



## ELECTION CARETAKER PERIOD POLICY

<b>Policy No.:</b>	GTC-C-21	<b>Policy type:</b>	Council
<b>Responsibility:</b>	GM Office	<b>Policy expires:</b>	May 2030
<b>Approved by:</b>	Council	<b>Approved on:</b>	February 2026
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### Document History/Version Control

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### Amendment/Administrative History

Date	Details	Comment	Authorised by
		Nil	

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## 1. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

Major policy decisions are not made by Council in the leadup to an election that would prove to be unnecessarily binding for an incoming Council.

Council is committed to the application of good governance principles and high standards of integrity.

It is an established democratic principle that elected bodies should not unnecessarily bind an incoming government during an election period. Council commits to the principle that it will make every endeavour to avoid making major policy decisions that bind an incoming Council.

This policy establishes clear guidelines for the conduct of Councillors in the lead up to a local government general election involving the George Town Council and ensures that the ordinary business of Council continues in a responsible, transparent and legally compliant manner in the period leading up to an election.

## 2. TYPE OF POLICY

As per Section 8 of Policy GTC-12, this policy is categorised as a Council Policy.

This categorisation is consistent with the definitions as stated in Policy GTC-12 which are as follows:

**Council** - Policies pertaining to the Governance of the Council and the activities of its elected members, including the establishment of Committees, and the government of the municipality including resident and ratepayer compliance policies and by-laws.

**Operational** - Policies pertaining to the operational, administrative, and internal matters of the Council, including internal governance, internal committees, and operational matters of service delivery.

## 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to elected members of the George Town Council for the duration of the caretaker period for a local government general election.

This policy does not apply to local government by-elections.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

By-Election	is an election to replace a councillor after the councillor's office becomes vacant.
Candidate	is a person standing for election.
Council	means the George Town Council.
Caretaker Period	is the period determined by the Tasmanian Government through the relevant legislation.
Electoral Material	means any advertisement, handbill, pamphlet, notice, flyer, letter or article that is intended or calculated to affect the result of an election.
Election Campaign	refers to the activities of candidates to win voter support in the period preceding an election and includes activities such as doorknocking, bulk emails, production of signs and flyers, telephone canvassing, social media campaigns and advertising.
Local Government Act	means the Tasmanian Local Government Act 1993.
Major Policy Decision	includes but is not limited to the appointment, remuneration or termination of the General Manager, approval of contracts greater than 1% of Council's net revenue, adoption or renewal of policies, making, amending or repealing of planning schemes and establishment of By-Laws.

#### 5. LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

##### George Town Council Strategic Plan 2020-2030

##### Future Direction Four - Leadership and Accountable Governance

29. Capable leadership in communities
- i. Communities have skilled leaders and contemporary leadership practices that guide change and manage complexity
  - ii. Council is capable, nimble, well-resourced and responsive
  - iii. Courage, kindness and determination is fostered when working through challenges and opportunities

## **6. RELATED LEGISLATION**

Local Government Act 1993

Tasmanian Electoral Act 2004

Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993

## **7. RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

As stated in Council's Risk Appetite Statement, we are prepared to take on measured risk and will do so with informed decision-making practices. We will address uncertainty through open and frank discussions to identify and manage risk and avoid personal perceptions and biases from hindering our objectivity.

## **8. POLICY**

### **8.1 Matters of Clarification**

During the Caretaker Period the following provisions shall apply:

- Tenure of General Manager – Council shall not appoint, dismiss or renew the contract of a General Manager during the Caretaker Period. An Acting General Manager may be appointed in accordance with Section 61B of the Local Government Act, if required.
- Tenders and Contracts – no tender or contract shall be approved by Council for which the total sum exceeds 1% of the Council's revenue as proposed in the forward estimates for the financial year in which the election is to be held.
- Planning Instruments – Council will not make, amend or repeal a local planning instrument under the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 (i.e. a planning scheme, a temporary local planning instrument or a planning scheme policy);
- By-Laws – Council will not make a new By-Law during the Caretaker Period.
- Policies – Council will not approve or renew any Council policies during the Caretaker Period.
- Distribution of Electoral Material – no electoral material shall be permitted to be displayed or distributed on or in any Council owned or managed property.
- Use of Council equipment and stationery, Council supplied equipment and Council branded material shall not be used by Councillors in any manner that supports a candidate's election campaign. Councillors may continue to use Council equipment and branded material throughout the course of the Caretaker Period to carry out their regular functions as described in Section 28 of the Local Government Act.
- Councillors will not use their position as an elected representative, or their access to employees or resources, to gain media attention in support of their, or any other candidate's election campaign.

- A Councillor shall not use their membership of a Council Advisory Committee or appointment as a member of an external group to disseminate information or promote their, or any other candidate's election campaign.

## 8.2 Policy Principles

Nothing in this policy prevents the Councillors from undertaking the business of the Council during the caretaker period.

Council meetings shall continue to be held during the Caretaker Period and will consider Agenda items that relate to the ordinary business of the Council.

The General Manager may still exercise all delegations provided by the Council during the Caretaker Period, including the appointment of staff.

Capital works as approved by Council in that year's budget-can proceed during the Caretaker Period.

The Mayor and Councillors will continue to accept invitations to attend community functions and may continue to correspond with constituents on matters related to Council business during the Caretaker Period.

The Mayor shall be the spokesperson for Council In accordance with Section 27 of the Local Government Act and shall carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office during the Caretaker Period.

Individual Councillors may continue to represent the community and facilitate communication between Council and the community for the duration of the Caretaker Period. In fulfilling these duties during this period, Councillors may claim allowances and expenses as provided under Council Policies GTC-19 Councillor Allowances and GTC-5 Social Media for Councillors.

## 8.3 Operational Continuity

Council staff shall maintain the normal business activities of Council during the Caretaker Period. Staff shall undertake their duties in an appropriate way and take all steps to avoid any real or perceived support for a candidate.

## 9. IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW OF POLICY

Implementation of this Policy rests with Council. This Policy will be reviewed in May 2030 or in accordance with legislative requirements.



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Shane Power  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

DATED 24, 2, 20