


## COUNCIL GUIDELINE

Councillors Standing for State or Federal Elections	<b>Adopted By Council:</b>	25/02/2026	
	<b>Date/s Revised:</b>		
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	<b>Directorate:</b>	CEO	
	<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chief Executive Officer	

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this Guideline is to prescribe clear and consistent requirements that apply when a Councillor of the Borough of Queenscliffe stands as a candidate in a State or Federal election, in order to:

- maintain the integrity of Council decision-making.
- ensure appropriate separation between Council duties and election campaigning.
- prevent any actual or perceived misuse of position or Council resources.
- protect public confidence in the governance of the Borough of Queenscliffe.

### APPLICATION

This Guideline applies to all Councillors of the Borough of Queenscliffe who become:

- a Prospective Candidate
- a Nominated Candidate

in a State or Federal election, including by-elections.

This Guideline operates in conjunction with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, and the Governance Rules of the Borough of Queenscliffe.

### DEFINITIONS

**Prospective Candidate:** means a Councillor who:

- seeks or receives endorsement from a political party to contest a State or Federal election.  
and/or
- publicly declares an intention to contest a State or Federal election.

**Nominated Candidate:** means a Councillor who has formally nominated as a candidate with the relevant Electoral Commission

**Campaign Period:** means the period commencing when a Councillor becomes a Prospective Candidate or Nominated Candidate (whichever occurs first) and concluding at the close of voting in the State or Federal election.

### GUIDELINE

#### 1. Notification and Declaration

- 1.1 A Councillor who becomes a Prospective Candidate or Nominated Candidate must provide written notice of their candidacy to the Chief Executive Officer as soon as practicable.
- 1.2 Upon receipt of written notice under clause 1.1, the Chief Executive Officer will advise all Councillors and the Executive Leadership Team of the Councillor's candidacy.
- 1.3 The Councillor must declare their candidacy at a Council Meeting as soon as practicable after notifying the Chief Executive Officer.

## **2. Leave of Absence**

- 2.1 A Councillor who becomes a Prospective Candidate or Nominated Candidate in a State or Federal election should apply for a leave of absence from all Councillor duties.
- 2.2 Upon becoming a Prospective Candidate and/or Nominated Candidate, the Councillor should apply in writing to the Chief Executive Officer for a leave of absence in accordance with clause 32 of the Governance Rules. As per clause 32 of the Governance Rules, the Chief Executive Officer shall list the application for leave for consideration at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council.
- 2.3 Upon receiving an application for a leave of absence from a Councillor who is a Prospective Candidate and/or Nominated Candidate, the Council should consider this as a reasonable request and approve that application. Note that section 35(4) of the *Local Government Act 2020* provides that Council must grant any such reasonable request for leave.
- 2.4 The leave of absence should, at a minimum, commence no later than the date of the Councillor's formal nomination as a candidate with the relevant electoral commission for the election and conclude no earlier than the close of voting for the election.
- 2.5 During the leave of absence, the Councillor:
  - must not attend any Council Meeting, Councillor Briefing, Council Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting.
  - must not receive agendas, reports, briefings or internal Council communications.
  - must not perform, exercise or purport to perform any role, function or duty of a Councillor.
- 2.6 Where the Mayor is on a leave of absence the Deputy Mayor must perform the role of Mayor in accordance with section 21 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. If Council has not established an office of Deputy Mayor then Council must appoint a Councillor to be the Acting Mayor for a period specified by Council in accordance with section 20B of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- 2.7 A Councillor who withdraws their nomination prior to the close of voting must advise the Chief Executive Officer in writing of their withdrawal and give notice of any change in date to their leave of absence. The Chief Executive Officer shall list the application for the amendment of leave of absence for consideration at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council.
- 2.8 During the period of leave of absence, it is recommended that a Councillor elects not receive their Councillor allowance.

If a Councillor elects to continue to receive their allowance during the leave of absence, this will be clearly disclosed in the Councillor Expenses published in Council's Annual Report, in accordance with Council's transparency and reporting practices.

2.9 Any Councillor/staff interaction policies and protocols which Council has in place should be observed by a Prospective Candidate or Nominated Candidate throughout the campaign period.

### **3. Use of Council Resources**

3.1 A Councillor must not use Council resources for any purpose connected with an election campaign.

3.2 Council resources include, but are not limited to:

- Council staff or contractors.
- Council facilities, vehicles, equipment and IT systems.
- Council branding, publications and communication channels.

3.3 Any Council-issued equipment must be returned to Council or rendered inactive for the duration of the leave of absence.

3.4 A Councillor who is a Prospective Candidate or Nominated Candidate, should not use Council activities, including Council meetings, events, network meetings, advocacy activities and Council-related external activities in relation to their candidacy.

### **4. Media and Communications**

4.1 Council will not provide media advice, media support or communications assistance to a Councillor who is a Prospective Candidate or Nominated Candidate.

4.2 A Councillor who makes public comment during the Campaign Period must clearly state they are speaking as a candidate and not on behalf of Council.

4.3 Council communications must not be used to promote or support a Councillor's candidature. Media attention or marketing campaign opportunities are not to be sought through participation in Council activities, meetings, events or network meetings, in support of an election campaign.

### **5. Advocacy**

5.1 Council may continue to undertake advocacy activities during State or Federal election periods.

5.2 A Councillor who is a Prospective Candidate or Nominated Candidate must not lead, represent or participate in advocacy activities on behalf of Council during the Campaign Period.

### **6. Successful Election**

A Councillor who is elected to State or Federal Parliament must resign immediately in accordance with section 34(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

## **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

This guideline will be reviewed as required, but as a minimum every four years from the date of adoption.

**OTHER REFERENCES**

*Local Government Act 2020*

Model Councillor Code of Conduct

Borough of Queenscliffe – Governance Rules

CP058 Internal Resolution Procedure

END