



AGENDA

Special Meeting of Council

Tuesday, 7 March 2023

12.30pm

Council Committee Room, Civic Centre,
Stuart Highway, Katherine

The Chief Executive Officer of Katherine Town Council hereby provides notice of the Ordinary Meeting of Council, in accordance with Section 92 of the *Local Government Act 2019*.

ELECTED MEMBERS

- Mayor Elisabeth Clark (Chair)
- Councillor Maddy Bower
- Deputy Mayor Denis Coburn
- Councillor Amanda Kingdon
- Councillor Jeremy Trembath

OFFICERS

- Ms Ingrid Stonhill – Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Rosemary Jennings – Director Community Services
- Mr Brendan Pearce – Director Infrastructure and Environment
- Mr Avtar Singh – Director of Corporate Services
- Amanda Haigh – Governance and Executive Officer

VISION:

Katherine is a place of opportunities. We celebrate diversity as we live, work, learn and grow together.

MISSION:

Together, we will work effectively today to shape our exceptional future tomorrows.

VALUES:

- **Accepting of diversity**
- **Sense of community**
- **Respect for people, environment, and culture.**

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1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT **THIS MEETING IS BEING HELD ON THE TRADITIONAL LANDS OF THE FIRST NATIONS** PEOPLE OF THE KATHERINE TOWNSHIP AND SURROUNDING COUNCIL COMMUNITIES. WE RECOGNISE THE FIRST NATIONS CULTURE AS ONE OF THE LONGEST SURVIVING CULTURES IN THE WORLD AND WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO ELDERS BOTH PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

2 OPENING PRAYER

Grant O God to this Council wisdom, understanding and sincerity of purpose in the Governance of this Municipality. Amen

3 MEETING DECLARED OPEN

4 ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

4.2 APOLOGIES
4.3 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

5 DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

Members Disclosure Conflict of Interest

Council declares any conflicts of interest in line with Conflict-of-Interest Policy. A copy of this policy can be downloaded from www.katherine.nt.gov.au or obtained by emailing records@ktc.nt.gov.au

6 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

6.1 LGANT MOTION - SENIOR EXECUTIVE SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

FOLDER ID : \COUNCIL MEETING ADMINISTRATION\SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL (SMC)\SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL (SMC) - AGENDA\SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL (SMC) - AGENDA - 2023/176988

AUTHOR : AMANDA HAIGH, EXECUTIVE AND GOVERNANCE OFFICER

AUTHORISER : INGRID STONHILL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ATTACHMENT/S : NIL

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council approve the motions for a Senior Executive Support Framework to be submitted to the LGANT General Meeting April 2023 requesting:
 - (a) Katherine Town Council calls on LGANT to investigate a framework to support the NT Local Government executive leadership through a specific NT designed induction process.
 - (b) Katherine Town Council calls on LGANT to advocate for and establish a high-level service for senior executives for ongoing support, within the Local Government Sector.
 - (c) Katherine Town Council calls on LGANT to investigate other state Local Government models for the most appropriate framework.
 - (d) Katherine Town Council calls on LGANT for this motion be supported through to the Australian Local Government Association motions.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek council approval to submit the motion to LGANT General Meeting in April 2023.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Priority Four	Growth and Sustainability	Attract Skilled Workers	Offer Council staff training and development opportunities
Priority Four	Growth and Sustainability	Attract Skilled Workers	Provide the right conditions and right opportunities

BACKGROUND

LGANT provide Member councils an opportunity to submit motions on issues for consideration, such as policy positions and advocacy efforts, at either the April or November General Meetings or the monthly Board Meetings.

Policy positions are a statement or declaration of an organisation's stance on a particular topic or topics. Further, LGANT seeks to influence public policy which is laws, guidelines and actions decided and taken by governments.

Advocacy is a broad term encompassing endeavours to achieve change. In the context of LGANT, advocacy is activity undertaken to promote issues that collectively effect the local government sector.

DISCUSSION

Council are being asked to consider submitting a motion for a Senior Executive Support Framework.

In Local Government NT there is an absence of support of any kind for council CEO's. There is high turnover within the sector and difficulty recruiting talented individuals, from all sectors, into local government executive roles within the Northern Territory. This issue was brought to the fore in 2022, by City of Darwin's motion to LGANT re Recruitment and Retention of Senior Executives.

Within a more increasingly challenging time for the local government sector, with increased costs, increasing prominence of natural disasters, economic decline, aging infrastructure and loss of trust in government institutions, more pressure is placed on local leaders.

There is no support agency or place for executive leadership to turn. With an increased awareness of obligations to employees health and wellbeing, we need to make change now.

Council's Duty of Care to its most senior executives.

As Employers, Council's elected members have a duty of care to their employee, the Chief Executive Officer. As an employer, Councils have an obligation to make sure their employee is doing well. This means taking measures to ensure that their employee is not harmed physically or psychologically.

In Australia, this duty has materialized into the law such as Workplace Health and Safety regulations. Every employer has an obligation to understand what the law dictates about Employers responsibilities in the workplace.

Employer's Duty of Care to Employees' Mental Health

In 2018-2019, \$736 million was paid in workers compensation for claims that cited mental health conditions stemming from unhealthy work environments. Not only do employers have a duty to make sure the physical environment is safe for employees, but they are also responsible for preventing psychological harm in the workplace.

Psychological harm can come in many forms and cannot always be visibly seen like an injury, so keeping communication open with your employee is essential.

Ensuring employees feel safe expressing any concerns regarding their work environment is an essential part of Employers Duty of Care. As is being cognizant of hazards that can negatively impact an employee's mental health. These often include:

- Unreasonably long hours
- Bullying and harassment
- Lack of support from superiors
- Traumatic events

- High stress or pressure

How psychosocial hazards cause harm

Psychosocial hazards can create stress. This can cause psychological or physical harm. Stress itself is not an injury. But if workers are stressed often, over a long time, or the level of stress is high, it can cause harm.

- Psychological harm may include anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, sleep disorders,
- Physical harm may include musculoskeletal injuries, chronic disease or fatigue related injuries.

Managing psychosocial risks

An Employer must eliminate psychosocial risks, or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimize them so far as is reasonably practicable.

The model WHS Regulations require Employers to have regard to all relevant matters when determining what control measures to implement.

Psychosocial hazards as identified by Safe Work Australia, are extremely prevalent within a Local Government's Chief Executive Officer role. Evidence suggests that often dismissed and rarely discussed, many CEOs are plagued by feelings of isolation once they take on the top job. Findings from Harvard Business Review inaugural CEO Snapshot Survey™ revealed that half of CEOs report experiencing feelings of loneliness in their role, and of the group surveyed, 61 percent believe it hinders their performance.

The Safe Work Australia, Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace – Code of Practice 2022 is available to each state and territory.

RISK, LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Workplace health and safety is the main regulatory guideline establishing the standard of care employers need to practice in order to fulfil their duty of care towards their employees. Safe Work Australia is the main organisation that looks after workplace health and safety.

Ordinary workplace health and safety regulations can take the form of:

- Providing employees with all the necessary safety equipment
- Giving adequate training to all employees so they are well informed in handling any machinery
- Getting rid of any hazards around the workplace
- Having plans for emergencies such as a fire
- Allowing employees the opportunity to discuss any safety concerns
- Having the right policies and an appropriate staff handbook

COUNCIL OFFICER CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We the Author and Approving Officer declare we do not have a conflict of interest in relation to this matter.

7 CLOSURE OF MEETING