

# APPLYING TO ACCESS

## INFORMATION HELD BY COUNCIL

The *Information Act* (NT) (The Act) gives the public a general right of access to information held by the City of Palmerston and the right to apply to have personal information changed if it is inaccurate, incomplete or out of date. The Act also requires that the Council respects your privacy in the way it collects and handles personal information about you.

This information sheet has been developed to assist you in obtaining access to information held by the Council.

### THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF COUNCIL

## Organisational Chart



### **THE KINDS OF INFORMATION HELD BY COUNCIL**

There are broadly two categories of information held by Council:

- 1) Information relating to its management and administration (internal)
- 2) Information relating to the services which it provides to the community (external).

#### **Internal Information**

The internal information which Council holds is information which is created to support the management and administration of the Council. For example, there is information related to:

- strategic planning, management & reporting
- recruitment and management of staff
- staff development & training
- occupational health & safety
- financial management
- legal services
- management of assets
- business relationships and communication with individuals, the community and other agencies
- records management
- publications including electronic publications and web sites.

#### **External Information**

The external information which PCC holds relates directly to the services which it delivers. Most of these services are provided to the community. Examples of the kind of information held are:

- Complaints about animals
- Legal issues related to Council property
- Investigations related to Council services
- Contracts to deliver services
- Rates
- Complaints about Council services

### **REQUESTS FOR ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

You can access information by completing the form Application for Access to Information available at [www.palmerston.nt.gov.au](http://www.palmerston.nt.gov.au) or at the Civic Centre Building, corner of Chung Wah Terrace and University Avenue.

You do not have to give a reason for your request, although sometimes knowing the reason may help staff to provide you with access in a form which is the most helpful to you. Also, the information you require may be available without making a request under the Information Act, eg. the information is in a publication.

The following information is available free of charge on Council's website:

- Council By-Laws
- Council Policies
- Elected Members Code of Conduct
- Terms of Office Register
- Declaration of Interest Register
- Municipal Plan for the current year and last three years

- Long Term Financial Plan
- Schedule of Fees and Charges for the current year and last three years
- Declaration of Rates for the current year and last three years
- Annual Report for the current year and last three years
- Council and Committee Meeting Agendas and Minutes for the current year and last three years
- Tender Register
- Current Tenders
- Council Strategies
- 2018 Election Results

These documents, along with Council's Rate Book, can also be viewed at the Civic Centre Building, corner of Chung Wah Terrace and University Avenue.

It is recommended that, before you make an application under the Act, you approach staff at the Council and ask whether the information is available.

The Council needs proof of your identity before it accepts your application. Council will accept the following forms of identification - driver's licence, passport or some other card or document that identifies who you are.

### **Fees**

There is no application fee if you are applying for access to, or for correction of, information about yourself. A \$30.00 application fee applies if your application is for Council information, other than personal information about you. Where an application fee is payable, you must pay this before your application will be accepted. The application fee can be paid at the 1st Floor, Civic Centre Building, corner of Chung Wah Terrace and University Avenue 8:15am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday. If you mail your application, please enclose a cheque or money order for \$30.00.

Fees also apply for processing your application. After receipt of your application, and before it is processed, a statement may be provided to you, giving an estimate of the processing fee. This gives you the opportunity to decide if you wish to go ahead with your application or amend it. A deposit for the processing fee may be required. Please note that if you request photocopies, charges may apply to cover the reasonable cost incurred in providing these.

Fees may be waived or reduced in limited circumstances where you can prove financial hardship. An Application to Waive or Reduce Fees must be submitted for a waiver or reduction of fees to be considered. Supporting evidence of financial hardship must be provided.

### **REQUESTS TO CORRECT PERSONAL INFORMATION**

If, after accessing your personal information, you consider that the information is wrong, incomplete or out-of-date, you are able to complete the form Application to Correct Personal Information asking that records containing information about you be changed. This form is available at [www.palmerston.nt.gov.au](http://www.palmerston.nt.gov.au) or at the Civic Centre Building, corner of Chung Wah Terrace and University Avenue. Correction of personal information may be agreed to, refused or a different correction to the one that you requested may occur. If you and the Council do

not reach agreement on what changes should be made, you may provide a statement to be placed with your personal information.

### **DECISION**

After receiving an application, Council will:

- provide you with a decision within 30 calendar days
- if necessary, request additional details from you to identify the information that you are seeking, in order to deal with your request
- advise you if more time is required to make the decision, eg if the information you have requested includes information about others and the Council needs to consult with those other people or organisations before it can release the information.

A decision on your application may be to:

- provide access to information in whole or in part
- defer access
- refuse access on the grounds that:
  - the information is exempt under the Act;
  - access would unreasonably interfere with the operations of Council;
  - the information cannot be identified, found or does not exist; or
  - the information is not held by Council;
- delay a decision because more time is required to deal with your application.

You can submit an Application for a Review of a Decision if you are not happy with the outcome. This is available at [www.palmerston.nt.gov.au](http://www.palmerston.nt.gov.au) or at the Civic Centre Building, corner of Chung Wah Terrace and University Avenue.

### **FORMS**

The following forms are available on Council's website [www.palmerston.nt.gov.au](http://www.palmerston.nt.gov.au) or at the Civic Centre Building, corner of Chung Wah Terrace and University Avenue.

- Application to Access Information
- Application to Correct Personal Information
- Application to Waive or Reduce Fees
- Application for a Review of a Decision

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### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Please contact Director of Corporate Services

📍 Level 1, Civic Plaza, 1 Chung Wah Terrace, Palmerston PO Box  
PO Box 1 Palmerston NT 0831

✉ [palmerston@palmerston.nt.gov.au](mailto:palmerston@palmerston.nt.gov.au)

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