PROCEDURE



Chief Executive Officer Recruitment and Onboarding

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Portfolio	People and Strategy	Review Date	10/05/2024
Business Unit	Human Resources	Document ID	11693939

Objectives

Section 194 of the *Local Government Act 2009* determines that Council must appoint a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is deemed to have the ability, experience, knowledge and skills that the Council considers appropriate, having regard to the responsibilities of the CEO.

This Procedure outlines an appropriate framework for recruitment, appointment and onboarding of a high-performing CEO with the skills, knowledge and competency to guide the organisation's delivery of the strategic vision set by Scenic Rim Regional Council (Council).

The objectives of this Procedure are to:

- 1. Establish a Recruitment Panel to undertake and oversee the recruitment process and to make a recommendation to the Council on the appointment of a CEO;
- 2. Identify a process for, and key inputs into, negotiation and execution of the CEO's Performance Agreement; and
- 3. Outline processes associated with onboarding of the new CEO.

Scope

This Procedure applies to the Mayor, Councillors and all Council officers involved in the recruitment and onboarding of the CEO.

Procedure Actions

1. CEO Recruitment and Appointment Process Overview

Recruitment of a new CEO is required by legislation to be a merit-based process.

Council will appoint a Recruitment Panel to undertake the recruitment and recommendation process as outlined in this Procedure. The Recruitment Panel will make a recommendation to the Council for the formal interview by the Council of one or more candidates selected by the Recruitment Panel.

To support a thorough recruitment process, Council may seek to engage a suitable third party agency to facilitate the end-to-end recruitment of a new Chief Executive Officer. This process should include a considered approach to market, a comprehensive assessment of candidates and interview by the Panel of a short list of candidates considered by the third party agency to meet the criteria established for appointment to the position.

The Council will undertake a formal interview with the recommended applicant/applicants, following which Council will resolve an appointment to the position (or otherwise if Council does not believe any of the applicants are suitable).

The key steps involved in the recruitment process are summarised below.

- Council identifies the requirement for a new CEO;
- Council resolves to appoint an Acting CEO, if required;
- Council resolves to appoint a Recruitment Panel (the Panel), including an external independent member with extensive experience as a local government CEO, to undertake and oversee the recruitment and recommendation process in accordance with this Procedure;
- Council may appoint an external recruitment agency experienced in executive local government recruitment to assist in the recruitment process in accordance with this Procedure¹;
- The Recruitment Panel undertakes training in recruitment principles and methodology; all Councillors should be invited and encouraged to attend;
- If required, a Recruitment Panel workshop is conducted, with all Councillors invited, to identify priority skills and key attributes desired of the new CEO, and the challenges and priorities facing the CEO and the organisation;
- The Panel undertakes the recruitment process in accordance with this Procedure (or as otherwise determined by Council refer to clause 1.1 of this Procedure), and selects and interviews a short list of one or more candidates for the role (and more than one interview may be desirable). The Panel will then determine the candidate or candidates to be formally and finally interviewed by the whole Council;
- Council undertakes the formal interview with the selected candidate or candidates and makes a determination for appointment of a preferred candidate or for a continuation of the process;
- Negotiations are undertaken with the preferred candidate and an Individual Employment Agreement signed;
- The new CEO is onboarded into the role; and
- A workshop with Council and the new CEO is held within three months after the CEO's commencement to identify priorities in the role in that first year of appointment to be incorporated into the Performance Agreement.

Further details of each of these components of the process are outlined in the sections below.

1.1. Variation to the Process

The process outlined in this Procedure may be varied, based on advice provided by the external recruitment agency and a majority agreement of Council (facilitated informally by the Mayor).

2. Roles and Responsibilities

It is important to note that, in undertaking the recruitment process, the members of the Panel, all other Councillors, and any administrative officers who support the process, understand and appreciate the need for confidentiality. Many applicants will be currently employed in another role and they have the right to have their interest in this role kept confidential. Breaches of this confidentiality requirement should be regarded as breaches of the Code of Conduct for Councillors or Employees, as appropriate.

¹ Subject to variation, based on clause 1.1 of this Procedure.

2.1. External Recruitment Agency

Where Council intends to explore the external market as part of the process to engage a new CEO, Council will appoint an external recruitment agency or person experienced in the recruitment of executive positions in local government (the Agency) to assist the Recruitment Panel and Council in the recruitment and appointment processes outlined in this Procedure, or to recommend and facilitate an alternate process, subject to a majority agreement of Council (to be facilitated informally by the Mayor).

Local Government is a somewhat unique working environment and a specialist executive recruitment agency experienced in local government, government and not for profit executive recruitment is likely to have in-depth knowledge of the executive recruitment market across Australia. Their knowledge of high performing CEOs will ensure a broad cross section of interest can be identified and encouraged to apply for the role. The Agency will also be able to have confidential discussions with potential candidates and assure that their potential interest in the CEO role can be discussed privately.

The Agency will not be a voting member of the Recruitment Panel but will organise, facilitate and conduct meetings of the panel and help the Mayor to ensure the recruitment process is run in accordance with this Procedure (or as otherwise agreed by Council - refer to clause 1.1 of this Procedure) and based on the principles of equity, fairness, confidentiality and merit.

The Agency should recommend an extensive advertising strategy to Council to ensure the vacancy is well promoted throughout Australia and more broadly to attract the best interest and applications.

2.2. Recruitment Panel

The Recruitment Panel will undertake and oversee the recruitment process in accordance with this Procedure (or as otherwise agreed by Council - refer to clause 1.1 of this Procedure).

2.2.1. Membership of the Recruitment Panel

The Panel will comprise the Mayor (Chair), Deputy Mayor and at least one other Councillor nominated by the Council. The Panel will also include an external person who has extensive experience in the role of a local government CEO, preferably in a Council such as Scenic Rim. The agency, the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) or the Public Service Commissioner may identify suitable external independent potential panel members for Council's consideration.

2.2.2. Mandatory Training for Members of the Recruitment Panel

All members of the Panel must be trained in the CEO recruitment and appointment processes outlined in this Procedure and/or recommended by the Agency, as well as the key principles of recruitment, including equity, fairness, confidentiality and merit.

It is desirable that all Councillors attend this training, as they will be involved in the final interview/s and in making the appointment to the position.

This training is likely to be delivered by the Agency in the early stages of its engagement.

3. Procedure Actions - Recruitment of the CEO

3.1. Appointment of an Acting CEO

While not technically a component of the recruitment process, it may be necessary for Council to appoint an acting or interim CEO until the role has been filled in the longer term. In this case, a report will be prepared by the General Manager People and Strategy, in collaboration with the

Mayor, to recommend a short-term or interim appointment to the role of CEO. This decision will be made by Council resolution.

3.2. Appointment of a Recruitment Panel

In order to facilitate the recruitment of a CEO, Council will resolve to appoint a Recruitment Panel, including an external independent member, to undertake and oversee the recruitment and recommendation process inaccordance with this Procedure. Refer to section 4.2.1 of this Procedure for information relating to membership of the Panel.

To facilitate this decision, a report will be prepared by the General Manager People and Strategy, in collaboration with the Mayor, for consideration of Council. Council will pass a resolution on the membership and appointment of the Panel.

3.3. Appointment of an External Recruitment Agency

Where Council intends to explore the external market as part of the process to engage a new CEO, Council will appoint an external recruitment agency experienced in executive local government recruitment to assist in the recruitment process in accordance with this Procedure.

In this instance, the General Manager People and Strategy will, in consultation with the Mayor and in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy engage an appropriate third party to deliver this service. The selection of a preferred recruitment agency will be by resolution of Council.

3.4. Strategic Workshop to Determine Key Attributes, Priorities and Other Matters

At the commencement of the recruitment process, a workshop may be facilitated, either by the General Manager People and Strategy, or an appropriate third party, for the Mayor and Councillors to discuss the current and future challenges and priorities facing the CEO and the organisation.

The objectives of this workshop would be:

- a) to undertake training in the CEO recruitment and appointment processes as outlined in this Procedure, as well as recruitment principles and methodology such as equity, fairness, confidentiality and merit;
- b) to discuss and agree the key attributes required in the new CEO;
- c) to identify and agree on key challenges and opportunities facing the CEO;
- d) to agree an appropriate remuneration range; and
- e) to confirm the process and timelines for recruitment.

3.4.1. Training in Recruitment for Councillors

The General Manager People and Strategy will facilitate training for the Mayor and Councillors in the CEO recruitment and appointment processes as outlined in this Procedure, as well as recruitment principles and methodology.

In the circumstance whereby an external recruitment agency has been engaged, this training may be delivered by that agency.

3.4.2. Key Attributes, Challenges and Opportunities

A key purpose of the workshop is to agree the key attributes required for a successful CEO and the significant challenges and opportunities facing the organisation and the position in order to attract potential candidates to the role.

In considering the key attributes, workshop participants should be mindful of the Position Description for the CEO role which outlines the roles, responsibilities and competencies

required in the position. It is important that workshop participants recognise the fundamentally important role of the CEO in leading a high performing Council organisation. Particular priorities of Council should be resourced within the organisation, rather than being seen as informing specific and predominate key attributes of the CEO. It should also be acknowledged that Local Government is a unique working environment and a comprehensive understanding of this unique environment is desirable.

The workshop should also identify the key challenges, opportunities and priorities for the CEO. These will give an insight into what the focus will be for the successful applicant, and they should be framed to motivate the right person for the role.

3.4.3. Terms and Conditions of Engagement

The General Manager People and Strategy will seek independent and expert advice regarding the terms and conditions of the CEO's engagement. This will include, but may not be limited to, the term of the engagement and the Total Remuneration Package (including the structure of any at risk / reward payments payable annually), giving consideration to the value placed on the position in the prevailing market.

These terms and conditions should be designed to

- a) align to conditions offered by other similarly sized and structured councils; and
- b) attract and motivate applications from suitably qualified candidates.

Such information will be provided to Councillors to inform discussions regarding remuneration. Prior to commencing the recruitment process, Councillors should discuss and determine an acceptable remuneration range within which the final negotiations may be conducted.

3.4.4. Process and Timelines for Recruitment

Finally, at this workshop, the Council should confirm the process and timelines to be implemented. This may include commencement of advertising, closing of advertising, shortlisting date, interview date/s with the Panel and the date of interview/s with the Council. It is important these dates are agreed and documented early so they can be placed in the diaries of Panel members and Councillors (for the final interview), and for aspiring candidates to set interview dates aside in their diary.

3.5. Selection Criteria

Agreeing selection criteria is one of the most important steps in the recruitment process.

The selection criteria should include multiple dimensions relating to the key attributes identified at the strategic workshop (aligned to the CEO position description), organisational competencies, experience and skills. Outstanding leadership skills should be listed as the key attribute.

The General Manager People and Strategy or the Agency (in the circumstance whereby an agency has been appointed to facilitate the recruitment process), will draft Selection Criteria, giving consideration to the Position Description, key attributes and organisational competencies, for approval by the Panel.

All applicants should be required to address the selection criteria in their application and be asked to clearly identify their motivation and interest in the role and the location.

3.6. Preparation of the Information Package to Send to Interested Applicants

The development of a quality information package should be seen by Council as a key step in this

process. The information package will promote the role, the organisation and the region, including the lifestyle the region has to offer.

This package should contain, at a minimum, details about the Scenic Rim region, the Council and its operations, specific details about the key attributes required in a successful CEO and some of the challenges, opportunities and initial priorities for the CEO position.

The package should also clearly outline the recruitment process, including selection criteria and key dates.

3.7. Shortlisting of Candidates by the Recruitment Panel

The primary role of the Panel is the evaluation of all applications and the shortlisting of preferred applicant/applicants for interview/s by the Panel, and to then make a recommendation to Council of a preferred candidate or candidates for formal Council interview.

3.7.1. Application Report

In the circumstance where an independent recruitment agency has been engaged, the approach to market for suitable candidates for the role of CEO will be managed by the Agency.

The Agency will prepare a detailed assessment report on all applications received that meet minimum requirements. This will assist the Panel in reviewing these applications and agreeing a shortlist of candidates to be interviewed by the Panel. That report should contain a summary of each applicant, their qualifications and experience, and comments from the Agency relating to both the suitability of the candidate based on the key attributes identified at the Recruitment Panel workshop and included in the information package, and the personal discussions and interviews the Agency has conducted with the candidate.

There is an expectation that the Agency will have spoken personally with all of these applicants prior to preparing the shortlisting report.

The application report should contain the Agency's recommendations in two parts: those who meet the attributes desired and who should be interviewed by the Panel; and those whom the Agency will discuss with the Panel to clarify their suitability as they may be on the margin of being recommended.

It is expected that the Agency will also have conducted a global social media search and check of applicants recommended for shortlist interview to confirm there is nothing in social media or on the internet that might be relevant to consideration of the candidate by the Panel.

3.7.2. Referee Checking

Initial referee checking will be conducted for candidates who may proceed to interview, so that any issues raised by referees can be considered and explored at interview. This process may also influence whether those candidates are selected for interview.

In the circumstance where a recruitment agency has been engaged, referee checking will be conducted by the Agency. If no agency has been engaged, the Panel should determine who will conduct this process. A report of referee responses for each candidate will be provided to the Panel.

3.7.3. Selection of applicants for interview by the Recruitment Panel

The Panel should carefully review all applications, including resumes, selection criteria responses, referee responses and, where applicable, the Agency's recommendation.

Applicants who meet the required level of competency and experience as detailed in the

selection criteria should be identified by the Panel and a decision then reached on how many candidates should be interviewed.

3.8. Interview of the Shortlisted Candidates by the Recruitment Panel

The Panel will determine the number of candidates to be interviewed and how the interviews are to be conducted. This will include duration, and location, of interviews.

3.8.1. Interview structure

The way the interview is structured is very important to a successful outcome.

It may be that the Panel conducts a two stage process with candidates before the final interview with the Council. This should be agreed at the commencement of the recruitment process, with advice from the General Manager People and Strategy or the Agency (where applicable) on what might constitute a best practice approach.

Questions to be asked at the interview should be agreed by the Panel in advance of the interview and relate directly to the selection criteria. Where there is more than one candidate being interviewed, the same set of questions should form the basis of each (first) interview.

At interview, Panel members should look for applicants to provide details in support of any claims made in the application or at the interview; the applicant should be able to provide a good answer to the question, and then support that with examples detailing their actual experience and achievements.

3.8.2. Preparation for Interview

The Panel should convene at least 30 minutes before the first interview to discuss the interview process so that every member of the Panel is clear on process and expectations. Panel members need to be aware they are being interviewed too – by the candidate – and that the conduct of panel members will be under review by each candidate.

3.8.3. Leadership Profiling and Second Interviews

Following interview with the Panel, the Panel may eliminate some candidates from the process, as a result of their performance in interview.

The remaining candidate or candidates will undertake leadership and personality profile testing to provide the Panel with important insight into their leadership style and personality traits. Other psychometric testing may also be undertaken.

In the circumstance where a recruitment agency has been engaged, the leadership and personality profiling will be coordinated by the Agency. If no agency has been engaged, the Panel should determine who will coordinate this process.

This profiling provides a valuable insight to each candidate. Following review of the candidate or candidates' leadership and personality profile/s, the Panel may determine that a second interview is required to explore any specific behavioural or leadership issues identified in the profiling.

The format of second interviews with the Panel, then, will be more tailored to each candidate.

3.8.4. Recommendations from the Recruitment Panel to Council

The Panel, through the Agency (where applicable), will prepare a report on the recruitment process and outcomes to provide to Council, clearly detailing the process followed, and the outcome of interviews, with an overview of the candidate or candidates (ideally, one or two candidates) selected for final interview with the Council.

Prior to finalising this report, the first stage of a further probity check of the candidate or candidates referred for final interview will be conducted. In the circumstance where a recruitment agency has been engaged, the probity check will be coordinated by the Agency. If no agency has been engaged, the Panel should determine who will coordinate this process.

An important additional due diligence process is for the Mayor, with the assistance of the Agency, where applicable, to undertake some final referee checks. If one or two candidates are being recommended to the Council for final interview and selection for appointment, the Mayor (and the Deputy Mayor, if possible) should personally speak with the candidate's referees, and if possible the Mayor of the Council where the candidate is coming from, or the Chair of the board if a private sector candidate, or a CEO supervisor if coming from a level below CEO.

This will enable the Mayor, on behalf of the Panel, to confirm his or her impressions of the candidate/s or otherwise, regarding the candidate's leadership style or key attributes.

3.9. Formal Interview by Council and Consideration of Appointment

On the basis of the Panel's report, Council will undertake the final formal interview with the selected candidate or candidates and make a determination – for appointment of a preferred candidate or for a continuation of the process.

An opportunity should be given to individual Councillors to ask any specific questions they may have, but these must relate directly to the CEO role.

Following formal interview, the Council should determine if it has a preferred applicant with whom negotiations should commence.

3.10. Failure to Identify Candidate for Appointment

If, after this comprehensive process, the Council is unable to select one preferred candidate then the Council will need to agree the next steps, which could involve follow up interviews by the Panel to clarify any concerns regarding the preferred candidate(s), selection of another applicant or applicants to interview from the Application Report (if applicable), or re-advertising the position.

4. Procedure Actions - Appointment of the CEO

4.1. Resolution of Council to Proceed

Assuming that a preferred candidate has been identified by Council, the General Manager People and Strategy, in collaboration with the Mayor, will prepare a report for the next available Ordinary Meeting (or a Special Meeting, as determined by the Mayor), to

- seek Council's endorsement of the content of the draft Individual Employment Agreement (with some detail subject to negotiation with the preferred candidate);
- recommend that negotiations commence with the preferred candidate;
- confirm the agreed remuneration range²; and
- seek that Council's delegation be provided to the Mayor to negotiate and finalise the offer of employment.

² Determined at the strategic workshop with Councillors - refer to section 3.4 of this Procedure.

4.1.1.The Individual Employment Agreement

The General Manager People and Strategy, in collaboration with the Mayor, will seek independent legal advice, in advance of Council's endorsement and an initial offer being made to the preferred candidate, to ensure that the proposed Individual Employment Agreement (IEA) for the CEO meets legislative requirements and mitigates any foreseeable risk to Council.

4.1.2. Contract Negotiations

Subject to Council's delegation, the Mayor will make an initial verbal offer to the candidate, discussing the proposed key terms (including remuneration, commencement date, and term of employment).

A formal offer will then be provided to the candidate³ and, if required, negotiations will be conducted by the Mayor until a mutually agreeable outcome is reached. In the circumstance whereby an external recruitment agency has been engaged, this may be facilitated on the Mayor's behalf by the Agency.

The offer made, including remuneration package and all other benefits, such as relocation provisions, will not exceed the range resolved by Council, without seeking further endorsement from Council.

4.1.3. Offer of Employment

The formal offer should be made in writing through a letter of offer from the Mayor (facilitated by the General Manager People and Strategy), which attaches the proposed Individual Employment Agreement, setting out the terms and conditions of the offer.

The preferred candidate should be asked to confirm acceptance in writing and return the signed and witnessed IEA to Council. The Mayor should then sign the IEA and return a copy to the successful applicant.

4.1.4. Reporting to Council

Following a successful negotiation process and agreement between the Mayor and preferred candidate on the terms of employment (resulting in a signed IEA), a report on the outcome will be provided to the Council in a closed forum by the Mayor.

4.1.5. Announcement of the CEO's Appointment

Once the offer has been formally accepted, the Mayor will discuss and agree with the successful applicant the timing of a formal announcement of appointment, to be aligned with any communication released by the successful applicant's current employer (the goal being a simultaneous announcement). Council's formal announcement of the appointment of a new CEO will be by way of a media release and advice to all employees containing comments from both the Mayor and new CEO.

5. Procedure Actions - Onboarding of the CEO

5.1. Prior to Commencement

The Mayor will arrange for background information to be sent to the new CEO, to include copies of

³ Refer to section 4.1.3.

relevant plans and strategies, Corporate Plan, current Operational Plan, recent studies or reviews of the Council organisation, recent Council meeting business papers, and other relevant documentation or reports.

The Mayor will also ask each General Manager to provide a briefing paper for the new CEO containing details of any "*hot issues*" for the Council, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and their Portfolio. The briefing paper should also give an overview of the status of their department and any recent performance reviews or internal audits conducted. These should be sent to the new CEO in advance of his or her commencement.

Where possible, the new CEO should be encouraged to visit the Council and the region prior to commencement, to formally meet the ELT and Office of the Mayor and CEO employees, explore residential accommodation options, and other facilities in the region that may be of interest to him or her, for example, local schools. The Mayor may offer to provide assistance, with the support of the Acting CEO and employees of the Office of the Mayor and CEO.

5.2. Following Commencement

During that visit, or perhaps remotely, the new CEO may request that the Executive Personal Assistant Office of the Mayor and CEO arrange appointments in the first two weeks of the CEO's tenure to:

- meet with employees from the Office of the Mayor and CEO;
- meet with the ELT, as a team and individually;
- meet with the Executive Management Team;
- meet with each individual Councillor, perhaps through a tour together around their division;
- tour the Council area and facilities, in particular, libraries and Council depots, and meeting with field based employees (perhaps at a barbecue breakfast);
- meet with key external stakeholders, including local Members of Parliament, key community representatives, Chair of the Chambers of Commerce; and
- meet with all employees by way of visits to work areas and work sites.

5.3. Development of the CEO's first annual Performance Agreement

5.3.1. The Three Month Workshop

Approximately 10 weeks following the CEO's commencement in the role, a workshop should be conducted with Councillors and the CEO so that:

- the CEO can present an overview of her or his findings in the first several weeks;
- the CEO can provide a list of potential projects and priorities for Council's consideration, based on the CEO's experience and early time in the role; and
- the Council and CEO can agree projects and priorities for consideration by the Panel and the CEO in the CEO's first annual Performance Agreement.

5.3.2. The CEO's Performance Agreement

The CEO Performance Agreement sets performance expectations between the parties in the early stages of the CEO's tenure and at the start of each new financial year. Negotiated between the Mayor, as delegate of the Council, and the CEO, the Performance Agreement should contain six key components.

Component	Description
Significant Annual Projects and Priorities	Achievement of a small number of significant projects and priorities
Roles and Responsibilities	Achievement of roles and responsibilities as contained in the Position Description for the position
Organisational Competencies	Performance against generic responsibilities and organisational competencies for the CEO
Behavioural Expectations	Consistent with Council's Values and the Code of Conduct for Employees
Personal Development	An plan for personal and professional leadership development
Key Corporate Performance Indicators	Key operational measures that underpin organisational performance

Definitions

Council: means the elected representatives of Scenic Rim Regional Council.

Recruitment Panel means a group of individuals delegated by Council resolution the responsibility to recommend to Council a preferred candidate for the role of CEO. The recruitment panel will actively participate in the recruitment process, including shortlisting and interview of candidates.

Recruitment Agency means an external recruitment agency or person experienced in the recruitment of executive positions in local government to assist the Recruitment Panel and Council in the recruitment and appointment processes.

Individual Employment Agreement means the Common Law contract between the Council and a Senior Officer of Council.

Performance Agreement means the document that sets performance expectations between the parties at the commencement of employment and each subsequent financial year.

Total Remuneration Package means the gross base salary plus all other benefits received by an officer of Council, inclusive of performance based remuneration, superannuation and any Fringe Benefits Tax paid by Scenic Rim Regional Council on the officer's behalf.

Related Documents

- 1. Local Government Act 2009;
- 2. Position Description Chief Executive Officer;
- 3. Code of Conduct for Councillors;
- 4. Code of Conduct for Employees;
- 5. Council Policy: Procurement;
- 6. Scenic Rim Regional Council Corporate Plan 2026; and
- 7. Council Policy: CEO Recruitment, Appointment and Performance.

This Procedure supports the Scenic Rim Regional Council Corporate Plan 2026, in particular Theme - Open and Responsive Government.

Approval and Review Details

Approval and Amendment History	Details
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Amendment Authority and Date	
Notes	New Procedure

Adopted By:

SCENIC RIM REGIONAL COUNCIL

Date: 10 May 2022

VERSION INFORMATION

Version No	Date	Key Changes
1	10/05/2022	Ordinary Meeting Item No. 10.2; New Procedure