

Advocacy Policy

1. PURPOSE

Council's advocacy policy provides the overarching principles on how Council will advocate on behalf of residents to persuade decision-makers and leaders in government to act in the best interests of our community. In principle, Councillors are elected to advocate on behalf of community to ensure our residents have their voices heard. Council provides a pathway to policy reform, advocating for resources and educating policy makers on issues relevant to our community.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all advocacy efforts and activities undertaken by Council representatives.

3. LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN

- People *Bisnis* - *Pipol*
- Sustainability *Bisnis* - *Mekem las long*
- Prosperity *Bisnis* – *Pruitpul*

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Advocacy is the intentional undertaking of activities with the goal to influence policy making and effect change. In the context of Local Government, advocacy is undertaken to benefit our residents and the wider community.

Council-led advocacy works on behalf of residents to access and secure government funding – state and federal – to deliver infrastructure, facilities and services that are beyond our responsibility and ability to fund.

We seek to take action to influence stakeholders and decision makers with political and/or funding power to implement public projects and policies that benefit our communities, enabling change and transformation.

Our Council will advocate strategically to address the issues that matter to our community. Our advocacy efforts will be aligned to Council's 5 Year Corporate Plan, Advocacy Action Plan and related strategies and is needed to;

- a) Seek and foster strategic partnerships
- b) Raise awareness of any local issues and obtain support from State and Federal Governments and other stakeholders
- c) Increase funding for infrastructure and services aimed at driving economic, environmental and social outcomes

- d) Influence governance frameworks to drive economic, environmental and social outcomes
- e) Clarify and inform the community on roles and responsibilities of all tiers of Government.

4.1 Policy principles

Council's advocacy policy is based on the following principles:

- a) Evidence-based - Council will only discuss and agree to advocacy priorities following extensive research and analysis of the issue.
- b) Transparency - Council will inform the community on agreed advocacy priorities to raise awareness of local issues.
- c) Pro-active - Council is taking a pro-active approach to influence policy making on behalf of the community.

4.2 Measuring our success

Council recognises that advocacy efforts are undertaken in a dynamic policy environment, and that legislative changes or government priorities can take many years to realise. We will measure our success through the following;

- a) Confirmed support from key organisations and stakeholders
- b) Advocacy priority included in election campaigns
- c) Changes made to policies and strategies
- d) External grants and funding received
- e) Engagement from the community.

5. DEFINITIONS

Advocacy Action Plan	Annual plan outlining Council's top advocacy priorities
Council	Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Councillor	An elected representative of Torres Strait Island Regional Council as defined under the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> and includes the Mayor
Election Campaign	State and Federal election campaigns where issues affecting the Torres Strait are used as election commitments
External Grant	Means any assistance by way of a sum of money or other resource provided to Council on the condition that the assistance is used for a specified purpose/s
Economic	Improved economic capacity creating better conditions for economic growth and job creation

Environmental	Regulations, laws, and other tools used to deal with environmental issues such as the management of land, freshwater, oceans, forests, air, natural resources, and wildlife.
Social	Initiatives, public policies, planning, and regulations supporting social issues and community wellbeing

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

This policy is established with reference to the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012* as well as the following Council policies and key documents:

- 5-Year Corporate Plan
- Annual Advocacy Action Plan
- Annual Operational Plan
- Annual Budget (incl. Long Term Financial Plan)

7. REVIEW

Policy type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative
Directorate:	Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Authorised on:	September 2024
Effective date:	September 2024
Next review date:	July 2027
Review history:	NA