

Coorong District Council Freedom of Information Statement 2026/27

This Freedom of Information Statement is published by Coorong District Council ('Council') in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 1991 ('FOI Act').

Subject to certain restrictions, the FOI Act gives members of the public a legally enforceable right to access information held by South Australian Government agencies such as councils. The FOI Act requires the Council to publish at intervals of not more than 12 months an up-to-date information statement.

The Freedom of Information Regulations require an information statement to be published on a website maintained by the Council and/or in the Council's annual report.

Each financial year an updated Information Statement will be published on the Council website (www.coorong.sa.gov.au/foi).

1. Structure and Functions of Council

The Council consists of the Principal Member, referred to as the Mayor and seven (7) Council Members who represent residents and ratepayers in the Council area.

Council is a body corporate as constituted under the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Local Government Act) and is established to provide for the government and management of its area at the local level and, in particular¹:

- a) to act as a representative, informed and responsible decision-makers in the interest of its community; and
- b) to provide and co-ordinate various public services and facilities and to develop its community and resource in a socially just and ecologically sustainable manner; and
- c) to encourage and develop initiatives within its community for improving the quality of life of the community; and
- d) to represent the interests of its community to the wider community; and
- e) to exercise, perform and discharge the powers, functions and duties of local government under the Local Government Act and other acts in relation to the area for which it is constituted.

Pursuant to section 7 of the Local Government Act, the functions of the Council are ²:

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

¹ Section 6, *Local Government Act 1999*

² Section 7, *Local Government Act 1999*

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- b) to provide services and facilities that benefit its area, its ratepayers and residents, and visitors to its area;
- ba) to determine the appropriate financial contribution to be made by ratepayers to the resources of Council;
- c) to provide for the welfare, well-being and interests of individuals and groups within its community;
- d) to take measures to protect its area from natural and other hazards and to mitigate the effects of such hazards;
- e) to manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment in an ecologically sustainable manner, and to improve amenity;
- f) to provide infrastructure for its community and for development within its area;
- g) to promote its area and to provide an attractive climate and locations for the development of business, commerce, industry and tourism;
- h) to establish or support organisations or programs that benefit people in its area or local government generally;
- i) to manage and, if appropriate, develop, public areas vested in, or occupied by, the Council;
- j) to manage, improve and develop resources available to the Council;
- k) to undertake other functions and activities conferred by or under the Act.

Pursuant to section 8 of the Local Government Act, the Council must act to uphold and promote observance of the following principles in the performance of its roles and functions:

- a) provide open, responsive and accountable government;
- b) be responsive to the needs, interests and aspirations of individuals and groups within its community;
- c) participate with other Councils, and with State and national governments, in setting public policy and achieving regional, State and national objectives;
- d) give due weight, in all its plans, policies and activities, to regional, State and national objectives and strategies concerning the economic, social, physical and environmental development and management of the community;
- e) seek to co-ordinate with State and national government in the planning and delivery of services in which those governments have an interest;
- ea) seek to collaborate, form partnerships and share resources with other Councils and regional bodies for the purposes of delivering cost-effective services (while avoiding cost-shifting among Councils), integrated planning, maintaining local representation of communities and facilitating community benefit;
- f) seek to facilitate sustainable development and the protection of the environment and to ensure a proper balance within its community between economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations;
- g) manage its operations and affairs in a manner that emphasises the importance of service to the community;
- h) seek to ensure that Council resources are used fairly, effectively and efficiently and Council services, facilities and programs are provided effectively and efficiently;
- i) seek to provide services, facilities and programs that are adequate and appropriate and seek to ensure equitable access to its services, facilities and programs;
- ia) seek to balance the provision of services, facilities and programs with the financial impact of the provision of those services, facilities and programs on ratepayers;
- j) achieve and maintain standards of good public administration;
- k) ensure the sustainability of the Council's long-term financial performance and position.

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Whilst the majority of the functions of the Council are set out in the Local Government Act, it also has functions under other pieces of legislation including the:

- Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016;
- South Australian Public Health Act 2011;
- Food Act 2001;
- Road Traffic Act 1961; and
- Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

The way in which the functions of the Council affect members of the public include the nature of the services, facilities and programs provided by the Council that benefit the Council's community. The Council is required to use its resources fairly, effectively, and efficiently as well as ensure equitable access. Decisions made by the Council can affect the community as a whole or individuals as the Council is responsible for the government and management of its area at a local area. The Council's regulatory role can affect members of the public who act in contravention of legislation. Further, the Council imposes rates and charges on ratepayers which is used to fund the activities of the Council. Rating decisions can affect individuals and groups within the Council's community differently.

1.1 Public meetings

Ordinary meetings of the Council are held at the Coorong Civic Centre Chambers (95-101 Railway Terrace, Tailem Bend) as determined by resolution of Council and commence at 5pm on the third Tuesday of each month (excepting January, where the meeting is held on the fourth Tuesday, and June, where the meeting is held on the final Tuesday of the month). All Ordinary Council and committee meetings are open to the public, with the exception of any matters which are required to be considered in confidence³. From time to time a special meeting may be called.

One of the main opportunities for the community to gain information about the business of Council is through the agendas, and associated reports prepared for Council and committee meetings. Agendas and minutes for these meetings are publicly available from Council's website (www.coorong.sa.gov.au/councilagendas&minutes). Printed copies can be provided on request from Council's principal office located at 95-101 Railway Terrace, Tailem Bend (on payment of a fee (if any) fixed by the Council).

1.2 Council committees and subsidiaries

The Council may establish committees⁴:

- To assist the Council in the performance of its functions;
- To inquire into and report to the Council on matters within the ambit of the Council's responsibilities;
- To provide advice to the Council;
- To exercise, perform or discharge delegated powers, functions or duties.

To Council has established the following committees:

³ Section 90, *Local Government Act 1999*

⁴ Section 41 (2), *Local Government Act 1999*

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- Audit & Risk Committee – provides independent assurance and advice to the Council on accounting, financial management, internal controls, risk management and governance matters.
- Chief Executive Officer Performance Review Committee – undertakes CEO performance review process and makes final recommendation to Council.
- Coonalpyn & District Soldiers Memorial Swimming Pool & Caravan Park Committee – makes recommendations to Council on pool fees for the year ahead, canteen facilities management and fundraising, where necessary.
- Coorong Community Health Advancement & Advisory Committee – investigates declining provision of health services in Council area and provides advice that may achieve better healthcare outcomes.
- Coorong District Local Action Plan Committee – supports and periodically reviews the Coorong District Local Action Plan strategic plan.
- Coonalpyn Hall Committee – informs Council regarding potential hall maintenance or upgrades, supports maximising facility use, and manages and makes recommendation in relation to Coonalpyn archives.
- Finance Committee – broadly advises, monitors and assists on matters relating to finance of the Council.
- Pangarinda Botanic Garden Committee – assists in developing and promoting the botanic garden with the aim to conserve and protect native plant species.
- Roads & Infrastructure Committee – broadly advises, monitors and makes recommendations to the full Council on matters relating to infrastructure and assets management.
- Tintinara War Memorial Hall Committee – reviews maintenance required or undertaken, encourages long-term projects and explores fundraising opportunities.

The membership of committees is determined by the Council. Further information including copies of agenda, minutes, terms of reference and details of committee membership, is available from Council's website (www.coorong.sa.gov.au/s41committees).

Council's Assessment Panel

The Council has established a Council Assessment Panel (titled the 'Coorong Assessment Panel') as a relevant authority under the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016. Further information including copies of agenda, minutes, terms of reference and details of panel membership, can be found on Council's website (www.coorong.sa.gov.au/cap).

Subsidiaries

The Council may establish a subsidiary to provide a specified service, to manage or administer property, facilities or activities on behalf of the Council or perform a function of the Council under the Local Government Act or another Act⁵. The Council may also, with one or more other Councils establish a regional subsidiary to provide

⁵ Section 42, *Local Government Act 1999*

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a specified service, to manage or perform a function of the Council under the Local Government Act or another Act.⁶

A list of Council's subsidiaries are as follows:

- Murraylands & Riverland Local Government Association

1.3 Delegations

The Council exercises a range of statutory powers and functions. Most of these powers and functions can be delegated by the Council⁷. The Chief Executive Officer has delegated authority from Council to make decisions on specified matters. Delegations made by the Council under the Local Government Act 1999 are reviewed by the Council within 12 months after the conclusion of each periodic election. The Council's Delegations Register reflects the delegated authority from the Council to the CEO (and subsequently any further sub-delegations). A record of delegations is available on Council's website (www.coorong.sa.gov.au/delegationsregister).

2. Public Participation

Members of the public have a number of opportunities to express their views on particular issues before the Council. These include:

Attendance at public meetings – Members of the public are welcome to attend Council and committee meetings which are open to the public.

Deputations to Council – A written request to address the Council by way of a deputation in a Council meeting or a committee meeting can be made by a member of the public to address Council personally or on behalf of a group of residents for up to 10 minutes. Further information including how to submit a deputation is available on Council's website (www.coorong.sa.gov.au/councilmeetings).

Petitions – Written petitions can be addressed to the Council on any issue within the Council's jurisdiction. Further information including how to submit a petition is available on Council's website (www.coorong.sa.gov.au/councilmeetings).

Council Members – Members of the public can contact Members of Council to discuss any issue relevant to Council. Contact details for all Members are available on Council's website (www.coorong.sa.gov.au/councilmembers).

Written Requests – Members of the public can write to the Council on any Council policy, activity or service by emailing council@coorong.sa.gov.au (or post to PO Box 399 Tailm Bend SA 5260).

Community engagement – The Council is committed to open, honest, accountable and responsible decision making. Council's Community Engagement Policy facilitates effective communication between Council and the community, encouraging community involvement

⁶ Section 43, *Local Government Act 1999*

⁷ Section 44, *Local Government Act 1999*

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and partnerships in planning and decision making. The Council's Community Engagement Policy sets out the steps Council will take in relation to public consultation and ensures that the most cost-effective methods of informing and involving the community, which are appropriate for specific circumstances and consultation topics, are used. The policy is available on the Council's website (<https://www.coorong.sa.gov.au/your-council/policies>).

3. Access to Council Documents

3.1 Documents held by Council

Most information and documentation held by Council is available for public inspection and is readily available without recourse to the FOI Act and we invite you to discuss your information needs with us.

Records System - Council operates HPE Content Manager for the effective management of Council's records. This system has been in place since 2010, with the majority of records prior to this date (including pre amalgamation [1997]) being sentenced and/or processed into the electronic system as time permits.

Land and Property Information System - Council's Land and Property Information system contains property-related information (valuation, rates, ownership details) on each property in the Council area.

3.2 Policies and publicly accessible information

Council has the following policies:

Access to Plans and other Copyright-Protected Documents Policy	Asset Accounting Policy
Asset Management Policy	Behavioural Management Policy
Caretaker Policy	Cemeteries & Burial Policy
Code of Conduct for Council Employees	Community & Sporting Clubs Leases and Licences Policy
Community Engagement Policy	Community Grants, Sponsorship & Funding Policy
Community Group Loan Policy	Community Wastewater Management Scheme (CWMS) Hardship Policy
Complaints and Compliments Policy	Construction of Unmade Road Reserve Policy
Corporate Credit Card Policy	Council Asset Surveillance Policy
Council Members Allowance, Benefits and Support Policy	Council Members Training & Professional Development Policy
Customer Service Charter	Debt Recovery & Financial Hardship Policy
Development Assessment Fee Waiver and Refund Policy	Disposal of Council Land and Other Assets Policy
Driveway and Property Access Policy	Electronic Communications Policy
Emergency Management Policy	Enforcement Policy
Equity Reserve Policy	Fee Waiver (Community Groups) Policy

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Flag Flying Policy	Fraud, Corruption, Misconduct and Maladministration Policy
Funding Policy	General Ledger Policy
Hospitality, Recognition, Gift & Employee Expenses Policy	Human Resource Policy
Information Security Policy	Internal Financial Control Policy
Internal Review of a Council Decision Procedure	Kerbside Waste, Recycling & Green Organics Collection Service Policy
Mayor Seeking Legal Advice Policy	Media, Communications & Social Media Policy
Motor Vehicle Policy	Naming of Roads and Public Places Policy
Order Making Policy	Privacy Policy
Procurement Policy	Prudential Management Policy
Public Interest Disclosure Policy	Quarrying Policy and Procedure
Rating Policy	Records and Information Management Policy
Requests for Service Policy	Risk Management Policy
Roadside Fallen Timber Collection Policy	Roadside Signage Policy
Safe Environments – Children & Other Vulnerable People Policy	Section 41 Committees of Council Policy
Street Traders and Mobile Food Vans Policy	Treasury Management Policy
Tree Management Policy	Volunteer Policy

Pursuant to section 132 and Schedule 5 of the Local Government Act⁸ the following categories of documents are available on Council's website (www.coorong.sa.gov.au). Upon request a printed copy can be provided (on payment of a fee (if any) fixed by the Council).

- Reviews of council constitution, wards and boundaries
- Registers and Returns
- Codes
- Meeting papers
- Information and briefing session papers
- Policy and administrative documents
- By-laws

All general inquiries regarding access to Council documents should be made to:

Coorong District Council
PO Box 399
TAILEM BEND SA 5260
Email: council@coorong.sa.gov.au

⁸ Section 132, *Local Government Act 1999*

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4. Freedom of Information Application Fees and Processing Charges

Freedom of Information requests to the Council are to be addressed to:

Freedom of Information Officer
PO Box 399
TAILEM BEND SA 5260
Email: council@coorong.sa.gov.au

To download an FOI application form, or to use the online Freedom of Information application form, please visit <https://www.archives.sa.gov.au/finding-information/sa-government-information/making-a-freedom-of-information-application>.

Requests for information not publicly available will be considered in accordance with the FOI Act. Under this legislation, applicants seeking access to documents held by Council need to provide sufficient information to enable the documents to which the application relates to be identified.

If the documents relate to the applicant's personal affairs, proof of identity may be requested. Applications must be made in accordance with the requirements set out in the FOI Act and will be dealt with by an accredited FOI officer on behalf of the Council. In dealing with an application under the FOI Act, consultation with third parties may be required. The Council will provide to the applicant written notice of its determination. There are rights of internal and external review where an applicant is dissatisfied with a determination.

In addition to the application fee, other fees and charges may be payable for dealing with an application (refer **Appendix 1** for list of fees and charges as prescribed under Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information (Fees and Charges) Regulations 2018 and annual Freedom of Information (Fees) Notice.

No fee is required for current concession holders or if payment of the fee would cause financial hardship⁹. At all times Council retains a discretion to waive, reduce or remit a fee for any reason it thinks fit.

If, in the Council's opinion, the cost of dealing with an application is likely to exceed the application fee, an advance deposit may be requested. The request will be accompanied by a notice that sets out the basis on which the amount of the deposit has been calculated. The accredited FOI Officer will endeavour to work with the applicant to define the scope of the request and the costs involved.

4.1 Amendment to Council Records

Under the FOI Act, persons may request a correction to any information about themselves that is incomplete, incorrect, misleading, or out of date.

To gain access to these Council records, a person must complete and lodge with Council an application form as indicated above outlining the records that they wish to inspect.

⁹ Section 5, Freedom of Information (fees and Charges) Regulations 2018

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If it is found that these records require amendment, details of the necessary changes are to be lodged with Council's accredited FOI Officer. There are no fees or charges for the lodgement, or the first two hours of processing of this type of application and where there is a significant correction of personal records and the mistakes were not the applicant's, any fees and charges paid for the original application will be fully refunded.

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Appendix 1 – Fees and Charges

There is a \$44.70 FOI application fee that must be paid to the agency at the time of submitting an application.

Processing charges may also be applicable. Council's FOI Officer will advise applicants of these charges once the application is received and processing has begun.

These fees and charges are as follows and are prescribed fees declared in the Freedom of Information (Fees) Notice 2025 (gazetted on 14 May 2026, Notice 27):

Schedule 1	Fees and Charges as at 1 July 2026
On application for access to an agency's documents (section 13(c))	\$44.70
For dealing with an application for access to an agency's document and in respect of the giving of access to the document (section 19(1)(b) and (c))—	
(a) in the case of a document that contains information concerning the personal affairs of the applicant—	
(i) for up to the first 2 hours spent by the agency in dealing with the application and giving access no charge	No charge
(ii) for each subsequent 15 minutes so spent by the agency	\$16.90
(b) in any other case – for each 15 minutes so spent by the agency	\$16.90
Where access is to be given in the form of a photocopy of the document (per page) (in addition to the fees outlined above as applicable)	30 cents
Where access is to be given in the form of a written transcript of words recorded or contained in the document (per page) (<i>in addition to the fees outlined above as applicable</i>)	\$10.00
Where access is to be given in the form of a copy of a photograph, x-ray, DVD or other medium in or on which information is recorded or stored (<i>in addition to the fees outlined above as applicable</i>)	The actual cost incurred by the agency in producing the copy
Postage or delivery charges	If the applicant requires that a document be posted or delivered, the applicant must pay the actual costs incurred by the agency in posting or delivering the document.
An application for review by an agency of a determination made by the agency under Part 3 of the Act (section 29(2)(b))	\$44.70