

A large decorative graphic on the right side of the page, consisting of two overlapping semi-circles. The left semi-circle is orange and the right semi-circle is green. They overlap in the center, creating a dark blue shape. The background of the entire page is dark blue.

Council Policy

Use of Common Seal of Council

Document Overview

Document Category	Council Policy
Policy Title	Use of Council Common Seal
Policy Statement	This policy sets out the situations in which a seal is required, and how the seal is to be used.
Date	13 August 2025
Resolution Date	28 October 2025
Clause Number	CCL25/272
Accountable Position	Manager Corporate Governance
Responsible Position	Manager Corporate Governance
Branch	Corporate Governance
Division	Organisational Performance
CM Reference Number	ED25/233026
Version	3
Review Period	5 Years
Review Date	August 2030
Consultation	Not Applicable

Document Revision History	
Description	Date
Updated to Western Plains Regional Council	22 June 2016
Updated to Dubbo Regional Council	May 2022
Reviewed and updated into new policy format with some title changes	13 August 2025
Notes	
Brought in line with current Council template, slight amendments to who may sign documents, in line with legislation.	

Purpose

A Council seal is like the signature of a Council. Affixing the seal demonstrates approval of the content of a document and shows what Council has done or agreed to do.

Council's seal can only be used following a resolution of Council. However, not all documents created to implement decisions of Council require the affixing of a seal.

Related Information

Councils are required to resolve the awarding of contracts and agreements through council resolutions. If any of these are not within the General Managers delegations, Council can resolve to execute these contracts under the Common Seal of Council.

Related Legislation

Local Government Act 1993 (The Act)

Section 377 of the Act allows Council to delegate any of its functions (except those enumerated in the section) to the General Manager (General Manager) or any other person or body.

Interpretation Act 1987

Section 50 of Part 8 of the Interpretation Act requires Council to have a seal. This is because Council is a statutory corporation. In addition, it requires that the seal be kept by the president, chairperson or other principal officer of the corporation and affixed to a document only in the presence of at least two members of the corporation, and with an attestation by the signatures of those members of the fact of the affixing of the seal.

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation)

Requirements in relation to Council's seal are further detailed in clause 400 of the Regulation, which states that:

1. *The seal of a council must be kept by the mayor or the general manager, as the council determines.*
2. *The seal of a council may be affixed to a document only in the presence of:*
 - *the mayor and the general manager, or*
 - *at least one councillor (other than the mayor) and the general manager, or*
 - *the mayor and at least one other councillor, or*
 - *at least 2 councillors other than the mayor.*
3. *The affixing of a council seal to a document has no effect unless the persons who were present when the seal was affixed (being persons referred to in subclause (2)) attest by their signatures that the seal was affixed in their presence.*

4. *The seal of a council must not be affixed to a document unless the document relates to the business of the council and the council has resolved (by resolution specifically referring to the document) that the seal be so affixed.*
5. *For the purposes of subclause (4), a document in the nature of a reference or certificate of service for an employee of the council does not relate to the business of the council.*

Scope

The Chief Executive Office is to arrange safekeeping of the Council Seal. The seal is to be kept under lock except when it is required for affixing to a document.

Policy

In line with its legislative requirements, Council has determined that:

- A decision to affix Council's seal to a document can only be made by a resolution of Council. It is not a matter that can be delegated.
- Council's seal will be held by the General Manager. Following a decision by Council that a document will be issued under seal, the General Manager will ensure that the requirements of sections 400(2) and (3) of the Regulation are met whenever the Council Seal is to be affixed to a document.
- Council's seal will be used only for documents that relate to the business of Council, and without limiting the use of the seal, will normally only include specifically:
 - o the exercise by Council of its functions in relation to the purchase, exchange, leasing, disposal of, and otherwise dealing with, real property, or
 - o executing a contract of employment for the General Manager, or
 - o completing agreements or contracts from state or federal government departments where they have requested the agreements or contracts be under seal, or
 - o entering into planning agreements.
- Council's seal will not be used for documents such as references or certificates of service for Council employees.
- The General Manager will not witness the affixing of Council's seal to the contract of employment for the General Manager.
- In accordance with section 440(2) of the Regulation, the seal of Council may be affixed to a document only in the presence of:
 - o The Mayor and the General Manager (preferred), or
 - o At least one Councillor (other than the Mayor) and the General Manager, or
 - o The Mayor and at least one other Councillor, or
 - o At least two Councillors other than the Mayor.

PROCEDURE FOR USE OF THE SEAL

If a document is to be sealed, the Council resolution that authorises the sealing must refer to the specific document.

However, this does not always mean that each document needs a separate resolution. If Council is authorising an activity or transaction, for example the transfer of land, a single resolution could specify all the documents that need to be executed under seal to carry out that activity or transaction.

Resolutions to use Council’s seal must be in the following form:

“That any necessary documentation be executed under the Common Seal of the Council.”

If required, the words ‘Mayor’ and or ‘General Manager’ may be replaced as required by the Mayor or General Manager, in compliance with sections 400(2) and (3) of the Regulation.

In the case of the contract of employment for the General Manager the word ‘Mayor’ may be replaced, and the words ‘General Manager’ must be replaced, as required by the Mayor, in compliance with sections 400 (2) and (3) of the Regulation.

Responsibilities

The General Manager is responsible for ensuring the Council Seal is used in accordance with this Policy, except in the case of the contract of employment of the General Manager, when the Director Organisational Performance is responsible.

Position	Responsibility
Mayor	To sign along with the CEO as per the resolution of council.
General Manager	To ensure that the Council Seal is used in accordance with this policy.
Manager Corporate Governance	Manager or nominee to apply the seal and maintain the register of all occasions that it is used.
Directors	Director Organisational Performance to take on CEO responsibility in the case of executing the CEO’s employment contract.

Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
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Council Seal

A stamp or embossed insignia that serves as the official signature of a local government council.

Appendices

Nil.

Document Control

Responsible Officer:	Manager Corporate Governance
Division:	Organisational Performance
Prepared by:	Governance Team Leader
Version:	3.0
Revision:	5 years
Document Date:	13/08/2025
Effective:	28/10/2025

Previous Cover



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