CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

COUNCIL POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy sets out the City of Palmerston's process to ensure the proper treatment and review of confidential items considered at Council Meetings.

PRINCIPLES

City of Palmerston is committed to transparent and accountable decision making to achieve the outcomes of its Community Plan.

Council shall only consider matters in confidence that fall under the prescribed categories of the *Local Government Act 2019* (NT) and *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* (the Regulations) and retain this information until the reason no longer applies.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

TERM	DEFINITION
Confidential Information	Means information prescribed as confidential under the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021.
Council Decision	Means a resolution made at a Council Meeting.
Prescribed Categories	Refers to the categories set out in section 51(1) the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021.
Council Meeting	Means Ordinary Council, Special Council Meetings or Committee Meetings.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Classifying Confidential Information

1.1. Any business that falls under the prescribed categories in the Regulations will be considered as a confidential decision.

1.2. Reasoning setting out why the confidentiality applies will be included within Council business papers which are available to the public or, in the case of Confidential Special Council Meetings, the public notice related to the meeting.

1.3. Confidential decisions will be retained in confidence until Council determines by resolution that the reason for confidentiality no longer applies.

2. Consideration of Confidential Information

2.1. When considering confidential decisions, confidentiality is to be considered for the purpose of assessing whether the information is to remain confidential. Council may release different types of information relating to confidential business at different times. For example, confidential resolutions that are no longer confidential may be released independently of related reports or attachments, which may remain confidential. Council will decide whether confidential information:

(a) Should no longer be confidential after a specified period of time, or

(b) should be subject to periodic review to determine if it should no longer be confidential.

2.2. On the consideration of a confidential matter, Council will determine by resolution whether the confidential council decision will:

(c) Be released to the Open Minutes at a time determined by Council;

(d) Be required to remain confidential until the information is transferred to the NT Archives Services pursuant to the *Information Act 2002* (NT) and Records Disposal Schedule for Local Authorities in the Northern Territory;

(e) Remain confidential indefinitely.

2.3. Should a council decision not be made in accordance with clause 2.1, the decision will be added to City of Palmerston's Confidential Decisions Review List.

3. Review of Confidential Decisions

3.1. Council will undertake a six-monthly review of its Confidentiality Decisions Review List, when a report will be provided to Council with a recommendation to either release, retain or to reconsider the matter at the next review period.

3.2. Council decisions that are no longer confidential will form part of the Open Minutes of the meeting where Council endorsed release of the decision.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- City of Palmerston Community Plan.
- Records Disposal Schedule for Local Authorities in the Northern Territory.

REFERENCES AND RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 2019 (NT).*
- *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021.*
- *Information Act 2002 (NT).*

POLICY DETAILS

OWNER	CEO	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager Finance and Governance
APPROVAL DATE	03/03/2026	NEXT REVIEW DUE	12th Council Term
RECORDS NUMBER	498388	COUNCIL DECISION	11/0270