

Candidate Information Session

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION 2025

Welcome



What is Local Government?

- It is the level of government closest to the people in your community.
- It is responsible for making sure everyone in the community has access to important local services.
- It helps to shape the community's future.

About the Shire of Coolgardie

Physical Characteristics:

- Total Shire area 30,400km²
- Population 3,686 (2021 Census)
- Three towns: Coolgardie, Kambalda, Widgiemooltha - plus Kurrawang Community.
- Neighbouring local governments: Shire of Dundas, Shire of Menzies, Shire of Yilgarn, and City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

About the Shire of Coolgardie (cont'd)

Council:

- Consists seven (7) elected members including Shire President (no wards).
- **Ordinary Council Meetings** are held on 4th Tuesday of every month (except for December which is held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month), commencing at 4.30pm.
- **Information Sessions** are held on 2nd Tuesday of every month, commencing at 1.00pm.
- Changes to the *Local Government Act 1995* in 2021 require all Councils to adopt a Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and **Candidates**.
- Where a complaint is received that a candidate has infringed the Code of Conduct, the complaint must be dealt with by Council if the candidate is elected.

About the Shire of Coolgardie (cont'd)

Administration:

- Full-time employees – 31
- Part-time employees – 17
- Restructure in progress – proposed departmental areas:
 - Office of Chief Executive
 - Executive Manager Finance & Corporate Services
 - Executive Manager Governance & Workplace
 - Executive Manager Infrastructure & Assets
 - Executive Manager Community, Regulatory & Development Services

Current Issues

- Threat of Boundary Adjustment / Amalgamation with City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.
- Continuation of financial and organisational recovery.
- Loss of community trust and confidence.
- Disposal of Bluebush Village.
- Coolgardie Waste Facility transition away from Class 3 Waste and contamination at the Kambalda Waste Facility needs to be addressed.
- Potential lease of Kambalda Airport that incorporates the Lessee undertaking large scale upgrades.

Why Stand for Council?

- To contribute to the development, improvement and advancement of the Shire of Coolgardie.
- To represent the interests of Residents and Ratepayers - being people living, working, and owning property in the Shire.
- To make important strategic decisions that impact the way people live.
- By serving on Council at this time, you will be part of the leadership body contributing directly to the Shire's recovery and rebuilding.

Responsibilities of a Councillor

- You represent **all** Shire electors, ratepayers and residents.
- You provide leadership and guidance to community members.
- You facilitate communication between the community and Council.
- You make important decisions on behalf of the community, for the Administration to then undertake.
- Councillors **cannot** direct staff, make decisions outside of Council meetings, purchase items, or commit funding.

Responsibilities of a Councillor (cont'd)

- Attend Council meetings, committee meetings, events (where required) and other activities as required.
- Participate in strategic decision making.
- Act in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995* and Shire of Coolgardie Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates.
- **You must undertake the required mandatory training.**

What Decisions Do Councillors Make?

- Develop a strategic vision for the community's future and establish a plan for the Shire to meet that vision.
- Make decisions on land use planning.
- Oversee the financial management of the Shire.
- Develop and review Shire policies, delegations and local laws.
- CEO recruitment and performance reviews, but not other employees as all other staff are employed by the CEO.
- Councillors must declare Financial, Proximity and Indirect Interests when making decisions.
- Also must provide a Primary Return, Annual Return and other documents each year, and if failing to provide within the set times the Councillor must be reported in breach of the LG Act.

Communication Dos & Don'ts

Pre-Election

- **Golden Rule!** When running your election campaign, remember what your mother said: *if you can't say something nice...just don't say it.*
- **Never denigrate other candidates, current Councillors or Shire staff as part of your campaign** – extremely divisive, likely negative consequences – never ends well.
- Everything you say will be scrutinized – make a positive impression and communicate with care. If in doubt, get advice from CEO.
- Stay in your own lane - this period is the time for your 'sales pitch' - what will **you** bring to the table? Focus on your own campaign.
- Reminder the Shire's Code of Conduct is applicable to all candidates – any adverse commentary deemed in breach of the Code will have consequences; you jeopardize your chance for success.

Communication Dos & Don'ts (cont'd)

Post-Election

- Whether you are successful or not, **be gracious** - always a good look.
- If you didn't win a seat this time, publicly congratulating the winners will be respected and remembered.
- If you did win a seat on Council, publicly thank your constituents and acknowledge your opponents.
- Venting or gloating on social media – never a good look. Often results in negative public perception (remember the Golden Rule!)

Communication Dos & Don'ts (cont'd)

Once on Council

- Adherence to Shire's social media policy and Code of Conduct.
- You are now an advocate and "PR person" for the Shire of Coolgardie.
- Importance of consistent messaging, particularly when decisions are made that you don't agree with – critical for fostering public confidence in Council.
- There may be appropriate times to engage with the public on social media to address issues or misinformation.
- **HOWEVER!** Exercise caution before posting anything – if in doubt, check with the CEO. The Shire Admin has communications staff who address these matters on behalf of Council.

Declarations of Office

- All newly elected members must make a Declaration of Office before they can act in the office of Councillor.
- A Declaration must be made before a prescribed person (eg, Justice of the Peace).
- Following the 2025 elections, Councillors-elect will make their Declarations of Office immediately at a Special Council Meeting that will be held the next week after the election.

Declarations of Office (cont'd)

- The Shire President and Deputy Shire President will be elected from the sitting Councillors.
- This is conducted through a formal election process facilitated by the CEO.
- At this meeting Elected Members will also be elected to represent Council on external Committees and Working Groups.

Council & Committee Meetings

- **Ordinary Council Meetings** – 4th Tuesday of every month (12 months a year). Open to the public.
- **Information Sessions** - 2nd Tuesday of every month. Not open to the public.
- Audit Committee, advisory and working groups generally meet as required.
- All committee and advisory/working group positions become vacant on LG election day and new members will be appointed at the Special Council Meeting after the election.
- **Special Council Meetings** are called when there is an urgent item that needs to be addressed.

Council & Committee Meetings (cont'd)

- Councillors are required to present to Council Meetings in business attire.
- Council Meetings go for 2-3 hours on average, with preparation time prior to the meeting taking up to 5-6 hours.
- Information Sessions can go for 2-3 hours, and required preparation time is approximately 4 hours.
- You should put aside every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month for Council business. The Administration does its best to organize other meetings and activities like training on these days to lessen the impact and reduce travel.
- A light lunch or dinner is provided and will be advised prior to the meeting.

Post-Election Processes

- Information about post-election procedures will be issued to candidates following formal lodgement of nominations with the Returning Officer.
- This will assist you with scheduling, should your campaign be successful and you are elected to Council.

Question Time



End of Presentation
Thank you...
and all the best! ☐

