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1. Introduction

The objects of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* ('FOI Act') are to:

- A. Enable the public to participate more effectively in the governing of the State; and
- B. Make the persons and bodies that are responsible for State and local government more accountable to the public.

Under Part 5, section 96 of the FOI Act the Town of Port Hedland is required to publish an Information Statement annually. This provides a guide to the information sources of the Town of Port Hedland including its functions, responsibilities, and structure.

The Information Statement includes information on:

- The structure and functions of the Town.
- Decision-making functions.
- Community participation in the formulation of the Town's decisions and performance of the Town's functions.
- Description of the type of documents generated and held by the Town and which documents may be viewed, purchased, or obtained free of charge.
- How to access documents and personal information held by the Town of Port Hedland; and
- How to amend personal information in documents held by the Town of Port Hedland.

This document can be obtained by accessing the Town's website:

<https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/documents/public-documents>

Further information can be provided by contacting the Freedom of Information Coordinator

Town of Port Hedland

Po Box 41

Port Hedland

WA 6721

Telephone: (08) 9158 9300

Email: council@porthedland.wa.gov.au

This information is correct as of February 2026.



2. Town of Port Hedland's vision, mission, and Guiding Principles

Our vision

"Together, we create a thriving, resilient and inclusive future for our diverse community".

Our mission

"To guide the growth and development of the Hedland community, economy and environment through the provision of strong civic leadership, provision of high-quality services and facilitation of active community participation".

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are the fundamental, moral, and ethical beliefs that we share as a community. They represent core values and capture what a community considers important. They help foster trust, respect, collaboration, and unity.

The following Guiding Principles provide the context for the Town of Port Hedland:

1. Integrity, Openness, Respect and Accountability

We will act in a professional, ethical, accountable, and transparent manner nurturing attitudes and behaviours that result in positive community building, relationships, transparency and enhanced community pride

2. Teamwork, Unity and Collaboration

We commit to a high-level community, stakeholder and staff engagement, cooperation, partnership and networking

3. Active Community Engagement and Citizenship

We will respect the contributions of all community groups and ages by fostering the mindset and actions that encourage greater community member involvement, volunteerism and ownership

4. Inclusiveness and Diversity

We will promote a future for all our community members, actively strengthening the social fabric of the community, valuing diversity and responding to special needs and disadvantages.

5. Innovation and Creativity

As an organisation, we will encourage an enterprising spirit and initiative to achieve our community's aspirations and Council's vision



3. Structure and functions

The Town of Port Hedland is established under and operates in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*.

The Council of the Town of Port Hedland is the overall decision-making body. The Council employs a Chief Executive Officer who is charged with the responsibility of putting into effect the decisions of the Council.

Chief Executive Officer

The CEO's Office is responsible for the overall management of the Town of Port Hedland at an operational and strategic level. The CEO's Office includes the following services:

- Corporate Affairs.
- Executive Assistant to the CEO and the Mayor; and
- Human Resources.

Director of Corporate Services

The Corporate Services directorate includes the following services:

- Financial Services (operations and management).
- Governance; and
- Information and Communication Technology / Records.

Director Infrastructure Services

The Infrastructure and Town Services directorate includes the following services:

- Infrastructure Projects and Assets
- Infrastructure Operations
- Works & Services (Formerly Engineering Services)
- Landfill and Waste Services

Director Community Services

The Development, Sustainability, and Lifestyle directorate includes the following services:

- Leisure Facilities
- Community Development
- Community Safety



Director Regulatory Services

The Regulatory Services directorate includes the following services:

4. Town of Port Hedland Council

The Town of Port Hedland is currently served by the mayor and eight councillors, in a single ward structure.

- Jacinta Behrend, Mayor
- Troy Melville, Deputy Mayor
- Russell McDowall
- Jemma Scott
- Rachael Baxter
- Zoe Little
- Sharon Todd
- Frank Edwards
- Lorraine Butson

The Elected Members work together as the Town's Council for the benefit of the community. Decisions are made by the Council in accordance with the Local Government Act 1995. For further information about the Town of Port Hedland's elected members, please visit;

<https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/our-council/council/your-councillors.aspx>



Role of the Council

- Directs and controls the local government affairs.
- Is responsible for the performance of the local government functions.
- Oversee the allocation of the local government finances and resources.
- Determine the local government's policies.

Role of Mayor

- Presidency at meetings in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*
- Provides leadership and guidance to the community in the Town.
- Conducts civic and ceremonial duties on behalf of the local government.
- Speaks on behalf of the local government.
- Performs such other functions as are given to the Mayor by the *Local Government Act 1995* or any other written law.
- Liaise with the Chief Executive Officer on local government affairs and the performance of its functions.

Role of the Councilors

- Represent the interests of electors, ratepayers, and residents of the Town.
- Provide leadership and guidance to the community in the Town.
- Facilitate communication between the community and the Council.
- Participate in the local government's decision-making processes at Council and Committee meetings.
- Perform such other functions as are given to an Elected Member by the *Local Government Act 1995* or any other written law.



5. Decision-making structure

The framework

The *Local Government Act 1995* provides for a system of local government by creating a constitution for elected local government in the State, describing the functions of local governments, providing for the conduct of elections, and providing framework for the administration and financial management of local governments and for the scrutiny of their affairs.

The *Local Government Act 1995* and its subsidiary legislation is intended to result in better decision-making, greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of local government, greater accountability to their communities and more efficient and effective local government.

The *Town of Port Hedland Standing Orders Local Law 2014* are the local laws by which Council and Committee meetings are run. They relate to the conduct of proceedings of the business of the Council and Committee meetings.

A copy of the Standing Orders Local Law is available for perusal on the Town of Port Hedland's website site <https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/our-council/council/local-laws.aspx>

Ordinary and Special Council Meetings

Ordinary Council Meetings take place on the fourth Wednesday of the month. From time to time a Special Meeting of Council may be called to consider matters that cannot wait until the next scheduled Ordinary Meeting of Council. Special Council Meetings are advertised in the local newspaper or via community notices.

Annual General Meeting of Electors

The Annual General Meeting of Electors is convened following the adoption of the Town's Annual Report, which includes the audited financial statements.

Agenda and minutes for Council and Electors Meetings

The Town will endeavour to make the agenda for Council and Electors Meetings available to the public approximately two weeks prior to the date of meeting, and the Minutes within 10 business days of the meeting.

The notices of meeting and agenda for both Ordinary and Special Council Meetings are advertised on the Town's website at <https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/council-meetings/>



The Minutes are saved at <https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/council-meetings/past-meetings.aspx>

Public agenda briefings

Public agenda briefings take place on the Wednesday one week prior to the Ordinary Council Meetings, in Council Chambers. Public agenda briefings give Elected Members and members of the public the opportunity to ask the Town's officers questions they may have on any of the items listed in the agenda.

Confidential briefings

Confidential briefings generally occur on the first Wednesday of the month and are not open to members of the public. They are an opportunity for officers to present to Elected Members on future projects and/or strategies that may result in a formal report to Council.

Whilst confidential briefings are not open to the public, the attendance register is available to the public and can be found on the Town's website.

Audit Risk and Governance (ARG) Committee

The ARG Committee was established in accordance with Part 7 of the *Local Government Act 1995* to:

1. Liaise with the auditor(s) to assist Council in carrying out functions in relation to external audit, including liaising with the auditor and developing a process for selection and appointment of a person as the auditor.
2. Receive quarterly budget review reports.
3. Review and suggest improvements to risk management within the organisation; and
4. Assist the organisation in the development of an internal audit program and make recommendations to Council regarding:
 - Financial management
 - Risk management
 - Internal controls
 - Legislative compliance
 - Internal and external audit planning and reporting

ARG Committee meetings usually take place on a quarterly basis on the first Tuesday of the month in Council Chambers.

A copy of the ARG Terms of Reference is found on the Town's website:

https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/Profiles/porthedland/Assets/ClientData/Document-Centre/Public_Documents/20160622AdoptedARG_TOR.pdf



Public notices

There are a few sections within the *Local Government Act 1995* that require the Town to provide notice to the community. This can be in relation to a proposed decision or a decision that has been passed. In such instances the Town will provide such notice on public notice boards in the Civic Centre building, the libraries, on the Town's public website (<https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au>), on the Town's Facebook page and in state or local newspapers.

Where local public notice is required, it shall be undertaken in the Northwest Telegraph newspaper.

Where state-wide public notice is required, it shall be undertaken through the West Australian newspaper.



6. Public participation

Community consultation

The whole community may be asked to comment and ‘have their say’ on a particular issue, while in other instances only the community members directly affected by an issue will be consulted. The consultations process may take many forms and some of the more commonly used methods are:

- Online and hard copy surveys.
- Information sessions.
- Workshops.
- Expressions of interest.
- Advertisement in the local and state newspapers.
- Leaflet drops.
- Committees.
- Forums; and
- Public displays.

Deputations

In accordance with the *Town of Port Hedland Standing Orders Local Law 2014*, any person or group can make a deputation at a committee or Council meeting.

Public question time

In accordance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, a minimum of 15 minutes is available for public question time for each Committee and Council meetings. During public question time, members of the public and Elected Members are given an opportunity to ask three questions about any issues concerning the meeting at which it is asked.

The Town promotes the practice of questions being supplied in advance of the meeting, particularly if a detailed response is required, as this provides officers with the opportunity to fully address the question at the meeting. If an answer is unable to be provided at the meeting, the question will be taken on notice and a response provided to the person raising the question. The responses to questions taken on notice are also included in the following agenda for the meeting.



Information regarding public question time, along with the public question form, can be found on the Town's website <https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/our-council/council/minutes-and-agendas/public-question-time.aspx>

Public statement

In accordance with the *Town of Port Hedland Standing Orders Local Law 2014*, members of the public can make a public statement at a Council and Committee Meeting regarding a matter concerning the local government.

Petitions

A petition is defined as a formal written request, signed by members of the public, appealing to an authority for some cause. The cause or subject of the submission must be something that the Council has the authority to deal with or has a decision-making role.

Written requests

A member of the public can write to the Town on any council policy, activity, or service of the Council. A response will be provided in accordance with the Town's Customer Service charter, this document can be found on the Town's website <https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/our-council/news-and-information/customer-service-charter.aspx>



7. Access to documents held by the Town.

There are two categories of documents held by the Town of Port Hedland. These can be broadly categorised as those available for inspection or purchase, and those which must be held confidentially because of their content, with public access considered only through the provisions of the Act.

The following schedule categorises the documents available at the Town of Port Hedland.

Document Description

- Strategic Community Plan
- Corporate Business Plan
- Long Term Financial Plan
- Asset Management Strategy and Plan
- ICT Strategic Plan
- Annual report
- Code of Conduct
- Annual budget documents
- Agendas & Minutes of Council & Committee & Electors meetings
- Delegation register
- Disclosure of Interest Register (Financial and Impartiality for Elected Members)
- Annual and Primary Returns Register
- Customer Service Charter
- Policy Manual
- Register of Owners & Occupiers under section 4.32(6) of the *Local Government Act 1995*
- Electoral Rolls
- Confidential Concept Forum Attendance
- Proposed Local Laws for which state-wide notice has been given.
- Local laws made under 3.12 of *Local Government Act 1995*
- Schedule of Fees & Charges
- Rates Records
- Tender Register
- Record Keeping Plan
- Town Planning Scheme
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Community Engagement Strategy



8. Documents subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*

The FOI Act gives people the right to seek access to documents held by the Town of Port Hedland.

The Town of Port Hedland is required to:

- Assist applicants in making an application.
- Assist in providing access to documents at a reasonable cost; and
- Ensure that personal information captured in documents is accurate, complete, up to date and not misleading.

The Town is mindful of its obligations and provides general right of access to documents. If possible, the Town will initially try to provide the public with the documents outside of the Freedom of Information process. The right to apply is not affected by any reasons a person may have to obtain access.

While the FOI Act provides a general right of access to documents, it also recognises that some documents require a level of protection, and these documents must meet specific exemption criteria in Schedule 1 of the FOI Act.

Personal information

If access to personal information is requested, the Town will require identification to be produced.

Amendment of personal information

The FOI Act gives a person the right to apply for amendment of personal information, which is inaccurate, incomplete, out of date, or misleading. The Town may make the amendment by –

- Altering information
- Striking out or deleting information
- Inserting information
- Inserting a note

Submitting a Freedom of Information application

The Town's Freedom of Information application form must:

- Be in writing.
- Give enough information to enable the requested documents to be identified.
- Give an address in Australia to which notices under this Act can be sent.



- Give any other information or details required under the regulations; and
- Be lodged at the Town of Port Hedland with an application fee.

Application forms can be found on the Town’s website <https://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/i-need/online-forms/freedom-of-information.aspx> and may be lodged at the Town of Port Hedland.

By post, addressed to:
FOI Coordinator
Town of Port Hedland
PO Box 41
Port Hedland
WA 6721

In Person, to:
FOI Coordinator
Civic Centre
McGregor Street
Port Hedland
WA 6721

Freedom of Information Fees & Charges

Listed below are the scale of fees and charges set under the *Freedom of Information Act Regulations 1993*. Apart from the application fee, all charges are discretionary and are set by the Town as a part of the annual review of fees and charges. Fees and charges are GST-exempt.

Type of fee

- Personal Information about the applicant No fee
- Application fee for non-personal information \$30.00

Council Charges

- Charge for time dealing with the application (per hour, or pro rata) \$30.00
- Access time supervised by staff (per hour, or pro rata) \$30.00
- Photocopying staff time (per hour, or pro rata) \$30.00
- Per photocopy (A4 and A3) \$0.20
- Transcribing from tape, film, or computer (per hour, or pro rata) Actual Cost
- Duplicating of a tape, film, or computer information Actual Cost
- Delivery, packaging, and postage Actual Cost



The Town may require an advanced deposit on charges payable.

For financially disadvantaged applicants or those issued with prescribed pensioner concession cards, the charge payable is reduced by 25%.

Notice of decision

A notice of decision must be issued within 45 days (calendar days) from when the application was received and deemed valid (the application includes sufficient information to identify the documents). The Town aims to respond as soon as practical to any application and will negotiate with the applicant for an extension should the application be unusually large or require consultation with a significant number of third parties.

The written 'Notice of Decision' will include:

- The date on which the decision was made.
- The name and designation of the officer who made the decision.
- The reason why a document is considered exempt, or the fact that access is given to an edited document.
- If access is refused, the reason for claiming the document is exempt; and
- Information on the rights of review and the procedures to be followed to exercise those rights.

Access Arrangements

Access to documents can be by way of:

- An inspection; or
- A copy of a document

Documents include but are not limited to, maps, plans, diagrams, graphs, drawings, photographs, videos, audiotapes, CCTV Footage, and electronic records including emails.

Review process

The FOI Act provides for a review and appeal process as follows:

Internal review

Applications who are dissatisfied with a decision of the Town of Port Hedland are entitled to ask for an internal review. An application must be made in writing within 30 days of receiving the notice of the decision and must provide particulars of the decision to be reviewed.

There is no lodgement fee for an application for internal review, and there are no charges for dealing with an internal review request. The application will not be dealt with by the



person who made the initial decision, or by any person subordinate to the original decision maker. The outcome of the application for internal review may result in a confirmation, variation, or reversal of the initial decision under review. The applicant will be notified of the outcome within 15 days of the application. External review

If still dissatisfied with the Town's decision after the internal review has been completed, a review by the Information Commissioner can be sought. External Review requests must be made in writing within 60 days of the original decision to the Information Commissioner and give details of the application decision to which the request relates.

There is no charge for lodging a request for an external review with the Office of the Information Commissioner and details for contacting the office are:

By post, addressed to:

Office of the Information Commissioner
Albert Facey House
469 Wellington Street
PERTH WA 6000

In-person, at:

Office of the Information Commissioner
Albert Facey House
469 Wellington Street
PERTH WA 6000 (entry off Forrest Place)

Phone:

Telephone: (08) 6551 7888
Country Callers: 1800 621 244 (Western Australia only)
Facsimile: (08) 6551 7889

Copies of the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* and their subsidiary legislation can be found online by visiting the State Law Publisher website at <https://www.slp.wa.gov.au>.