

Council Ordinary Meeting	
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Authorisation: Charlie Dill	

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12 October 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERIM ADMINISTRATOR OF IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL

FROM: ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RE: PROPOSED NEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION:

This is a report by the Chief Executive Officer dated 12 October 2018 concerning a new Committee Structure that aligns with Council's strategic framework as detailed in Advance Ipswich 2015 Community Plan (Community Plan).

BACKGROUND:

1. The role of a local government

Section 70 of the *Queensland Constitution 2001* (the Qld Constitution) recognises there must be a system of local government in Queensland and that the system is to consist of a number of local governments. Section 71(1) further states that:

"A local government is an elected body that is charged with the good rule and local government of a part of Queensland allocated to the body."

Further, Section 12 of the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act) states that it is the responsibility of all councillors to represent the current and future interests of the residents of the local government area as well as:

- “(3) (a) *ensuring the local government—*
 - (i) discharges its responsibilities under this Act; and*
 - (ii) achieves its corporate plan; and*
 - (iii) complies with all laws that apply to local governments;*
- (b) providing high quality leadership to the local government and the community;*

- (c) *participating in council meetings, policy development, and decision-making, for the benefit of the local government area;*
- (d) *being accountable to the community for the local government's performance.*
- (6) *When performing a responsibility, a councillor must serve the overall public interest of the whole local government area."*

To achieve the requirements of Section 12 of the Act, elected representatives and the supporting administration, at the direction of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), must be accountable, effective, efficient and sustainable to deliver the best results for the community in accordance with the Local Government Act Principles:

- (a) *transparent and effective processes, and decision-making in the public interest; and*
- (b) *sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services; and*
- (c) *democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement; and*
- (d) *good governance of, and by, local government; and*
- (e) *ethical and legal behaviour of councillors and local government employees.*

2. Establishment of Standing Committees

In accordance with Section 264(1) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the Regulation) a local government may appoint, from its Councillors, standing committees or special committees; and advisory committees to discuss and debate strategic issues (leaving decisions in relation to operational matters and the day-to-day management of Council, to the CEO). Standing committees are defined in the Act as:

"... a committee of its councillors that meets to discuss the topic decided by the local government when establishing the committee."

Councillors and the administration come together at committee meetings where the councillors use their combined knowledge and experience, coupled with the advice of the administration, to make decisions for the good governance and the betterment of the community they serve. At the end of such meetings those involved should be satisfied that the local government and community have gained maximum benefit from the decisions made.

3. Council's Current Committee Structure

Council's current standing committee structure includes 10 standing committees, which resulted in the majority of Councillors each being the Chair of at least one committee and would therefore be the spokesperson to the community and media in relation to relevant committee decisions/matters.

A review of Council's current committee structure has identified inefficiencies in relation to the committee structure for example:

- There is no clear alignment between Council’s two key strategic plans – the Community Plan (“Advance Ipswich”) and Corporate Plan – and the current committee structure. Sound governance principles suggest that, to ensure strategies and programs are delivered effectively, accountability and reporting lines should be directed towards these outcomes. The current committee structure does not provide a substantive basis for council and the community to be aware of progress towards the strategic goals outlined in the Advance Ipswich and Corporate Plan.
- Although standing committees are, where possible, aligned to departments there is often a crossover due to the volume of committees. Departments have to submit reports for up to 4 committees which requires attendance at all 4 committees leading to lengthy time away from their departments and business as usual activities - is a resource heavy burden.
- The current committee responsibilities document (refer Attachment A) is very broad. As a result, staff often struggle to determine to which standing committee a report should be submitted.
- Departments regularly do not have any reports to submit to standing committees. However staff felt the need to prepare reports to ensure there were agenda items for all committees each month. This resulted in the preparation of reports with no strategic decisions needing to be made with recommendations being that the committee ‘receive and note’ the report. Preparation of such reports is an unnecessary administration burden on staff with no strategic or operational outcomes or benefit. Committee reports and traditional media releases are not the only mechanism for promoting council to the greater community as Council’s Communication and Media Branch utilise a number of platforms to disseminating information on the good work of Council, such as social media, traditional media, events and forums
- Administratively the resources required to ensure the committee process runs smoothly is very high considering over 50% of the reports submitted are receive and note reports that may have been able to be dealt with by another means.

4. Other Local Governments’ Committee Structures

Most medium to large Queensland councils operate under a committee system whereby detailed deliberation on most matters is carried out at a standing committee, with the committee making recommendations to the Council. Matters are the subject of detailed deliberation at a council ordinary meeting only if Councillors believe further discussion is required and generally are exceptional and of such importance that the whole council should consider them in the first instance.

A review of other Queensland council committee structures was undertaken (refer Attachment B). It was discovered the following councils have standing committees:

- Gold Coast City Council

- Townsville City Council
- Toowoomba Regional Council
- Logan City Council
- Rockhampton Regional Council

OPTIONS:

The Interim Administrator, Interim Management Committee, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officers have discussed standing committee structure options. Consideration was given to:

- aligning standing committees with Departments
- three (3) draft structures that tried to cluster Departments' functions and responsibilities thereby creating a structure that worked more efficiently
- a quadruple bottom line approach i.e. four (4) standing committees named to reflect the community's social, environmental, economic and civic leadership concerns/issues and future sustainability of the city

Following such discussions and review of other council committee structures it is proposed that the new structure align to council's strategic theme as articulated in the Community Plan

- Strengthening our local economy and building prosperity
- Managing growth and delivering key infrastructure
- Caring for the Community
- Caring for the Environment
- Listening, Leading and Financial Management

5. A Standing Committee Structure Aligned to Strategic Direction

Development of the current Community Plan required the design and implementation of a community engagement activity to ensure the learnings/findings of the engagement would:

- make the Community Plan a better document by ensuring it shares a collective vision; shapes the future development of the city and reflects the aspirations, values, experiences and priorities of the community the Plan is meant to serve
- develop a consensus around a desired future for the city
- build support for Council's role in working toward these futures
- obtain essential data about the community's values, attitudes, expectations and priorities for infrastructure and services

The finalised Community Plan:

- provides a shared vision for the future
- identifies key themes and areas for action
- provides information for the planning and service delivery of Council's corporate and operational plans and budgets

- includes a monitoring and review process
- can be utilised by local community groups, the development industry, business groups and other stakeholder groups to align their development and growth programs with Ipswich City Council

The Community Plan is underpinned by Council's 5 year 2017-2022 Corporate Plan. Division 1 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* requires a local government to prepare a 5 year corporate plan and discharge its responsibilities in a way that is consistent with its Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan must:

- (a) outline the strategic direction of the local government; and*
- (b) state the performance indicators for measuring the local government's progress in achieving its vision for the future of the local government area; and*
- (c) include the following information for each commercial business unit—*
 - (i) an outline of the objectives of the commercial business unit;*
 - (ii) an outline of the nature and extent of the significant business activity the commercial business unit will conduct.*

6. Mapping proposed Standing Committee Structure/Community Plan Strategy/Committee Responsibilities and responsible department

Both the current Community Plan and Corporate Plan are structured under the same strategic Themes and Goals. It is proposed the standing committee structure align as per Table 1. The linkages between the proposed Standing Committees, Community Plan Strategy, Committee Responsibilities and responsible Departments have been mapped (refer Attachment C).

Theme	Goal	Proposed Standing Committee
Strengthening our local economy and building prosperity	Provide jobs for the growing population and prosperity for the city through business diversification, adapting and responding to technological advances and creating an attractive economic environment for business investment	Economic Development
Managing growth and delivering key infrastructure	Plan and develop a vibrant and sustainable city that accommodates the needs of a diverse and growing population and economy	Growth and Infrastructure
Caring for the Community	Create a city that values its past and embraces opportunities to work together for the betterment of the community.	Communities
Caring for the Environment	Important areas of native habitat are conserved, the city's important	Environment

Theme	Goal	Proposed Standing Committee
	waterways are protected and their water quality enhanced, and the city responds appropriately to climate change and uses resources prudently.	
Listening, Leading and Financial Management	Visionary and accessible leadership is provided that consults and communicates on key decisions and delivers sound financial management and good governance outcomes.	Governance

Table 1

As well as the above 5 standing committees council must establish an Audit Committee as per Section 105 of the *Local Government Act 2009*. An Audit committee is a committee that:

(a) monitors and reviews—

- (i) the integrity of financial documents; and*
- (ii) the internal audit function; and*
- (iii) the effectiveness and objectivity of the local government’s internal auditors;*
- and*

(b) makes recommendations to the local government about any matters that the audit committee considers need action or improvement.

Council has adopted an Audit committee as per the Act however this report is to deal with standing committees.

7. Benefits of a Strategic Standing Committee Structure:

The proposed committee structure will:

- ensure the subject matter and discussion regarding reports is held at a high strategic level therefore focusing on Community Plan outcomes and that council decisions and delivery of key corporate projects is in keeping with Act Principles as referenced in Section 1 of this report
- provide linkages to the strategic Community Plan, Corporate and Operational Plans, and inform the development and adoption of council’s long term financial plan and asset management plan. As the topics of such reports are of high level strategic value, there will be a decrease of reports regarding operational matters and “receive and note” reports historically prepared to provide an agenda for a committee meeting being placed on Agendas

- enhance interdepartmental and holistic strategic planning and project delivery while highlighting project interdependencies, risks and issues, etc., of Community/Corporate Plan initiatives. This holistic approach to strategic committee reporting will break down the risk of departments working in isolation or in a 'silo'
- provide Councillors with better knowledge and oversight of major strategic initiatives, allowing them to monitor corporate plan projects and outcomes as per their responsibilities under Section 12(3)(ii) of the Act *"ensuring the local government achieves its corporate plan"*
- provide an opportunity for the development of a media strategy regarding the reporting of council decisions linked to Community Plan outcomes, allowing the Chair and other members of the standing committee to take a lead role in informing the community of major council strategic initiatives
- ensure staff prepare well-structured strategic reports and recommendations clearly identifying linkages to the strategic Community Plan and corporate planning documents while emphasising policy, budgetary, legal and risk management implications
- clarify for staff and the wider community the responsibilities and subjects of committee reports to be presented at standing committees as the strategic alignment to the Community Plan, Corporate and Operational Plans
- provide an opportunity to establish five community reference groups to assist the standing committees deliver strategies within each theme. (NB: the establishment of the reference groups will be the subject of a future report to the Governance Committee).

8. Standing Committee Terms of Reference

Each Standing Committee will have a Terms of Reference (ToR) which will contain clear and specific information on what the committee is trying to achieve, who the members are, when and where they meet, etc.

A ToR has been developed for each Standing Committee (refer attachments D to G). Although care has been taken to identify all the Functions and Services the respective Standing Committee will be responsible for, it is anticipated the more Functions or Services will be identified moving forward and the ToR will be amended accordingly.

9. Days and Times of Standing Committees for the Remainder of 2018

For the remainder of the 2018 calendar year, it is proposed that standing committee meetings take place in the week prior to Council ordinary meetings at the times and days set out below:

Standing Committee	Day	Time
Economic Development	Tuesday	8.30 am
Growth and Infrastructure	Tuesday	9.30 am or 10 minutes after the conclusion of the Economic Development Committee, whichever is the earlier.
Communities	Tuesday	10.30 am or 10 minutes after the conclusion of the Growth and Infrastructure Committee, whichever is the earlier.
Environment	Tuesday	11.30 am or 10 minutes after the conclusion of the Communities, whichever is the earlier.
Governance	Tuesday	12.30 pm or 10 minutes after the conclusion of the Environment Committee, whichever is the earlier.

Committee meetings scheduled for November 2018 will be held at the same time of day as those above, but on the days of the week specified below:

Meeting Dates	Meeting Days
7 November	Wednesday (<i>as per Tuesday schedule above</i>)

10. Minutes of Standing Committee Meetings

At the 2016 post-election meeting Council resolved:

“That all standing committees (with the exception of the Specific Purposes Committee) other committees and boards formed by Council, the functions of which are only to advise or recommend to the minuted Council meeting, provide written reports of their deliberations advice or recommendations and be exempted from keeping minutes of proceedings in accordance with section 272 (6) of the Local Government Regulation.”

It should be noted that, in keeping with the local government principle relating to *“transparent and effective processes and decision making in the public interest”* the Interim Administrator has ensured standing committee reports now include a statement of reasons for any amendments to an officer’s recommendation as well as a written record of any significant points of discussion regarding the report and its recommendation/s.

11. Attendance of Interim Management Committee at Standing Committees

Under Section 205 of the Act, the Minister appointed a committee of persons to assist the interim Administrator to perform their responsibilities. This committee is known as the Interim Management Committee (IMC).

IMC members can take part in the debate at a standing committee if the Interim Administrator passes a resolution to determine a process for their attendance. Such a resolution meets the requirement of sections 12 and 13 of Council's Local Law 2 – Council Meetings which state:

- 12 Attendance at committee meeting
The local government or a committee may, by resolution determine a process for attendance of persons at committee meetings.
- 13 Participation in committee meetings
Any person, not being a councillor of the local government or a member of the committee, must not take part in a committee debate unless the chairperson invites the person to address the committee upon the matter before it.

Therefore it is proposed that the Interim Administrator pass a resolution at a Council meeting that all members of the IMC attend all future committee meetings of Council and take part in the debate at those committee meetings.

CONCLUSION:

Following a comprehensive review of Council's current committee structure, desktop review of other local government committee structures, discussion between the Interim Administrator, Interim Management Committee, Acting CEO and Chief Operating Officers, it is proposed that:

- Council adopt the below standing committees structure which align to the Advance Ipswich Community Plan strategies which is supported by the Corporate Plan and annual Operational Plan actions and outcomes (refer Table 1 on page 5 and Attachment C):

Proposed Standing Committee Structure

- Economic Development
 - Growth and Infrastructure
 - Communities
 - Environment
 - Governance
- Amend the day and time of committee meetings as detailed in section 8 of this report and keep the minutes of standing committees in accordance with section 272 of the Regulation.
 - Pass a resolution as per Section 12 of Local Law 2 Council Meetings determining that all members of the IMC attend all future committee meetings of Council and take part in the debate at those committee meetings

ATTACHMENTS:

Name of Attachment	Attachment
Council's current Standing Committee Structure	Attachment A
Other Local Governments' Committee Structures	Attachment B
Mapped Linkages	Attachment C
Terms of Reference Template – Economic Development	Attachment D
Terms of Reference Template – Growth and Infrastructure	Attachment E
Terms of Reference Template – Communities	Attachment F
Terms of Reference Template – Environment	Attachment G
Terms of Reference Template – Governance	Attachment H

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Interim Administrator of Ipswich City Council resolve:

- A. That the previous decisions of Council, as per Items 1, 3 and 4, "Establishment and Responsibilities of Committees and Boards" adopted at the Post Election Meeting of 8 April 2016 and Recommendations A, B and D of the Officer's Report adopted at the Council Ordinary Meeting of 19 September 2017, be repealed.
- B. That the committee structure as detailed in the report by the Chief Executive Officer dated 12 October 2018, be adopted.
- C. That days and times of standing committees for the remainder of 2018 as detailed in the report by the Acting Chief Executive Officer dated 12 October 2018, be adopted
- D. That the Terms of Reference for the proposed standing committee structure as detailed in Attachment D to H of the report by the Chief Executive Officer dated 12 October 2018, be adopted.
- E. That members of the Interim Management Committee attend all future committee meetings of Council and take part in the debate at those committee meetings as per sections 12 and 13 of Council's Local Law 2 – Council Meetings.
- F. That Chief Operating Officer, Arts, Social Development and Community Engagement, prepare a report regarding the establishment of five community reference groups to assist the standing committee committees deliver strategies within each theme to a future Governance Committee.

Angi Harms
Project Officer
CORPORATE SERVICES

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Jeffery Keech

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Charlie Dill

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER