

# General Election

Information Session for  
potential candidates



# Agenda

- **Welcome** – Chief Executive Officer, Brendan Dowd
- **Electoral Processes** – NT Electoral Commission, Sue Whyte
- **Dept. of Housing and Community Development, Local Government Division** – Nathan Fanning
- **Overview** – Chief Executive Officer, Brendan Dowd
  - The role, functions and objectives of a council and of Elected Members
  - Overview of City of Darwin
- **Elected Member Perspective** – Past Alderman John Bailey
- **Local Government Association of the NT** – CEO Tony Tapsell
- **Questions**



# NT Electoral Commission

- [Senior Project Officer, Ms Sue Whyte](#)



# Dept. of Housing and Community Development



Local Government Division, Manager Local Authorities

Mr Nathan Fanning



Chief Executive Officer, Brendan Dowd

# OVERVIEW



# What is Local Government?

- First tier of Government
  - Local Government (councils)
  - State/Territory Government
  - Australian Government
- Closest to the community
- The Local Government Act contains the power for councils to exist

# What are councils required to do?

## **The NT Local Government Act sets out:**

- role
- functions
- objectives of councils
- role of Members

## **Some other laws Council must abide by include:**

- Darwin City Council By-Laws
- Information Act
- Planning Act
- Waste Management & Pollution Control Act
- Enterprise Agreement
- Disability Services Act
- Workplace Health & Safety Act
- Anti Discrimination Act... and others!



# Role of a Council

## Section 11, Local Government Act

The role of a council is:

- To act as a representative, informed and responsible decision-maker in the interests of its constituency
- To develop a strong and cohesive community life for its residents and allocate resources in a fair, socially inclusive, and sustainable way
- To provide and co-ordinate public facilities and services



# Role of a Council

- To encourage and develop initiatives for improving quality of life
- To represent the interests of its area to the wider community
- To exercise and carry out the powers and functions of local government assigned to the council under this Act and other Acts.



# Functions of a Council

## Section 12, Local Government Act

The functions of a council include:

- To plan for the future requirements of its area for local government services
- To provide services and facilities for the benefit of its area, its residents and visitors
- To provide for the interests and well-being of individuals and groups within the council area

# Functions of a Council

- To carry out measures to protect its area from natural and other hazards and to mitigate the effects of such hazards
- To manage and develop council facilities and services in its area in a sustainable way
- To manage and develop all the resources available to the council for the benefit of its area
- Other functions assigned to the council under the Local Government Act or any other Act

# Functions of a Council

Additionally, the functions of a council may (if the council chooses to exercise them) include the following:

- To promote its area as a location for appropriate industries or commerce or as an attractive tourist destination
- To establish or support organisations or programs that benefit the council area

# Objectives of a Council

## Section 13, Local Government Act

A council has the following objectives:

- To provide open, responsive and accountable government at the local level
- To be responsive to the needs, interests and aspirations of individuals and groups within its area
- To co-operate with Territory and Australian Government in the delivery of services for the benefit of its area
- To place a high value on the importance of service to the its constituency

# Objectives of a Council

- To seek to ensure a proper emphasis on environmentally sustainable development within its area and a proper balance between economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations
- To seek to provide services, facilities and programs that are appropriate to the needs of its area and to ensure equitable access to its services, facilities and programs
- Generally to act at all times in the best interests of the community as a whole



# Role of Elected Members

## Section 35, Local Government Act

The role of an elected member of a council is:

- To represent the interests of all residents and ratepayers of the council area
- To provide leadership and guidance
- To facilitate communication between members of the council's constituency and the council
- To participate in the deliberations of a council and its community activities

# Role of Elected Members

- To ensure that the council acts honestly, efficiently and appropriately in carrying out its statutory responsibilities.

An elected member of the council does not have the power to direct or control staff, or to interfere with the management of staff.

A member of the council has a duty to act, at all times, in what the member genuinely believes to be the best interests of the council's constituency.

# Elected Member Code of Conduct

## Schedule 2, Local Government Act

- 1. Honesty and integrity**  
A member must act honestly and with integrity in performing official functions.
- 2. Care and diligence**  
A member must act with reasonable care and diligence in performing official functions.
- 3. Courtesy**  
A member must act with courtesy towards other members, council staff, electors and members of the public.
- 4. Conduct towards council staff**  
A member must not direct, reprimand, or interfere in the management of, council staff.

# Elected Member Code of Conduct

## 5. **Respect for cultural diversity**

A member must respect cultural diversity and must not therefore discriminate against others, or the opinions of others, on the ground of their cultural background.

## 6. **Conflict of interest**

A member must, if possible, avoid conflict of interest between the member's private interests and official functions and responsibilities.

Where a conflict in fact exists, the member must comply with the member's statutory obligations of disclosure. Legal advice regarding conflict of interest can be obtained by contacting the CEO.

# Elected Member Code of Conduct

## 7. **Respect for confidences**

A member must respect the confidentiality of information obtained in confidence in the member's official capacity.

A member must not make improper use of confidential information obtained in an official capacity to gain a private benefit or to cause harm to another.

## 8. **Gifts**

A member must not solicit or encourage gifts or private benefits from any person who might have an interest in obtaining a benefit from the council.

# Elected Member Code of Conduct

## 9. **Accountability**

A member must be prepared at all times to account for the member's performance as a member and the member's use of council resources.

## 10. **Interests of municipality or shire to be paramount**

A member must act in what the member genuinely believes to be the best interests of the municipality or shire.

In particular, a member must seek to ensure that the member's decisions and actions are based on an honest, reasonable, and properly informed judgement about what will best advance the best interests of the municipality or shire.

# Conflict of Interest

## Part 7.2, Local Government Act

A member has a conflict of interest in a question arising for decision by the council, local board or council local authority, committee if the member or an associate of the member has a personal or financial interest in how the question is decided.

As soon as practicable after a member becomes aware of a conflict of interest in a question that has arisen or is about to arise before the council, local authority, local board or council committee, the member must disclose the personal or financial interest that gives rise to the conflict.



# Meeting Frequency

## Standard Monthly Meetings

- 2x Ordinary Council Meetings
  - on the last and second last Tuesdays at 5.00pm
- 1x Executive Committee Meeting

## Additional Meetings

- Special Council Meetings
- Council Workshops
- Briefings
- Advisory Committee Meetings
- Meetings of organisations where Elected Members represent the Council

# Number of meetings in 2016/17

Meeting	Number of meetings
Ordinary Council	21
Executive Committees *	25
Town Planning Committee	4
Special Council Meetings	2
Special Council Workshops	17
TOTAL for Lord Mayor	69
TOTAL for Aldermen	53

*\*Note: each Alderman only sits on one Executive Committee.  
The Lord Mayor attends all committees.*

# Inauguration & Induction

- Following the announcement of the election results, new Elected Members of the Council will be formally admitted to office
- Council is committed to implementing a structured induction program after the general election and several briefing sessions will be scheduled

# Elected Member Induction

Briefings will include:

- About Council
- Elected Members and the Law
- Corporate Governance
- Financial Governance
- Meeting Procedures

# Allowances

The Minister for Local Government determines the maximum allowances payable to Elected Members.

The following are the 2017/18 Category 1: Darwin allowances.

# Allowances

## Principal Member (Lord Mayor)

Allowance	Amount
Base	\$121,874.05
Electoral	\$32,077.45
Professional Development	\$3,653.68
Total maximum claimable	\$157,605.18

## Ordinary Member (Alderman)

Allowance	Amount
Base	\$21,918.53
Electoral	\$8,019.95
Professional Development	\$3,653.68
Maximum Extra Meeting Allowance claimable/year	\$14,612.35
Total maximum claimable	\$48,204.51



# OVERVIEW OF CITY OF DARWIN

# Key Statistics

• Population	83,465
• Area	112 km <sup>2</sup>
• 2017/18 operating expense	\$106 million
• 2017/18 capital works	\$21.6 million
• Community assets	\$1.2 billion
• Staff	350.4 FTE
• Parks, gardens and reserves	646ha
• Sealed roads	452km
• Footpaths & shared paths	553km
• Stormwater pipes	391km
• Driveways	20,570
• Playgrounds	125
• Council owned buildings	109
➤ including: 3 public swimming pools, 7 childcare centres, 8 tennis courts, 2 multi-storey car parks and 36 public toilet blocks	

# Evolving Darwin Towards 2020 Strategic Plan



## **Vision**

Darwin:

A tropical, liveable city that creates opportunity and choice for our community

## **Mission**

Council will work with the community to maintain and promote the City of Darwin as the tropical capital of the Northern Territory, offering opportunities and a vibrant lifestyle for our residents and visitors.



## **Service**

Council will strive to achieve excellence, quality and pride of service to the community using common sense, compassion and courtesy.

## **Responsiveness**

Council will be responsive to the needs of the community.

## **Involvement**

Council will provide avenues of participation for and be accessible to the community.

## **Responsibility**

Council will act responsibly and with integrity in the interests of the community and public safety.

## **Equity**

Council will treat and provide services to the community in an equitable manner

## **Governance**

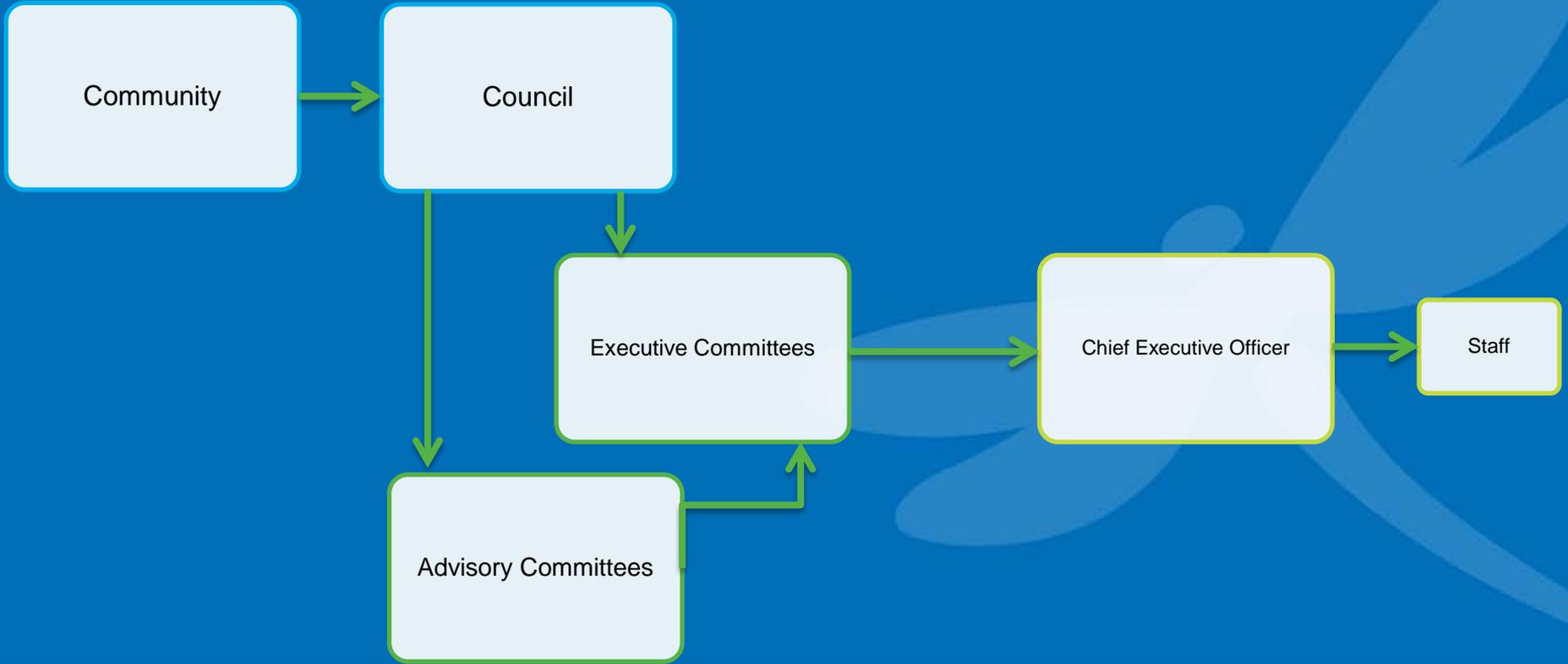
Council will demonstrate good governance through its rigorous, transparent and financially accountable decision making process.

# Values and Principles

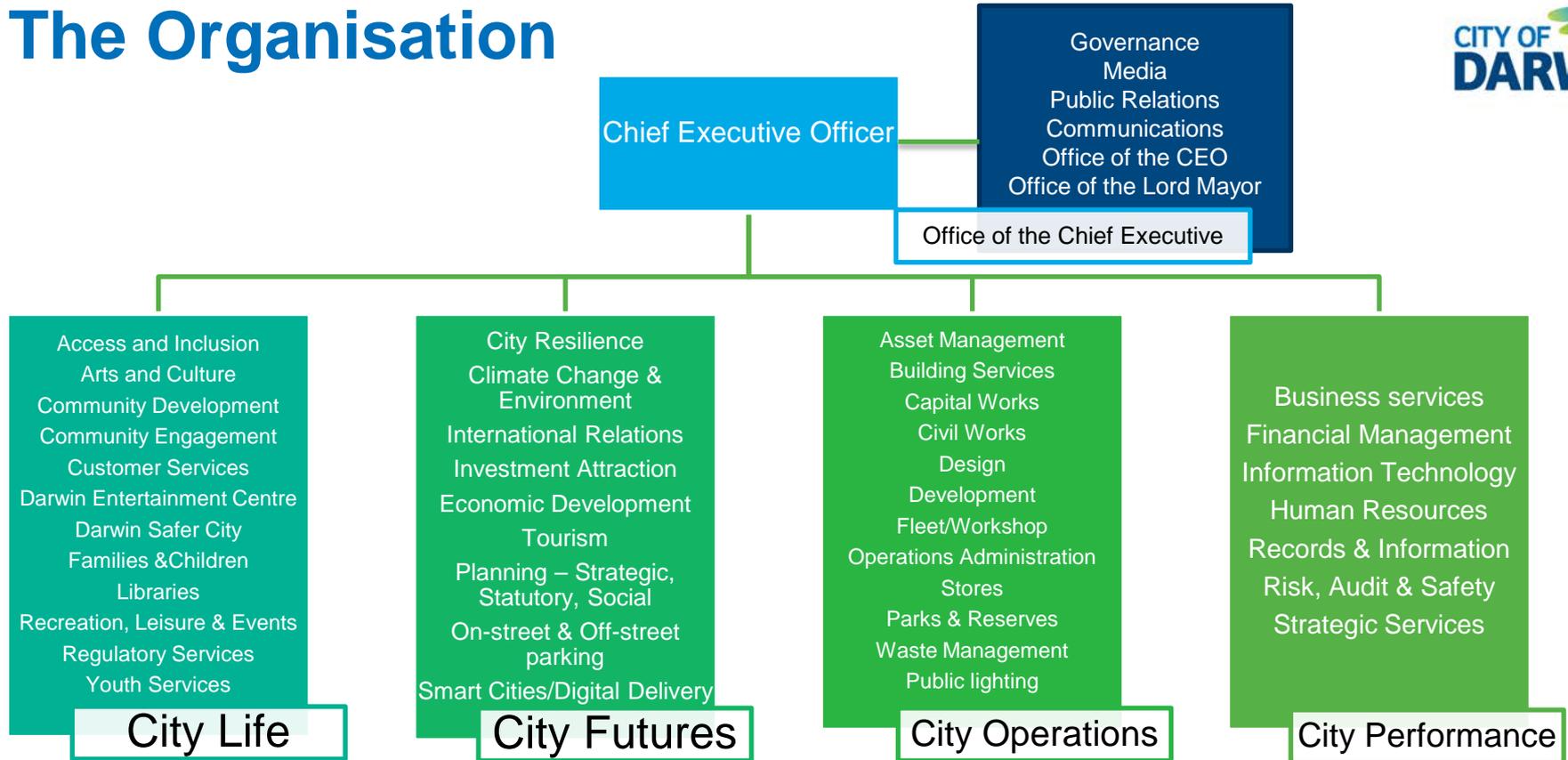
## **Council is a body corporate**

- Council is comprised of the Lord Mayor and 12 Aldermen
- Divided into four Wards:
  - Chan, Lyons, Waters and Richardson
- Each Ward is represented by three Aldermen
  - Representation ratio – approximately 1:3860
- Part 4.2, Division 2 of the Local Government Act sets out the Role of Members

# Governance Structure



# The Organisation



# Office of the Chief Executive

## **Chief Executive Officer, Brendan Dowd**

- Primary link between Elected Members and staff
- Assists Elected Members in policy development
- Provides organisational leadership
- Responsible for financial and non-financial performance
- Implement policy decisions of Council
- Diplomat, activist, warrior and peace-keeper!

# City of Darwin



- [Video](#)



# Elected Member Perspective

- Past City of Darwin Alderman, Mr John Bailey  
(2000 – 2012)

# Local Government Association of the NT



- [Chief Executive Officer, Mr Tony Tapsell](#)



# Questions?



Thank you and good luck!

