

SIGNIFICANT DECISION MAKING

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1. OBJECTIVE

1. To provide guidance to the community and Council for the purpose of identifying significance in relation to the issues, proposals, decisions or other matters which substantively affect the lives or future of the City of Karratha's community.
2. To ensure that Council is informed of and carefully considers the consequences of decisions of significance during the process of decision making.
3. To help determine the appropriate means to engage with the community on a particular issue, proposal, decision or matter.

2. PRINCIPLES

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to Council in determining the significance of proposals and decisions. It includes procedures, criteria and thresholds that Council will use in assessing which issues, proposal, decisions and other matters are significant.

Council will ordinarily consult on any matters of significance through the preparation, review of amendment of its strategic community plan or through its annual corporate plan. Where a matter is deemed significant Council will consider consulting with the community.

The more significant a matter or decision the more likely Council will need to:

1. Consider the long term implications of the decisions.
2. Consider the impact on the strategic community plan and annual corporate plan.
3. Consider the consistency of the decision with adopted strategies and plans.
4. Consider engagement and consultation with the community on their views.

2.1. Definitions

"Significance" – in relation to any issue, proposal, decision or other matter that concerns or is before the Council, means the degree of importance of the issue, proposal or matter as assessed by the Council in terms of its likely impact and likely consequences for:

1. The current and future social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the City.
2. Any persons who are likely to be particularly affected by or interested in the issue, proposal, decision or matter.
3. The capacity of the Council to perform its role and the financial and other costs of doing so.

"Significant" – in relation to any issue, proposal, decision or other matter means that the issue, proposal, decision or other matter has a high degree of significance.

"Strategic asset" – in relation to the assets held by the City, means a group of assets that the Council needs to retain if it is to maintain its capacity to achieve or promote any outcome the Council determines to be important to the current or future well-being of the community.

“Unbudgeted” – means a new proposal or decision about a proposal that is not in the current strategic community plan nor in the current annual corporate plan and which requires Council to raise new funding. This does not include reasonable changes in cost to existing proposals where the scope of the proposal or level of service delivered is not significantly changed, as these can be dealt with through overall fiscal management and prioritisation.

2.2. General Approach

In considering whether an issue, proposal, decision or other matter is of significance under this policy, Council will be guided by the following:

1. The likely impact/consequences of the issue, proposal, decision or other matter on the current and future social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the City.
2. The parties likely to be particularly affected by or interested in the issue, proposal, decision or other matter.
3. The likely impact/consequence of the issue, proposal, decision or other matter from the perspective of those parties.
4. The financial and non-financial costs and implications of the issue, proposal, decision or other matter having regard to Council’s capacity to perform its role.

In determining whether an issue, proposal, decision or other matter is significant Council will consider the thresholds and apply the criteria and procedures set out below.

2.3. Thresholds

When undertaking a process to determine which issue, proposal, decision or other matter is significant, Council will recognise the following thresholds. If any of these thresholds are triggered the matter will be significant.

1. If the cost of a proposal or decision is estimated at 5% or more of the total rates of the Council as shown in the annual corporate plan or strategic plan for the financial year.
2. If the proposal or decision will incur unbudgeted capital expenditure exceeding 5% of the total value of Council’s assets, or where spent on a strategic asset as a whole, exceed 5% of that assets value.
3. Entry into partnership with the private sector to carry out a significant activity.

Where any issue, proposal, decision or other matter does not trigger one or more of the above thresholds, significance shall be considered against the criteria contained in this policy.

2.4. Criteria

The more tangible the impact or consequence of the issue, proposal, decision or other matter is, the higher the likelihood of significance.

If an issue, proposal, decision or other matter satisfies one or more of the following criteria, the matter is likely to be significant.

1. Any transfer of ownership or control or the constructions, replacement or abandonment of a strategic asset.
2. A decision that will significantly affect the capacity of the Council to carry out any activity identified in the strategic plan.
3. A decision that will significantly affect the cost to Council to carry out any activity identified in the strategic plan.
4. Any issue, proposal, decision or other matter that will substantially affect a wide range of people who reside in the City.
5. The extent to which the decision flows logically and consequently from a significant decision already made or from a decision in the strategic or annual corporate plans.
6. The degree to which a decision or issues are difficult to reverse.
7. The matter will have implications for the present and future social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the City.

2.5. Procedures

In achieving this policy, the following procedures will be follows:

1. Every report to Council on any issue, proposal, decision or other matter will include a statement indicating that the issue of significance has been considered.
2. Where the issue, proposal, decision or other matter triggers the thresholds or criteria of this policy and is therefore likely to be significant, the report to Council will also include a statement relating to recommended level of consultation.
3. In receiving the report, Council may accept the report writer's assessment of significance made in the report and the recommended level of consultation. Where Council does not accept the report writer's assessment and recommendation, a separate resolution will be made to that effect.

3. CONSEQUENCES

This policy represents the formal policy and expected standards of the City of Karratha. Appropriate approvals need to be obtained prior to any deviation from the policy. Elected Members and Employees are reminded of their obligations under the Council's Code of Conduct to give full effect to the lawful policies, decisions and practices of the City.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All officers are accountable for implementing the policy and ensuring that every person or organisation contracted to or acting on behalf of Council adheres to this policy.

Council is responsible for the application of the policy. Council is responsible for the review of the policy

The **Corporate Directorate** is responsible for monitoring the effects of the policy.

5. REFERENCES TO RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Strategic Community Plan
- City of Karratha Corporate Plan
- City of Karratha Business Plan
- Community Facilities Plan
- Annual Financial Budget
- Annual Financial Report
- Karratha City of the North Plan

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This Policy takes effect from the date of adoption by Council and shall remain valid until it is amended or deleted.