the interests and values of your community.

High performing councils

The pathway to success for councillor groups is to understand the needs and priorities of the community, be cognizant of the finite resources available, create harmonious working relationships between one another and promote a collegiate approach to decision-making.

What underpins successful outcomes for your communities, is working together in a healthy, vibrant and inclusive environment. Taking the time to get to know your fellow councillors through the induction process is the single most important investment you can make.

Amendments to the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) have seen the implementation of structured mayoral and councillor training that, in part, will assist in relationship building.

As the training is mandatory, your success as a councillor will be enhanced if you approach this training with a positive mindset.

Decision-making

Councils are routinely required to make important and impactful decisions across their many and varied functions.

Decision-making as a councillor is different to decision-making in privately operated business. In a privately operated business, the business owner is

empowered to make decisions that impact how the business operates. As a business owner, you can create your own recruitment policy, manage staff and assets as best you see fit and facilitate expenditure according to your own personal needs and beliefs.

As a Councillor, you do not get to make these decisions unilaterally.

You are one of a wider councillor group, and as an individual you must contribute to the group who make decisions as a collective. The decisions you make should reflect the needs of your community.

As a public entity, every decision made by a council **must be transparent and defensible**. Irrespective of the type or nature of the expenditure, or the dollar value, as a decision-maker you have a responsibility to ensure that all decisions are suitably supported by the relevant policy, process, guideline or law. There is **no** discretionary spending available to councillors.

When part of the decision-making in the council chamber, it is important that you respect and adhere to the standards of conduct. Some of which include, not acting in a demeaning, abusive, obscene or threatening manner, not engaging in discrimination or vilification, as well as adhering to health and safety requirements in the workplace.

Generally, councillors must act with integrity, exercise reasonable care and diligence and take reasonable steps to avoid any action which may diminish the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of local government.

Additional information

For further information please refer to the Municipal Association of Victoria's [Citizen to Councillor Guide](#).



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Local Government Inspectorate

Encouraging higher standards of integrity, accountability and transparency in local government

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