



Behavioural Support Policy

Classification:	Council Policy
Version Number:	1
Review Frequency:	Term of Council
Last Reviewed:	N/A
Review Due:	2026
Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999
Related Policies/Procedures:	Behavioural Management Policy

1. PURPOSE:

Council Members in South Australia have an obligation to serve the best interests of the people within the community they represent and to discharge their duties conscientiously, to the best of their ability, and for public, not private, benefit at all times.

To serve the community well, Council Members must work together constructively as a Council. This, in turn will foster community confidence and trust the Council and local government more generally.

Council Members will make every effort to ensure that they have current knowledge of both statutory requirements and the required standards of practice relevant to their position.

2. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT:

This policy has been prepared and adopted by Kingston District Council pursuant to section 75F of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act). This policy forms part of the Behavioural Management Framework for council members.

Section 75F(2) of the Act provides that a Behavioural Support Policy may:

- a. Specify directions relating to behaviour that must be observed by members of the Council; and
- b. Set out guidelines relating to compliance by members with the Behavioural Standards for Council Members and directions under clause a. above; and
- c. include any other matter relating to behaviour of Council Members considered appropriate by the Council.

Section 75F(3) of the Act provides that a Behavioural Support Policy:

- a. must not be inconsistent with the Behavioural Standards for Council Members; and
- b. must comply with any requirements specified by the behavioural standards.

A breach of the Behavioural Support Policy will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Behavioural Management Policy and may be referred to the Behavioural Standards panel in accordance with section 262Q of the Act.

3. SCOPE:

This Policy applies to all Council Members.

4. DEFINITIONS:

<i>Behavioural Management Framework</i>	<p>Comprises the following components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legislative framework within which Council Members must operate. 2. Behavioural Standards for Council Members, determined by the Minister for Local Government, which apply to all Council Members in South Australia. 3. Behavioural Management Policy relating to the management of the behaviour of Council Members pursuant to section 262B of the Act. (This Policy, incorporating the Behavioural Standards for Council Members, was adopted by Council on 24 January 2023.) 4. Optional Behavioural Support Policy (this document) designed to support appropriate behaviour by Council Members pursuant to section 75F of the Act.
<i>Behaviour Standards for Council Members</i>	Established by the Minister for Local Government and published as a notice in the SA Government Gazette specifying the standards of behaviour to be observed by Council Members.

5. POLICY STATEMENT:

We, the Council Members of Kingston District Council commit to the following values and supporting behaviours: (LGA examples provided below – to be considered and determined by Council Members)

1. **Value & Respect** – We engage with each other respectfully in robust debate. We listen to others' views and speak to the issue and not the person/s.
2. **Optimism** – We are positive, constructive and creative in our problem solving. We are open minded and are willing to learn from each other and from the staff input.
3. **Integrity** – We are well prepared and stay focused on agreed strategic priorities. We uphold decisions of Council. Where it is not a unanimous decision, we respectfully communicate the decision to others.
4. **Connected** – We ensure we provide a safe, supportive environment where people thrive, are listened to and communication is open and transparent.
5. **Excellence** – We value leading toward clear strategic and inspiring goals and implement outcomes that benefit the community as a whole.

6. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMITMENTS:

To support our shared values and behaviours, we, the Council Members of Kingston District Council agree:

1. That as the currently elected custodians, entrusted to oversee the affairs of Kingston District Council, we have a duty to put the interests of the community before our own interests.
2. As most Council Members will serve at least a four-year term on council together, it is important to spend time focused on building and maintaining positive and constructive relationships and participate in workshops and undertake training.
3. To fulfill our duties, we will establish and maintain relationships of respect, trust, confidentiality, collaboration, and cooperation with other Council Members and the employees of Council.
4. As a democratic tier of the government in South Australia we acknowledge our role in representing a wide diversity of viewpoints within the community. We:
 - a) recognise that it is appropriate and important for a range of views to be expressed at council meetings.
 - b) accept we are likely to disagree at times as part of robust debate, but we will always show respect in our differences.
 - c) undertake, when we disagree, that we will do this respectfully. In particular, we undertake, when disagreeing with others, that we will focus on the merits of the argument and not make personal or derogatory remarks about other council members or council employees.
5. At Council meetings we will engage with each other in a respectful and civilised manner, and we will exercise care in expressing views regarding the conduct of other Council Members and Council employees.

6. The Mayor has the primary role in maintaining good order at Council meetings. However, all Council Members will responsibly lead in demonstrating and supporting constructive and positive behaviour in effective decision making at Council.
7. If relationships between Council Members become strained, all Council Members will work collegially and constructively to resolve the conflict and restore positive relationships.
8. When engaging and communicating with Council administration we will do so in accordance with the requirements of the CEO and relevant legislation, recognising the separation of powers between Council Members and the CEO and the importance of working together constructively to achieve outcomes for the community.

To support the undertakings made above, the Council Members of Kingston District Council additionally commit to participating in activities to monitor and review the shared values and behaviours throughout the term of Council.

7. OTHER MATTERS RELATING TO THE BEHAVIOUR OF COUNCIL MEMBERS:

We, the Council Members of Kingston District Council consider it appropriate and agree that all Council Members will act in accordance with the following specific obligations:

DRAFTING NOTE: The information set out below is by way of example. Section 75F(2)(c) provides that a behavioural support policy may “include any other matters relating to behaviour of members considered appropriate by the council”. This section of the policy is where those other matters should be incorporated. Councils should discuss and determine “other matters relating to the behaviour of members” it considers appropriate for inclusion within this section of the policy and then modify the text in this section accordingly. In determining ‘other matters relating to behaviour’ councils should avoid duplicating matters already provided for within the Local Government Act.

7.1 Media

1. The Local Government Act provides that the Mayor is the principal spokesperson for the Council unless the Council has appointed another Council Member to act as its principal spokesperson, either at all times or on specific issues.
2. Subject to this section, Council Members should refrain from making any public comment that is inconsistent with the resolutions of Council.
3. Council members may express their individual personal views through the media. When this occurs, it needs to be clear that any such comment is a personal view and does not represent the position of Council.
4. If Council Members choose to express dissent in the media, they should address the policy issues and refrain from making personal criticism of other Council Members or Council staff. Any such commentary should not include any remarks that could reasonably be construed as being derogatory, defamatory or insulting to any person.
5. For clarity, this policy does not attempt to prevent robust political debate on issues considered by Council, but provides guidance on how views should be expressed.

7.2 Social Media

1. Council recognises that social media is an important platform for communication and public engagement and as such, Council Members may establish and maintain their own social media sites.
2. Kingston District Council's website is the principal source of Council's public information, supported by social media platforms.
3. Council Members may link and disseminate key information from official Council media platforms in messaging to the community but should not change the information.
4. Council Members should refrain from linking or disseminating information that is inconsistent with the resolutions of Council.

7.3 Communication and engagement

1. Council Members, as representatives of Council, will communicate and engage with the community on Council's key directions, providing factual information on the challenges and opportunities respectfully and in accordance with resolutions of Council.

8. AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY:

This policy will be available for inspection at the Council's principal office, 29 Holland Street Kingston SE, during ordinary business hours and on Council's website: www.kingstondc.sa.gov.au. Copies will also be provided to interested members of the community upon request, and upon such payment of the fee set by Council.

9. REVIEW:

Pursuant to Section 75F of the Local Government Act 1999, Council must review the operation of this Policy within 12 months after the conclusion of each period election.