



Local Government Standards Panel

Complaint Number	20250652
Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
Complainant	Councillor Catherine Lezer
Respondent	Councillor Bruce Reynolds
Local Government	City of Perth
Regulation	Regulations 17, 18 of the <i>Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021</i>
Panel Members	Ms Erin Gauntlett (Presiding Member) Ms Bronwyn Ife (Deputy Member) Ms Elanor Rowe (Deputy Legal Member)
Heard	1 October 2025 Determined on the documents
Finding	No breach of Regulation 17 1 x breach of Regulation 18(1)(a)

FINDING AND REASONS FOR FINDING

Published 5 November 2025

DEFAMATION CAUTION

The general law of defamation, as modified by the *Defamation Act 2005*, applies to the further release or publication of all or part of this document or its contents. Accordingly, appropriate caution should be exercised when considering the further dissemination and the method of retention of this document and its contents.



Summary of the Panel’s decision

1. The Local Government Standards Panel (“the Panel”) found that Councillor Bruce Reynolds (“Cr Reynolds”), an elected member for the City of Perth (“the City”) committed one breach under the *Local Government Act 1995* (WA) (“the Act”) and Regulation 18(1)(a) of the *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021* (“the Regulations”) when he described himself as “*acting Lord Mayor*” in promotional material in the run up to the 2025 Local Government Election.
2. The Panel found that Cr Reynolds had not breached Regulation 17 when he included three images in the same promotional material.

Jurisdiction and procedural fairness

3. The Act makes provision for the circumstances in which a council member commits a minor breach.¹
4. On 22 August 2025, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (“the Department”) received a Complaint of Minor Breach Form (“Complaint”). The Complaint was signed by Councillor Catherine Lezer (“the Complainant”) and contained two allegations of breaches of the Regulations by Cr Reynolds.
5. On 26 August 2025, the Department advised Cr Reynolds of the Complaint and invited him to respond.
6. Under the Act the Panel is required to consider a complaint of a minor breach and make a finding as to whether the alleged breach occurred.² On 1 October 2025 the Panel convened to consider the Complaint.
7. The Panel:
 - (a) accepted the Department’s advice, based on information from the Western Australian Electoral Commission, that Cr Reynolds was a councillor at the time of the alleged breaches, and was still a Councillor when the Panel met on 1 October 2025;
 - (b) was satisfied the Complaint had been made within six months after the alleged breaches were said to have occurred.
 - (c) was satisfied the Complaint had been dealt with in accordance with the administrative requirements in the Act for dealing with complaints of minor breaches³; and
 - (d) was satisfied that the Department had provided procedural fairness to Cr Reynolds.

¹ Section 5.105 of the Act.

² Section 5.110(2)(a) of the Act.

³ Sections 5.107, 5.108, 5.109 of the Act.



8. If a councillor has previously committed two or more minor breaches, the Panel may send the complaint to the Chief Executive Officer of the department assisting the relevant Minister at the time instead of considering the Complaint itself.⁴ Cr Reynolds had not previously been found to have committed any breaches of the Regulations. Therefore, the Panel decided to not send the Complaint to the Chief Executive Officer of the Department.
9. Based on the information referred to above, the Panel found it had jurisdiction to determine whether Cr Reynolds had breached the Regulations in connection with the Complaint.

Panel's role

10. The Panel is not an investigative body. It determines complaints of minor breaches solely upon the evidence presented to it.
11. Any finding, that a councillor has committed a minor breach, must be based on evidence from which it may be concluded that it is more likely than not that the breach occurred than that it did not occur (the required standard of proof).⁵
12. In order to find the allegation, proposition or conduct has been established, and where direct proof is not available, the Panel must be satisfied from the evidence that it is more probable than not that it has occurred. The Panel cannot make a finding that the alleged fact, proposition or conduct occurred if the evidence merely supports two or more conflicting but equally possible inferences.⁶
13. For a finding that a councillor has breached a particular regulation, the Panel must be satisfied that every element of the particular regulation has been established to the required standard of proof.

Regulation 17

14. Regulation 17 provides:

“17. Misuse of local government resources

(1) In this clause –

electoral purpose means the purpose or persuading electors to vote in a particular way at an election, referendum or other poll held under the Act, the Electoral Act 1907 or the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918.

resources of a local government includes –

(a) local government property; and

(b) services provided, or paid for, by a local government.

⁴ Sections 5.110(2)(b), 5.111(1) of the Act.

⁵ Section 5.106 of the Act.

⁶ *Bradshaw v McEwens Pty Ltd* (1951) 217 ALR 1, paragraph 5.



(2) A council member must not, directly or indirectly, use the resources of a local government for an electoral purpose or other purpose unless authorised under the Act, or by the local government or the CEO, to use the resources for that purpose.”

Elements of Regulation 17

15. The essential issues or elements which need to be satisfied in order for a contravention of Regulation 17 to have occurred are that it is more likely than it is not that:

- a. a Councillor directly or indirectly used;
- b. his or her local government’s resources;
- c. for the identified purpose or any other purpose;

without such purpose being authorised under the Act or by the council or the local government’s CEO.

Regulation 18

16. Regulation 18 provides:

“18. Securing personal advantage or disadvantaging others

(1) A council member must not make improper use of their office –

(a) to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for the council member or any other person; or

(b) to cause detriment to the local government or any other person.

(2) Subclause (1) does not apply to conduct that contravenes section 5.93 of the Act or The Criminal Code section 83.”

17. The Panel decided that the alleged conduct was not conduct that contravened section 5.93 of the Act or section 83 of *The Criminal Code*.

Elements of Regulation 18

18. In order to find a breach of Regulation 18, the Panel must be satisfied to the required standard of proof that:

- (a) the person, the subject of the Complaint, engaged in the alleged conduct (first element);
- (b) the person, the subject of the Complaint, was a council member both at the time of the conduct and the time when the Panel makes its determination (second element);
- (c) by engaging in the conduct, the person, the subject of the complaint, made use of his or her office as a council member (in the sense that he



- or she acted in their capacity as a councillor, rather than in some other capacity) (third element);
- (d) when viewed objectively, such use was an improper use of the person's office as a council member in that it:
- (i) involved a breach of the standards of conduct that would be expected of a person in the position of a councillor, by reasonable persons with knowledge of the duties, power and authority of the councillor and the circumstances of the case; and
 - (ii) was so wrongful and inappropriate in the circumstances that it calls for the imposition of a penalty;
- (fourth element);
- (e) the person engaged in the conduct in the belief that:
- (i) [in the case of regulation 18(1)(a)] an advantage would be gained either directly or indirectly for the person or any other person; or
 - (ii) [in the case of regulation 18(1)(b)] detriment would be suffered by the local government or any other person. (fifth element).

Fourth element - meaning of "to make improper use of....office"

19. The Macquarie dictionary definition of "*improper*" is "*not in accordance with propriety of behaviour, manners, etc; unsuitable or inappropriate for the purpose or occasion; abnormal or irregular.*"⁷ The Shorter Oxford dictionary definition is "*irregular, wrong; unsuitable, inappropriate; unbecoming, unseemly.*"⁸
20. Whether there is impropriety is to be assessed objectively: would a reasonable person with knowledge of the duties, powers and authority of a councillor, and all the circumstances of the particular case, form the view that the councillor had breached the standards of conduct expected of a councillor?⁹ "*For behaviour to be improper it must be such that a right-thinking person would regard the conduct as so wrongful and inappropriate in the circumstances that it calls for the imposition of a penalty.*"¹⁰
21. Under the Act Panel members must have regard to the general interests of local government in Western Australia.¹¹ It is in the interests of local government that councillors are, and are seen to be, professional and respectful in their dealings with fellow councillors, local government employees and members of the public.
22. The meaning of "*improper*" must be considered in the context of relevant legislation, such as the Act and the Regulations, and other rules and standards

⁷ Macquarie Dictionary, Revised Third Edition.

⁸ Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, Sixth Edition.

⁹ *Ryan and Local Government Standards Panel* [2009] WASAT 154, paragraph 27, referring to *R v Byrnes* (1995) 183 CLR 501.

¹⁰ *Hipkins and Local Government Standards Panel* [2014] WASAT 48, paragraph 9, referring to *Robbins v Harness Racing Board* [1984] VR 641.

¹¹ Section 5.122(3) of the Act, Schedule 5.1 of the Act, clause 8(6).



that apply to a councillor's role and conduct, such as the circumstances and context of the case.¹² All these provisions form part of the backdrop to the Regulations and give context to a complaint but the alleged conduct must also be judged in the particular circumstances.

23. Conduct can be improper even though the councillor's judgement is that it isn't improper. A councillor's use of his or her office can be improper even though the councillor is intending to benefit the local government, the council or the ratepayers and residents.¹³

Fifth element - meaning of "to gain directly or indirectly an advantage for the person or any other person" and "to cause detriment to the local government or any other person"

Advantage

24. "Advantage" is defined as "favouring a circumstance; something which gives one a better position ... benefit; increased well-being or convenience ... pecuniary profit ..."¹⁴
25. "To" in "to gain directly or indirectly an advantage" indicates that for this element to be established, a councillor must have intended to gain an advantage for themselves or another person.
26. For this element to be established, it is not necessary to find that the councillor's actions did, or reasonably could have, delivered the result sought.

Detriment

27. "Detriment" means loss, damage or injury.¹⁵ It includes financial and non-financial loss and adverse treatment, such as humiliation, denigration, intimidation, harassment, discrimination and disadvantage. A person can suffer detriment through others thinking less favourably of them.¹⁶
28. For Regulation 18(1)(b) to be satisfied it is not necessary to show that the local government or the person concerned actually suffered detriment.¹⁷ However, it is not enough to show that the local government or the person concerned suffered detriment or could have suffered detriment. The Panel must find that it is more likely than not that the councillor believed that his or her actions would cause detriment and intended to cause detriment.¹⁸
29. "To cause detriment" has been interpreted as meaning "in order to" or "for the purpose of" causing detriment, or "with the will to" cause detriment.¹⁹ There can

¹² *Hipkins and Local Government Standards Panel* [2014] WASAT 48, paragraph 10.

¹³ *Yates and Local Government Standards Panel* [2012] WASAT 59, paragraph 64, referring to *Treby* 2010.

¹⁴ Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, Sixth Edition

¹⁵ Macquarie Dictionary Revised Third Edition, 2001.

¹⁶ *Ryan and Local Government Standards Panel* [2009] WASAT 154, paragraphs 31, 32.

¹⁷ *Treby* 2010, paragraph 96, referring to *Chew v The Queen* 1992 CLR 626 (*Chew* 2010).

¹⁸ *Re and Local Government Standards Panel* [2014] WASAT 111, paragraph 51, referring to *Australian Securities and Investments Commission v Australian Property Custodian Holdings Ltd* [2013] FCA 1342.

¹⁹ *Chew* 2010.



be a finding of intent if, after considering all the evidence, the only reasonable inference is that the councillor intended to cause detriment.²⁰

Substance of the Complaint

First Allegation – Images (alleged breach of Regulation 17)

30. In the run up to the 2025 Local Government Election, Cr Reynolds had distributed a promotional flyer (“Flyer”) that included three photographs (“Photos”) owned by the City. A copy of the Flyer is attached (“Attachment 1”). It was alleged that he had thereby misused government resources.

Second Allegation – Terminology (alleged breach of Regulation 18)

31. Also, in the Flyer Cr Reynolds had wrongfully referred to himself as being the City’s “*acting Lord Mayor*”. Elected members had been provided with legal advice confirming that the term “*acting Lord Mayor*” was not to be used

Cr Reynolds’s Response

32. On 26 August 2025, the Department requested comment on the allegations from Cr Reynolds. On 9 September 2025, Cr Reynolds submitted a Response in which he confirmed that he did not accept the information as detailed in the Complaint and denied that he had committed the alleged misconduct:

First Allegation – Images (alleged breach of Regulation 17)

- a) Cr Reynolds denied that he had used City owned images. He had given clear and consistent instructions to his graphic designers that campaign materials must only use:
 - images from his personal Instagram account;
 - photographs taken by him personally at events; or
 - stock imagery (the same images that appeared on his social media).
- b) From time to time, the City’s photographs may have appeared visually similar to his own because Cr Reynold’s supporters had taken photos at the same event. However, Cr Reynold’s images were distinguishable.
- c) Also, the Complainant had attached a newspaper article to the Complaint containing an image. The image was clearly not a City-owned photo.

Second Allegation – Terminology (alleged breach of Regulation 18)

- d) With regard to his use of the term “*acting Lord Mayor*”, Cr Reynolds had exercised care and had received advice from the WA Local Government Association (“WALGA”) that stated:

²⁰ Treby 2010.



“The Local Government Act does not identify the position of ‘Acting Mayor’ however WALGA appreciates that some Local Governments have chosen to use this designation; this is a local decision.”

- e) The response from the City’s lawyer was framed more as an *“opinion piece”* rather than a strict interpretation of the Act.
- f) Cr Reynolds submitted that he had erred on the side of caution and transparency. Accordingly, in his communications he had described his role as *“Acting Lord Mayor”* for clarity and public understanding, while also continuing to use his substantive title of *“Deputy Lord Mayor”*.
- g) His approach was consistent with community expectations of honesty about the role he was performing. It was entirely reasonable that councillors took steps to reassure the community that leadership was in place.

Panel’s Consideration

First Allegation – Images (alleged breach of Regulation 17)

33. It was alleged that Cr Reynolds had misused government resources in the run up to the 2025 Local Government Election when he had distributed a Flyer that included three Photos owned by the City. However, the Panel was not satisfied that Cr Reynolds breached his obligations under Regulation 17:
- a. None of the Photos could reasonably be deemed to be resources of the City. The Complainant had not provided any substantive evidence to support the allegation that the City owned the images referred to and the City had not asserted any ownership rights over them.
 - b. On the other hand, Cr Reynolds had expressly stated that he was in fact the owner of the Photos. Moreover, they were already in the public domain (they had been used on a variety of social media platforms).

Findings

34. Accordingly, for the above reasons, the Panel finds that Cr Reynolds had not breached Regulation 17 in relation to the allegation made against him.

Second Allegation – Terminology (alleged breach of Regulation 18)

35. The Panel finds that Cr Reynolds engaged in the conduct that is the subject of the Second Allegation, and that he was a councillor and was acting as a councillor at all relevant times. The first, second and third elements are established.

Whether Cr Reynolds acted improperly (fourth element)

36. The Panel was satisfied that Cr Reynolds acted improperly:



- a) By way of background, on 11 March 2025, the City had issued a confidential *Current Issues Briefing Note* (“Briefing Note”) regarding the “*Clarification on issues following the 2025 State Election.*” Attached to the Briefing Note was legal advice (“Legal Advice”) from the City’s lawyers.
- b) The City anticipated that the former Lord Mayor was to be elected to State Parliament imminently and would be vacating the office of the Lord Mayor. Clarity was required as to what would happen next from a local government perspective. A report was to be presented to Council recommending that it seek the agreement of the Electoral Commissioner to allow the office of the Lord Mayor to remain vacant and for the election of a new Lord Mayor to be consolidated with the Ordinary Election to be held on 18 October 2025.
- c) During the vacancy, the Deputy Lord Mayor (Cr Reynolds) was expected to lead the Council and to perform the functions of the Lord Mayor. Alternatively, if Cr Reynolds was unable to perform any of the functions of the Lord Mayor, that responsibility would fall on Councillor Liam Gobbert (“Cr Gobbert”).
- d) The Briefing Note specifically addressed how Cr Reynolds and Cr Gobbert were to be referred to when they performed those functions:

How do we refer to the Deputy Lord Mayor and Councillor Gobbert when they are performing these functions?

- The Act requires that the City of Perth Lord Mayor is popularly elected, and it does not prescribe a position of ‘Acting Lord Mayor’. Therefore, the Deputy Lord Mayor will continue to be known as the Deputy Lord Mayor while he is performing the functions of the Lord Mayor to ensure consistency and support Council through the absence of its Lord Mayor.
- Likewise, Cr Gobbert was appointed by Council to perform the functions of the Lord Mayor in the absence of both the Lord Mayor and the Deputy Lord Mayor but was not elected as required to the position of Deputy Lord Mayor so will continue to be known as “Cr Gobbert” and not ‘Acting Deputy Lord Mayor’.
- In some instances, and for official documentation additional clarification will be provided as follows:
 - ‘the Deputy Lord Mayor performing the functions of the Lord Mayor while the Lord Mayor’s position is temporarily vacant’
 - ‘Councillor Gobbert, as appointed by Council under s.5.35(1) to perform the function of Lord Mayor’.
- Given the recent findings of 2 complaints of minor breach, assessed by the Local Government Standards Panel, relating to the misuse of titles it is important that the City is alive to and avoids even the perception of misuse of titles in any way.

- e) As per the Briefing Note, it was clear that Cr Reynolds was to continue to use the title of the position he was elected to ie “*Deputy Lord Mayor*” when he performed any functions of the Lord Mayor. That was the position expressly stated in the legal advice on which the Briefing Note was based:



I agree with the comment that the appointment by the council of a councillor under s.5.35(1) to perform for a particular period of time the functions of Mayor does not have the effect of appointment of that person as Deputy Lord Mayor, or as Acting Lord Mayor. The Act does not say that the appointment has that effect, and I agree with your comment that the use of those titles is not supported by the provisions of the LG Act. S.5.35(1) provides only that a councillor appointed in the circumstances of s.5.35(1) would perform for a relevant time period the functions of Lord Mayor. I am not sure what if any convention applies in those circumstances, but in circumstances where ordinarily the signature of the Lord Mayor would be required on a document, and the person signing the document is a person appointed by the council under s.5.35(1), perhaps, instead of describing the signatory as the Acting Lord Mayor, the correct approach would be to describe the signatory as 'the Councillor appointed by Council under s.5.35(1) to perform the function of Lord Mayor'.

The fact that the LG Act does not use the term 'acting mayor' or 'acting deputy mayor', in my opinion is significant.

Where the Deputy Lord Mayor performs a function of the Lord Mayor while the position is vacant, in my opinion the title 'Deputy Lord Mayor' should be used rather than 'Acting Lord Mayor'. It may be necessary in some circumstances to elaborate with further words explaining that the Deputy Lord Mayor is performing the functions of the Lord Mayor while the Lord Mayor's position is temporarily vacant.

37. The Briefing Note was issued in March 2025 and sometime thereafter Cr Reynolds announced his decision to run for the position of Lord Mayor. Therefore, he was fully aware of the City's position that he (and others) should not use the terminology "*acting Lord Mayor*" in advance of distributing the Flyer.
38. Despite that, he clearly made a conscious decision to go against the City's position and legal advice when he referred to himself as "*acting Lord Mayor*" in the Flyer on four separate instances, including when he stated:

"I'm proud to be leading a Council that's delivering for you as an acting Lord Mayor."

In his Response Cr Reynolds confirmed that he had used that terminology

39. Cr Reynolds chose to take a position on the issue of how he should be referred to that was inconsistent with that of the City. While in his Response, he referred to the fact that he had contacted WALGA, that does not alter the fact that councillors had been expressly advised on the correct terminology to be adopted during that particular period and provided with legal advice in relation to same.
40. Cr Reynolds had undermined the position of the City on the matter and he had also potentially caused confusion amongst electors (who were being called upon to make an important decision) as to what his actual appointment / position was as an elected member. Therefore, the Panel found that Cr Reynolds had crossed the line of impropriety.

Whether Cr Reynolds intended to gain an advantage (fifth element)

41. The Panel finds that Cr Reynolds intended to gain an advantage for himself when he acted as he did:
 - a. He defied the legal advice and the City's adopted position on the matter by including the reference to him being "*acting Lord Mayor*" on at least



four separate occasions in the Flyer and distributing them after the Briefing Notice had been issued;

- b. The Flyer was distributed to the local community in the run up to the Local Government Election where Cr Reynolds was running for the position of Lord Mayor.
- c. By referring to himself as “*acting Lord Mayor*” electors may have reasonably understood that he had officially been appointed to that position (which did not exist).

PANEL’S FINDINGS

42. Accordingly, for the above reasons, the Panel finds that Cr Reynolds had breached Regulation 18(1)(a) in relation to the Second Allegation.

Erin Gauntlett (Presiding Member)

Bronwyn Ife (Deputy Member)

Elanor Rowe (Deputy Member)



“Attachment 1”



It's official - I'm running for Lord Mayor!

If you're a resident, a ratepayer or a business owner in Perth, you know it's vital to have a Council that's strong, stable and focused on you.

I'm proud to be leading a Council that's delivering for you as an acting Lord Mayor.

We've delivered a Budget that's kept your rates low. We're delivering more funding for safety and security. We're delivering big projects like City Deal (ECU, Aquatic Centre, WACA & Perth Concert Hall Redevelopment) Supreme Court Gardens Redevelopment, and Town Hall Refurbishment while making sure our finances are sound. Your Council is united, stable and delivering strong results.

We must keep Perth on the right track. That's why I've decided to run for Lord Mayor in the election this October - to keep us going in the right direction.

Now is not the time to put our achievements in jeopardy or risk our projects' delivery. Now is not the time to go back to the bad old days of chaos, division, or a Council more focused on themselves than on you. Over the last nine months as your Acting Lord Mayor, I've worked with so many of you to make our city safer, more secure, more vibrant and more prosperous.

Now I need your help to lock in our progress and secure our future.

Together, let's keep Perth on the right track.

Warm regards,
Bruce Reynolds
Deputy Lord Mayor, City of Perth

LISTENING · ACTING · DELIVERING

Get in touch at hello@bruceforperth.com.au

NEWS ARTICLE

The West Australian

'Vote for me to keep our city safe'

Oh, and I won't be Basil 2.0



EXCLUSIVE OLIVER LANE

Deputy Lord Mayor Bruce Reynolds will nominate for the Perth lord mayor position in the October elections, with the bold pitch of making Perth the safest capital city in the country.

The local business owner is looking to succeed Basil Zempilas who vacated the role when he was elected to State Parliament in March.

Mr Reynolds has been Acting Lord Mayor after he was elected Deputy Lord Mayor by council in October.

Speaking exclusively to The West Australian, Mr Reynolds — who has been on council since 2023 — said one of his priorities would be to earn Perth the title of the country's safest capital, a goal he touted would have benefits for locals and for tourism.

While he was yet to work out a metric for the title, he said he would bring groups from State Government, WA Police, private organisations and charities to the City of Perth to determine a path forward.

"Once we do that we just throw heaven and earth at marketing so the rest of the world knows that when they come to Australia, they Google which is the safest capital city in Australia and we not just come up because we own the term from a marketing point of view but we've got evidence to prove it," he said.

"The knock-on effect, whether it's tourism, education, placement of students, whether it's investment from other cities, whether it's investment internally from other States, for every dollar we spend the reward on that dollar would be very significant."

It will be Mr Reynolds's second attempt for the role after running unsuccessfully in 2020, an election won by Mr Zempilas.

He said he would not be another Basil, but instead seek to forge his own identity.

Committed \$5.5 Million dollars in additional CCTV and lighting upgrades as part of our ongoing commitment to a safer city. I am passionate to make Perth the safest capital city in Australia.

a great advocate for our city and I miss his presence, but at the same time I'm determined to be my authentic self."

Mr Reynolds is the second person to publicly announce their bid, following that of fellow councillor Catherine Leter.

It can also be revealed the owner of Perth nightclubs Butterfly 13 and Alibi, Chris Patton, will also run for lord mayor and will launch his campaign soon.

Mr Patton told The West it was time for a new chapter.

"It's clear Perth needs a new direction," he said.

"The status quo isn't delivering for ratepayers, we need a leader that is young, driven and in touch with what residence and businesses really need.

"We're a world-class city and deserve leadership that reflects that."

Another high-profile mayoral race is taking place in Fremantle.

Incumbent mayor Hannah Fitzhardinge has put her hat in the ring for re-election, the first to do so.

State and Federal election independent candidate Kate Hulet is yet to say if she will enter the race after her narrow defeats in successive elections.

Ms Hulet said her movement would make itself known in all three levels of government. "I am keen to support any independent candidates





The BIG picture: A City Built to Thrive

Having just delivered the City's largest budget in history, the 2025–26 City Budget isn't just a financial plan. It's a blueprint for a stronger, more confident Perth. I was proud to deliver it as your Acting Lord Mayor because it reflects the values I believe in: smart investment, shared opportunity, and long-term thinking.

\$313 million invested in our city's future

\$45 million into open space and infrastructure

\$25 million to transform the WACA into a vibrant sport and community hub

\$6.3 million for arts, events, and cultural activation

This is the kind of budget that moves a city forward — not just maintains the status quo.



Spotlight: Revitalising James Street

One of our most ambitious city projects is the transformation of James Street in Northbridge.

More than just a facelift, this is a bold and thoughtful redesign of one of Perth's key cultural arteries — a place that brings people together through food, art, nightlife, and community. The vision includes wider walkways to make the street more pedestrian friendly, improved lighting to enhance safety and atmosphere, the planting of new trees to green the space, and a renewed focus on supporting street life and local businesses.

This project sends a clear message: **Perth is ready to lead again** — with creativity, culture, and confidence. By reimagining James Street, we're not only upgrading infrastructure but investing in the character and future of our city. It's about making our public spaces more welcoming, vibrant, and alive — and building a Perth that's ready to thrive for years to come.

I'd love to hear from you, email me at hello@bruceforperth.com.au



If you run a business, this is your moment

Act now, don't miss out! In the City of Perth, businesses can shape the future too. If you own a business or lease commercial property, you may be eligible for **up to two votes**.

Enrolments close **August 22** — don't miss your chance to have a real say.

Enrolling is quick and gives your business a say in Perth's future.

To learn more or get help, scan the QR code or visit the City of Perth election page for a step-by-step guide and downloadable forms.



Let's make sure the next phase of Perth's future is built by the people who live, work, and invest in it.

This Mayoral campaign isn't about politics. It's about people.

It's about the city I've built a business in. The city where I've raised a family. The community I serve, and the future we all believe in. Perth deserves leadership that's ready on Day One to keep our City moving forward.

Leadership that listens. That shows up. That knows how to turn ideas into action. That's the principle which has guided me as acting Lord Mayor. That's the kind of Lord Mayor I will be.

Let's shape the next chapter — together.

Bruce Reynolds
Deputy Lord Mayor

If you have any questions or in need of further assistance,

Feel free to reach out via my social channels below.

Cr Bruce Reynolds

0419 965 137

cr_bruce_reynolds

hello@bruceforperth.com.au

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Regulation	Regulation 17 and 18 <i>of the Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021</i>
Panel Members for Penalty Consideration	Ms Erin Gauntlett (Presiding Member) Ms Emma Power (Member) Mr Peter Rogers (Member)
Heard	1 October 2025 Determined on the documents
Penalty Considered	4 December 2025
Outcome	Public Apology

DECISION AND REASONS FOR DECISION

Delivered 23 January 2025

DEFAMATION CAUTION

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Introduction

1. At its meeting on 1 October 2025, the Panel found that Lord Mayor Bruce Reynolds, the Lord Mayor of the City of Perth (“**the City**”), committed a minor breach under the *Local Government Act 1995 (WA)* (“**the Act**”) and regulation 18 of Division 4 of the *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021* (“**the Regulations**”) when he referred to himself as “*Acting Lord Mayor*” (“**the Minor Breach**”).

Jurisdiction and Law

2. The Panel convened on 4 December 2025 to consider how it should deal with the Minor Breach.
3. The Panel accepted the advice of the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (“**the Department**”) that on this date there was no available information to indicate that Lord Mayor Reynolds had ceased to be, or was disqualified from being, a councillor.
4. If the Panel finds that a councillor has committed a minor breach, it must give the councillor an opportunity to make submissions to the Panel about how it should deal with the breach under section 5.110(6).¹
5. By a letter dated 5 November 2025, Lord Mayor Reynolds was:
 - a. notified of the Panel’s finding of the Minor Breach;
 - b. provided with a copy of the Panel’s Finding and Reasons for Finding; and
 - c. offered an opportunity to make submissions as to how the Minor Breach should be dealt with under section 5.110(6) of the Act.

Possible Sanctions

6. Section 5.110(6) of the *Local Government Act 1995 (WA)* (“**the Act**”) provides that the Panel is to deal with a minor breach by:
 - (a) *ordering that no sanction be imposed; or*
 - (b) *ordering that —*
 - (i) *the person against whom the complaint was made be publicly censured as specified in the order;*
or
 - (ii) *the person against whom the complaint was made apologise publicly as specified in the order;*
or
 - (iii) *the person against whom the complaint was made undertake training as specified in the order;*
or

¹ *Local Government Act 1995 (WA)*, s 5.110(5).



(iv) *the person against whom the complaint was made pay to the local government specified in the order an amount equal to the amount of remuneration and allowances payable by the local government in relation to the complaint under Schedule 5.1 clause 9;*

or

(c) *ordering 2 or more of the sanctions described in paragraph (b).*

Lord Mayor Reynold's Submissions

7. By an email dated 27th November 2025 the Department received a response from Lord Mayor Reynolds.
8. Lord Mayor Reynolds provided the following comments as summarised by the Panel:
 - a. At no time did Lord Mayor Reynolds intend to act outside the expectations of his role or to mislead the community in any way, it was his view and that of the community that as he was fulfilling the role fully, he was acting as Lord Mayor.
 - b. Throughout the period in question, Lord Mayor Reynolds was required to perform the full range of mayoral functions due to the vacancy in the office of Lord Mayor. My intention in using the terminology was to communicate clearly to the community that there was continuity in leadership during that transitional period. Lord Mayor Reynolds understands that the Panel has reached a different view on the appropriateness of the terminology, and he respects that finding.
 - c. At no point was there any intention to gain an improper benefit.
 - d. Lord Mayor Reynolds has fully cooperated with the Department and the Panel at all stages of this matter.
 - e. Lord Mayor Reynolds has served as an elected member with professionalism, diligence, and a strong commitment to the City of Perth and its community and remains dedicated to upholding the standards expected of councillors in Western Australia.
 - f. The Panel's finding relates to a specific, time-limited period leading up to the 2025 local government election. The terminology in question is no longer used, and the circumstance giving rise to the issue an extended mayoral vacancy has concluded.
 - g. No harm, financial cost, or reputational detriment was caused to the City, its officers, other councillors, or the community. This was a discrete, technical matter rather than a pattern of conduct.
 - h. In light of the above, Lord Mayor Reynolds respectfully submits that no sanction is appropriate or necessary.
 - i. This approach would be in consideration with:
 - i. the minor and technical nature of the breach;
 - ii. Lord Mayor Reynolds' cooperation and good faith throughout;
 - iii. the absence of any detriment; and
 - iv. the fact that there is no continuing conduct to be remedied.



- j. Lord Mayor Reynolds remains committed to meeting the standards expected of elected members and will continue to do so in his ongoing service to the City of Perth.

Possible Sanctions

9. Section 5.110(6) of the *Local Government Act 1995* (WA) (“**the Act**”) provides that the Panel is to deal with a minor breach by:
- (d) *ordering that no sanction be imposed; or*
 - (e) *ordering that —*
 - (i) *the person against whom the complaint was made be publicly censured as specified in the order;*
or
 - (ii) *the person against whom the complaint was made apologise publicly as specified in the order;*
or
 - (iii) *the person against whom the complaint was made undertake training as specified in the order;*
or
 - (iv) *the person against whom the complaint was made pay to the local government specified in the order an amount equal to the amount of remuneration and allowances payable by the local government in relation to the complaint under Schedule 5.1 clause 9;*
- or*
- (f) *ordering 2 or more of the sanctions described in paragraph (b).*

Panel’s Consideration

10. Section 5.110(6) is solely about penalty. The Panel does not have the power to review any finding of a breach.
11. The Panel may order under section 5.110(6)(a), that no sanction be imposed, not to reverse the Panel’s finding of a breach, but to indicate that in all the circumstances the relevant councillor should not be penalised further.
12. Guidance as to the factors which the Panel may consider in determining the appropriate penalty to impose include, but are not limited to, the following:
- a. the nature and seriousness of the breaches;
 - b. the councillor’s motivation for the contravention;
 - c. whether or not the councillor has shown any insight and remorse into his/her conduct;



- d. whether the councillor has breached the Act knowingly or carelessly;
 - e. the councillor's disciplinary history;
 - f. likelihood or not of the councillor committing further breaches of the Act;
 - g. personal circumstances at the time of conduct, and of imposing the sanction;
 - h. need to protect the public through general deterrence and maintain public confidence in local government; and
 - i. any other matters which may be regarded as aggravating conduct or mitigating its seriousness².
13. In this case the Panel notes that in Lord Mayor Reynolds has shown insight as to the conduct.
14. Further, the conduct was on the lower end of seriousness. Due to the isolated nature of the breach, it is highly unlikely that the same type of breach will occur again.
15. In addition, the Panel notes that, although at the time of the breach Lord Mayor Reynolds was deputy mayor, Lord Mayor Reynolds is now the elected Lord Mayor of the City.
16. Despite this, the relevant facts of the case indicate that Lord Mayor Reynolds was on notice that:
- a. this was an issue the City had already flagged as significant; and
 - b. the City's lawyers had provided formal advice that the correct description of Lord Mayor Reynolds' then role was "Deputy Mayor".
17. As such, the Panel considers that a public apology is the appropriate sanction in the circumstances.
18. Making a public apology is a significant sanction, being a personal admission by the individual of wrongdoing³. It is a suitable and appropriate penalty when a councillor's conduct:
- a. adversely affects particular individuals⁴; and/or
 - b. does not meet the standards other councillors seek to uphold.
19. In the relevant circumstances, the Panel considers that making a public apology is an adequate sanction and that it is not necessary to make an order in accordance with Schedule 5.1 clause 9 of the Act that Lord Mayor Reynolds recoup to the City the costs of the Department incurred with respect to the Complaint.

Panel's decision

20. The Panel orders pursuant to section 5.110(6)(b)(ii) of the Act that, in relation to the Minor Breach of regulation 18 of the Regulations, Lord Mayor Reynolds make a public apology in terms of the attached Order.

² *Chief Executive Officer, Department of Local Government and Communities and Scaffidi [2017] WASAT 67 (S)*

³ *Treby and Local Government Standards Panel [2010] WASAT 81 (Pritchard J).*

⁴ *Treby and Local Government Standards Panel [2010] WASAT 81 [127] (Pritchard J).*



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erin Gauntlett'.

Erin Gauntlett (Presiding Member)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Power'.

Emma Power (Member)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Rogers'.

Peter Rogers (Member)

Signing



ORDER

Delivered 23 January 2025

DEFAMATION CAUTION

The general law of defamation, as modified by the *Defamation Act 2005 (WA)*, applies to the further release or publication of all or part of this document or its contents. Accordingly, appropriate caution should be exercised when considering the further dissemination and the method of retention of this document and its contents

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STANDARDS PANEL ORDERS THAT:

2. Lord Mayor Bruce Reynolds, the lord mayor of the City of Perth **publicly apologise** as specified in paragraph 3; OR
3. Failing compliance with paragraph 3 within the specified timeframe, then paragraph 4 shall apply.

Public Apology

4. On the ordinary council meeting of the City of Perth first occurring after the expiration of **28 days** from the date of service of this Order on him, Lord Mayor Bruce Reynolds shall:
 - i. attend the relevant ordinary council meeting;
 - ii. ask the presiding person, or acting presiding person, for his or her permission to address the meeting to make a public apology to the public;
 - iii. make the apology immediately after Public Question Time or during the Announcements part of the meeting, or at any other time when the meeting is open to the public, as the presiding person thinks fit; and
 - iv. address the Council and public as follows, without saying any introductory words before the address, and without making any comments or statement after the address:

"I advise this meeting that:

- i. A complaint was made to the Local Government Standards Panel, in which it was alleged that I contravened Regulation 18 of the *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021*, when I referred to my position as "acting Lord Mayor" instead of "Deputy Mayor".
- ii. The Panel found that I breached Regulation 18 as my conduct was improper and undertaken for my own personal advantage.
- iii. I acknowledge that I should not have used the title of "acting Lord Mayor" in such a manner and I now apologise to the public and my fellow councillors."



5. If Lord Mayor Bruce Reynolds fails to, or is unable to, comply with the requirements of paragraph 3 above in the required time frame THEN, within the next **28 days** following the ordinary council meeting referred to in paragraph 3 above the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Perth shall arrange for the notice of public apology to be published:
 - a. on the Facebook Page of the City of Perth shall in no less than 10 point font size; and
 - b. in an appropriate place on the website of the City of Perth shall in no less than 10 point font size; and
 - c. in the next occurring issue of any City of Perth shall public newsletter (if any) whether in electronic or print copy) in no less than 10 point font size.

PUBLIC APOLOGY BY LORD MAYOR BRUCE REYNOLDS

A complaint was made to the Local Government Standards Panel, in which it was alleged that I contravened Regulation 18 of the *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021*, when I referred to my position as “acting Lord Mayor” instead of “Deputy Mayor”.

The Panel found that I breached Regulation 18 as my conduct was improper and undertaken for my own personal advantage.

I acknowledge that I should not have used the title of “acting Lord Mayor” in such a manner and I now apologise to the public and my fellow councillors.

Appeal

6. In the event that, prior to the date for compliance with the above Orders, Lord Mayor Bruce Reynolds:
 - a. commences an appeal the decision of the Standards Panel to the State Administrative Tribunal in accordance with section 5.125 of the Local Government Act 1995; and
 - b. notifies the Complaints Officer of such appeal in writing,THEN:
 - c. compliance with the above Orders may be delayed until the State Administrative Tribunal has made a finding in respect to the decision; and
 - d. such Orders may be amended by an order of the State Administrative Tribunal.



NOTICE TO THE PARTIES TO THE COMPLAINT

RIGHT TO HAVE PANEL DECISION REVIEWED BY THE STATE ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL

The Local Government Standards Panel (the Panel) advises:

- (1) Under section 5.125 of the *Local Government Act 1995* the person making a complaint **and** the person complained about each have the right to apply to the State Administrative Tribunal (the SAT) for a review of the Panel's decision in this matter. In this context, the term "decision" means a decision to dismiss the complaint or to make an order.
- (2) By rule 9(a) of the *State Administrative Tribunal Rules 2004*, subject to those rules an application to the SAT under its review jurisdiction **must be made within 28 days** of the day on which the Panel (as the decision-maker) gives a notice [see the Note below] under the *State Administrative Tribunal Act 2004 (SAT Act)*, section 20(1).
- (3) The Panel's ***Breach Findings and these Findings and Reasons for Finding – Sanctions***, constitute the Panel's notice (i.e. the decision-maker's notice) given under the *SAT Act*, section 20(1).

Note:

- (1) This document may be given to a person in any of the ways provided for by sections 75 and 76 of the *Interpretation Act 1984*. [see s. 9.50 of the *Local Government Act 1995*]
- (2) Subsections 75(1) and (2) of the *Interpretation Act 1984* read:
 - "(1) Where a written law authorises or requires a document to be served by post, whether the word "serve" or any of the words "give", "deliver", or "send" or any other similar word or expression is used, **service shall be deemed** to be effected by properly addressing and posting (by pre-paid post) the document as a letter to the last known address of the person to be served, and, **unless the contrary is proved, to have been effected at the time when the letter would have been delivered in the ordinary course of post.** [Bold emphases added]
 - (2) Where a written law authorises or requires a document to be served by registered post, whether the word "serve" or any of the words "give", "deliver", or "send" or any other similar word or expression is used, then, if the document is eligible and acceptable for transmission as certified mail, the service of the document may be effected either by registered post or by certified mail."
- (3) Section 76 of the *Interpretation Act 1984* reads:

"Where a written law authorises or requires a document to be served, whether the word "serve" or any of the words "give", "deliver", or "send" or any other similar word or expression is used, without directing it to be served in a particular manner, service of that document may be effected on the person to be served —

 - (a) by delivering the document to him personally; or
 - (b) by post in accordance with section 75(1); or
 - (c) by leaving it for him at his usual or last known place of abode, or if he is a principal of a business, at his usual or last known place of business; or



- (d) *in the case of a corporation or of an association of persons (whether incorporated or not), by delivering or leaving the document or posting it as a letter, addressed in each case to the corporation or association, at its principal place of business or principal office in the State.”*