Freedom of Information Statement

As at 30 June 2023

Freedom of Information Statement

This Freedom of Information Statement is published by Alexandrina Council in accordance with the requirements of the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*.

Alexandrina Council is pleased to comply with the legislation and welcomes enquires.

An updated Freedom of Information Statement will be published on our website annually to provide an overview of the types of information held by Council.

1. Structure and Functions of Council

1.1 Background

Alexandrina Council was formed on 1 July 1997 by the amalgamation f the District Council of Port Elliot and Goolwa, the District Council of Strathalbyn and a portion of the District Council of Willunga.

1.2 Structure of Council

In 2021, Alexandrina Council undertook a required Representation Review and as of 10 November 2022, Council consists of nine (9) Councillors and a popularly elected Mayor who will represent three (3) wards.

Ordinary meetings of Council are held at the Alexandrina Council Community Chambers "Wal Yuntu Warrin" Cadell Street, Goolwa commencing at 5:30pm (unless stated otherwise). Council Meetings are held once per month on the third Monday of each month. If a Council meeting date falls on a public holiday, the meeting will be held on the next corresponding business day. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

1.3 Functions of Council

In keeping with legislative requirements, the Council:

a. acts as a representative, informed, and responsible decision-maker in the interests of its community

b. provides and coordinates various public services and facilities and to develop its community and resources in a socially just and ecologically sustainable manner.

c. encourages and develops initiative within its community for improving the quality of life of the community

d. represents the interests of its community to the wider community.

The functions of Council are set out in section 7 of the *Local Government Act 1999* and require Council to:

a. plan at the local and regional level for the development and future requirements of its area;

b. provide services and facilities that benefit its area, its ratepayers and residents, and visitors (including general public services or facilities (including waste collection, control or disposal services or facilities), health, welfare or community services or facilities, and cultural or recreational services or facilities);

c.   determine the appropriate financial contribution to be made by ratepayers to the resources of Council;

d.   providing for the welfare, well-being and interests of individuals and groups within its community;

e.   taking measures to protect its area from natural and other hazards and to mitigate the effects of such hazards;

f.   manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment in an ecologically sustainable manner, and to improve amenity;

g.   provides infrastructure for its community and for development withing its area (including infrastructure that helps to protect any part of the local or broader community from any hazards or other event, or that assists in the management of an area);

h.   promote its area and provide an attractive climate and locations for the development of business, commerce, industry and tourism;

i.   establish or support organisations or programs that benefit people in its area or local government generally;

j.   manage and, if appropriate, develops public areas vested in, or occupied by, the Council;

k.   manage, improve and develop resources available to the Council'

l.   undertakes other functions and activities conferred by or under an Act.

1.4   Decision-making Forums and Processes

Decision-making is the most important activity undertaken both by Council and by Administration. Effective decision-making processes increases the likelihood that the decisions themselves will be in the best interests of the entire community. The Council can only make decisions by resolution, that is, a motion being considered at a formal meeting of Council.

Council meetings are formal meetings as defined under the *Local Government Act 1999* and are required to be open to the public, although under certain conditions, meetings can be closed when Council considers certain items of business, in confidence, as prescribed by the Act. In order to promote transparency and accountability required for good governance, the closure of meetings is applied as infrequently as possible.

Council Information Sessions are usually held on the second and fourth Mondays of the month and are held in order for training, discussions on upcoming projects or to explore a particular topic. These sessions are chaired by the Chief Executive Officer and are an opportunity for information sharing. Decisions are not made at this time. Members of the public may attend and listen to the discussion and presentations unless the Chief Executive Officer or Council has determined that the Information Session should be held in confidence in accordance with the provision of section 90A(4) of the *Local Government Act 1999.*

1.5   Council Committees

Committees may comprise of:

a. Council Members only

b. Council Members and Independent Members

c. Council Members and members of the community

The role and tasks of Committees are varied, however Committees are generally established to:

a. assist Council in the performance of its functions

b. inquire into matters and to provide an make recommendations to Council on matters within Council's responsibilities

c. provide advice to Council

All Committees are required to operate within their own Terms of Reference and may be required to make recommendations to Council. The recommendations will only take effect when adopted by Council.

1.5.1 Section 41 Committees

Committees established under the *Local Government Act 1999* are know as Section 41 Committees as this is where Council derives the power to establish such Committees. Each Committee performs a specific purpose and its recommendations are presented to Council as the decision-making body.

During 2022/2023 Alexandrina Council had the following Section 41 Committees:

a. Alexandrina Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee

b. Chief Executive Officer Performance Management Panel

c. Climate Emergency and Environment Committee

d. Heritage Advisory Committee

e. Ratalang Basham Beach and Horseshoe Bay Advisory Committee

f. South Australian Wooden Boat Festival Committee

g. Cemeteries Advisory Committee

1.5.2 Audit and Risk Committee

Alexandrina Council's Audit and Risk Committee is established under section 126 of the *Local Government Act 1999.* The Committee comprises of two Council Members and three independent members. The Mayor is ex-officio member of the Audit and Risk Committee. During 2022/2023 the Committee met to evaluate and provide advice to Council on ways to improve the effectiveness of Council's:

a. Financial management

b. Risk management

c. Internal and external audit

d. Internal controls

The Committee also presented recommendations to Council on the annual budget and business plan and Council policies.

1.5.3   Other Committees of Council

Fleurieu Regional Assessment Panel

The role of the Fleurieu Regional Assessment Panel (FRAP) is to make decisions on planning applications, as required, in accordance with the relevant Planning Policy. All members have a keen interest in community planning and have sound knowledge of the relevant legislation. All members have the appropriate qualifications and/or experience require to undertake a development assessment role. Its delegated powers are administered in accordance with the statutory requirements set out under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*. The Panel comprises four (4) independent members and one (1) Council Member. The FRAP also has an independent deputy member and an elected deputy member who are called upon if a member is unavailable. The Panel meetings are scheduled for the third Tuesday of the month (but are subject to change). Meetings are held at various locations within Alexandrina Council and District Council of Yankalilla areas. All meetings are open to the public.

Building Fire Safety Committee

The Building Fire Safety Committee (BFSC) is established in accordance with Section 157(17) of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* (The BFSC is established by Council for the purpose of acting as the "appropriate authority" with respect to all fire safety matters within commercial and public buildings. It also prescribes the membership of the committee which will consist of:

a.   a person who holds prescribed qualifications in building surveying appointed by the Council; and

b.   an Authorised Officer under Part 3 Division 5 or section 86 of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005*, and has been approved by the Chief Executive Officer of the South Australian Country Fire Service; and

c.   a person with expertise in the area of fire safety appointed by the Council; and

d.   if so determined by the Council a person selected by the Council.

The BFSC has been appointed for a three year period until 20 July 2023.

1.5.4   Advisory Panels to Council

A Council may also establish Advisory Panels as a mechanism for facilitating and improving community participation in the Council's decision-making process. While not formally established under legislation, advisory groups provide particular expertise and advice to help the Council make its decision, or help engage community resources and opinion.

Decisions or recommendations from the Advisory Panels will be presented to a formal meeting of Council for consideration.

Council has established the following Advisory Groups:

   a.   Alexandrina Sustainable Agricultural Round Table
   b.   Lot 10 Langhorne Creek Rd Project Steering Group
   c.   Economic Development Advisory Panel

1.6   Agendas and Minutes

Council's **'Code of Practice – Access to Council and Committee Meetings and Documents'** (Code) details Council's commitment to the principle of open and accountable government and encourages appropriate community participation in the business of Council.

The Code provides the community with information relating to:

a.   how to access agendas and minutes for meetings

b.   public access to documents and meetings

c.   the process to exclude the public from meetings

d.   matters which the Council or Committee, may order that the public be excluded from a meeting

e.   how the Council will apply the confidentiality provisions of the Act

f.   how confidentiality orders will be reviewed

g.   accountability and reporting to the community

h.   the availability of the Code

i.   grievances about the use of the Code by Council.

Agendas of Council and Committees are placed on Council's website not less than three days prior to the meetings.

Minutes of the meetings are placed on Council's website within five days following the meeting.

1.7   Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer and other Officers have delegated authority from Council to make decisions on a number of specified administrative and policy matters. These delegations are listed in the Delegations Register which is publicly available for inspection on Council website.

2.   Public Participation

2.1   Council Meetings

Members of the Public have a number of options whereby they may put forward their views on particular issues before Council in accordance with Alexandrina Council's **'Code of Practice – Meeting Procedures'**:

a.   **Deputations** – a member of the public may address the Council personally or on behalf of a group of residents.

b.   **Presentations to Council** – a member of the public may address the Council for up to five (5) minutes on any issue relevant to Council

    c.   **Petitions** – written petitions can be addressed to the Council on any issue within the Council's jurisdiction

    d.   **Written Requests** – a member of the public can write to the Council on any Council policy, activity or service

    e.   **Council Members** – members of the public can contact a Council Member to discuss any issue relevant to Council.

Council also has social media platforms including, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

3.   Services for the Community

Council makes decision on policy issues relating to the services that are provided to ratepayers, residents, and members of the public. These services are listed below and include but are not limited to:

Administration Services	Development Assessment
Animal Management	Development Compliance
Asset and Risk Management	Development Policy
Boat Ramps and Jetties	Disaster Management and Planning
Building Fire Safety	Dog and Cat Management
Bushfire Management	Economic Development
Car Parks	Effluent Drainage
Citizenships	Emergency Management
Civic Events	Environmental Health
Clean Air Controls	Finance General
Cemeteries	Fire Prevention
Commercial Properties	Fleet Management
Communications	Food Premises Inspections
Community Consultation	Footpaths and Cycle Tracks
Community Development	Foreshore Facilities
Community Grants	Governance
Community Halls and Buildings	Heritage
Community Safety	Human Resources
Community Services Groups	Immunisation Programs
Corporate Planning	Information Management
Council Member Relations	Information Services
Customer Services	Information Technology

Library Services	Road Reserves
Litter Control/Waste Management	Service Centres/Depots
Marketing	Signage
Natural Resource Management	Sport and Recreation Facilities
Parking Control	Stormwater Drainage
Parks, Gardens and Reserves	Strategic Land Use
Pest, Plant and Weeds	Strategic Planning
Playground Equipment	Street Lighting
Policy Development/Advice	Street Numbering
Private Works	Street Sweeping
Property Access	Street Tree Maintenance
Public Conveniences	Town Planning
Public Lighting	Vandalism
Public Relations	Waste Control Systems
Public Seating	Waste Management
Purchasing and Contract Management	Waste Water System
Rates and Assessments	Water Catchment Management
Road Construction and Maintenance	Work Health and Safety
Road Opening/Closing	

3.1   Community Consultation:

Alexandrina Council is committed to open, honest, accountable and responsible decision-making. Council's Public Consultation Policy (Policy) facilitates effective communication between Council and its community, encouraging community involvement and partnership in planning and decision-making. The Policy sets out the steps that Council will take in relation to public consultation and ensures the most cost effective methods of informing and involving the community, which are appropriate for specific circumstances and consultation topics are used. A copy of the Policy is available via Council's website.

Consultation with our community can take a variety of forms including, but not limited to:

- posted circulars and letters
- questionnaires and surveys
- village conversations, community forums or local area meetings

- advertising and information in local newspapers

- various pamphlets, posters, flyers or publications

In accordance with its Community Consultation Policy, Alexandrina Council consults with ratepayers and local residents on issues which affect their neighbourhood. Specific examples include:

a. **Reserve Development** – property owners and residents may be consulted on the types of facilities and equipment required during the design of new public reserves or major upgrades.

b. **Community Forums** – forums are held from time to time to allow residents to view plans and proposals and to voice their views on any issue affecting their ward or the region generally.

c. **Development Applications** – residents and ratepayers are notified of some Development Applications requiring the approval of Council. Some types of applications are exempt from public notification by the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*. When an application is publicly notified, residents and ratepayers have the opportunity to write to Council expressing their view of the application and to subsequently address the Fleurieu Regional Assessment Panel.

d. **MySay website** – MySay is a consultation hub where the public can engage with Council *when and where* it suits the individual as well as providing Council with the opportunity to connect with the community on matter of interest to many.

4. Access to Council Records

4.1 Documents Available for Inspection

The following documents are available to view on Council's website. Copies of the documents may be purchased as per Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges. Availability of documents will be facilitated with due respect for legislation and procedure limitations.

- Annual Business Plan and Budget
- Annual Business Plan and Budget Summary
- Annual Financial Statements
- Annual Report
- Campaign Donations Returns
- Charters for our Section 43 subsidiaries:
    - Fleurieu Regional Aquatic Centre Authority
    - Fleurieu Regional Waste Authority
    - Adelaide Hills Region Waste Authority
    - Southern and Hills Local Government Association
- Clayton Bay Foreshore Master Plan
- Climate Emergency Action Plan
- Community Land Management Plan
- A2040 Strategic Plan (includes Kungun Ngarrindjeri Yunnan Agreement)
- Council and Committee Agendas
- Council and Committee Minutes
- Council By-laws
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2021-2024

- Dog and Cat Management Plan
- Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027
- Environment Action Plan
- Freedom of Information Statement
- Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan
- Integrated Water Management Plan
- Long Term Financial Plan
- Master Plan for Ratalang Basham Beach Conservation Reserve
- Regional Public Health Plan
- Register of Community Land
- Delegations Register
- Register of Development
- Register of Council Members Allowances and Benefits
- Register of Council Members Gifts and Benefits
- Register of Employees Gifts and Benefits
- Register of High Risk Manufactured Water Systems
- Register of Land Management Agreements
- Register of Public Streets and Roads
- Register of Wastewater Works Approval
- Roadside Vegetation Management Plan
- Schedule of Fees and Charges
- State Emergency Management Plan
- Terms of Reference for Council's Committees
- Tourism ad Visitor Strategy
- Voters Roll

4.2   Policies and Procedures

The following Policies and Procedures are available for public inspection on Council's website. Copies of the document may be purchased as per Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

- Acquisition and Disposal of Land Policy
- Acquisition and Disposal of Road Policy
- Alexandrina Libraries Collection Development Policy
- Alexandrina Libraries Service Policy
- Alexandrina Libraries User Code of Conduct
- Alexandrina Pop-up Business Activation Policy
- Annual Budget and Budget Performance Policy
- Arts and Culture Policy
- Asset Accounting Policy
- Behavioural Management Policy - Model
- Building Upgrade Finance Policy
- Caretaker Policy
- Cemeteries and Memorials Policy
- Climate Change Policy
- Communication Policy
- Community Donations Policy
- Community Loan Policy
- Complaints Policy

- Complaints Handling Procedure
- Corporate Credit Card Policy
- Council Members – Information Management Policy
- Council Members Induction for New Councils Policy
- Council Member Training and Development Policy
- Council Members Allowances, Benefits, Support and Facilities Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Development Assessment Fee Waiver and Refund Policy
- Disposal of Council Assets Policy
- Election Signage Guidelines
- Emergency Management Policy
- Employee Entertainment and Hospitality Policy
- Enforcement Policy
- Financial Internal Control Policy
- Fraud, Corruption, Misconduct and Maladministration Prevention Policy
- Grants Policy
- Hardship Policy
- Information Management Policy
- Internal Review of Council Decisions
- Kerbside Waste Collection Policy
- Lease and Licence Policy
- Mobile Food Vendor Procedure
- Naming of Roads, Reserves and Public Places Policy
- Order Making Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Privacy Procedure
- Privately Funded Planning and Design Code Amendments Policy
- Privately Funded Planning and Design Code Amendments Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Procurement Procedure
- Prudential Management
- Public Consultation Policy
- Public Consultation Procedure
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedure
- Rating Policy
- Requests for Services Policy
- Requests for Services Procedure
- Risk Management Policy
- Risk Management Framework
- Safe Environment Policy
- Safe Environment Code of Conduct
- Safe Environment Reporting Procedure
- Safe Environment Screening Guidelines
- Signs, Banners and Flags Policy
- Temporary Road Closure
- Treasury Management Policy
- Tree Management Policy
- Tree Management Procedure

- Unsolicited Proposal Policy
- Unreasonable Complaints Policy and Procedure

4.2 Extract from Fees and Charges

Item	Unit Charge	Fee/Charge
Register of Fees and Charges	Document	$30.00
Rate Assessment Record Copy	Extract	$30.00
Register of Public Streets and Roads Copy	Extract	$30.00
Register of Council Members Allowances and Benefits Copy	Document/Extract	$30.00
Register of Employees Gifts and Benefits Copy	Document/Extract	$30.00
Building and Planning approvals, documentation and plans – upon valid request	Application	$65.00
Complete copy of Council's Delegations Register	Document	$155.00
Copy of Council Policy	Page	$0.75
Council Meeting Agenda Copy	Page	$0.75
Council Meeting Minutes Copy	Page	$0.75
Committee Agendas and Minutes Copy	Page	$0.75
Council Policy Manual Copy	Page	$0.75
Code of Conduct Copy	Page	$0.75
Council's Annual Business Plan and Budget Copy	Document	$30.00
Annual Report Copy	Document	$30.00
Annual Financial Statements Copy	Document	$25.00
Council By-laws Certified copy	Page	$0.80

4.3 Other Information Requests

Request for other information not included in clause 4.1 or 4.2 above will be considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* (FOI Act). Under this legislation, an application fee and where appropriate, a search fee must be forwarded with the completed request form, unless the applicant is granted an exemption.

Should the applicant require copies of any documents inspected pursuant to a Freedom of Information request, the charges as set out under the FOI Act will apply.

Freedom of Information requests should be addressed to:

The Freedom of Information Officer:

Alexandrina Council
PO Box 21
GOOLWA SA 5214

or via email – alex@alexandrina.sa.gov.au

Forms are available from the Council Office at Goolwa or Council's website.

Applications will be responded to as soon as possible within the statutory 30 days of Council receiving a valid completed Freedom of Information request form together with the appropriate application fee.

5.   Amendment to Council Records

A member of the public may request access to Council documents containing reference to their personal affairs by making a request under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*. They must request a correction to any information about themselves that is incomplete, inaccurate, misleading or out of date.

To gain access to such Council records, a member of the public must complete a Freedom of Information Request Form as set out in clause 4.4 above, outlining the records that they wish to inspect.

6.   Alexandrina Council Freedom of Information Requests

Council determined 14 Freedom of Information applications during 2022/2023

7.   Location of Council Offices

Alexandrina Council's principal office is located in Goolwa.

Goolwa Council Office

11 Cadell Street
Goolwa SA 5214

Telephone (08) 8555 7000

Goolwa customer service centre is open Monday to Friday from 9am until 5pm and on Saturdays from 9am until 12 noon.

Strathalbyn Library and Customer Service Centre

1 Coleman Terrace
Strathalbyn SA 5255

Telephone (08) 8555 7000

Strathalbyn Library and customer service centre is open Monday to Friday from 9am until 5pm and on Saturdays from 9am until 12 noon.

8.   Copies of the Information Statement

The Information Statement is available on Council's website
www.alexandrina.sa.gov.au

A copy of this **Freedom of Information Statement** may be purchased from Council's offices as per Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.