

# Item 8.10

**Ordinary Meeting**  
**Thursday, 24 October 2024**

**commencing at 9:00am**

Sunshine Coast City Hall Chamber, 54 First Avenue, Maroochydore

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**8 REPORTS DIRECT TO COUNCIL**

**8.10 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL**

- File No:** Council Meetings
- Author:** Head of People & Culture  
Business Performance Group
- Attachments:**
  - Att 1 - Chief Executive Officer - Position Profile..... 11**  
  - Att 2 - Chief Executive Officer – CEO Applicant Pack ..... 15**  
  - Att 3 - Recommended Candidate - Curriculum Vitae - Confidential**
  - Att 4 - Chief Executive Officer - Proposed Contract of Employment - Confidential**

**PURPOSE**

This report proposes for Council’s consideration, an appointment to the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and the terms and conditions associated with that appointment.

**Attachments 3 and 4** are confidential as they contain identifying information on the preferred candidate and the contractual arrangements associated with the employment of the preferred candidate, should the recommendations in this report be accepted. Should Council wish to discuss these confidential documents, it is recommended that Council close the meeting under section 275 (1) (a) and (e) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* as **Attachments 3 and 4** relate to the appointment of an employee and a contract proposed to be made by Council. It is considered the privacy of the preferred candidate should be respected until such time as Council has made a decision on the appointment to this position.

The recommendations in this report provide for (subject to agreement by Council) the public release of the name of the preferred candidate should the appointment be approved. In addition, while the proposed contract of employment is considered confidential, the total value of the proposed remuneration package and the term of the proposed appointment are provided as public information in the body of this report.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Following the resignation of Council’s former Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Councillors reviewed the requirements for the position of CEO and established a new Position Profile (see **Attachment 1**) and commenced a comprehensive process to recruit for this position.

Leading Roles was selected through a Request for Quotation procurement process and engaged on 17 July 2024 to manage the executive search and assessment process to secure a new CEO for Council.

Advertising of the position commenced on Tuesday 6 August including online advertisements on SEEK, LinkedIn, Australian Local Government Job Director, the Leading Roles website and Council’s website.

The sequence of the applicant assessment processes conducted by Leading Roles was as follows:

- 138 applications were received, with over 40 detailed briefings provided to prospective applicants.
- The Consultant assessed all applications and 'longlisted' 35 applicants. This list was further reduced to 14 candidates.
- The Consultant commenced interviews with the most suitable candidates on Friday 30 August and finalised interviews on Tuesday 10 September.

The Consultant met with all Councillors on Monday 16 September to provide a full briefing on the applicant pool. Councillors reviewed the 14 highest ranked candidates from the list as proposed by the Consultant and settled on a shortlist of six candidates for interview.

A selection panel was established comprising:

- Mayor Rosanna Natoli
- Deputy Mayor, Cr Maria Suarez
- Cr Terry Landsberg
- Cr Winston Johnson
- Cr Taylor Bunnag

The selection panel conducted interviews with six candidates on Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 September 2024.

Following the interviews, the selection panel assessed the candidates against the Council agreed recruitment brief and the Leadership Capability and Competency Assessment Framework aligned to the "*McKinsey Mindsets and Practices of Excellent CEO's*" and identified three candidates to invite to undertake psychometric testing and to be the subject of referee reports. Following the completion of the psychometric tests and referee reports, the selection panel recommended all three candidates for further consideration and interview by all Councillors.

Following scheduling of the interviews, one of the three preferred candidates withdrew from the process due to personal reasons.

Councillors conducted interviews with the remaining candidates on Tuesday 8 October 2024. Integrity/pre-employment checks (i.e. Australian Criminal History; Australian Federal Police; Qualifications; and Australian Bankruptcy searches) were subsequently obtained for the preferred candidate. The Curriculum Vitae of the recommended candidate is provided at Confidential **Attachment 3**.

It is proposed the recommended candidate be appointed for a term of five years from the agreed date of commencement, with the option available to Council to re-appoint the CEO for a further term. Council will need to determine by June 2029 whether to re-appoint the CEO for a further term.

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**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION****That Council:**

- (a) receive and note the report titled “Appointment of the Chief Executive Officer of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council”
- (b) approve the appointment of the preferred candidate as the Chief Executive Officer of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council under section 194 (1) of the *Local Government Act 2009*
- (c) delegate authority to the Mayor to finalise and execute on behalf of Council, the proposed contract of employment associated with the appointment referred to in (b) above and
- (d) authorise the Mayor to make public, the name, qualifications and experience of the appointee to the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, once the contract of employment has been executed by all parties.

**FINANCE AND RESOURCING**

The cost of the recruitment and selection process to fill the CEO position was within the allocated allowance. These costs were met from the current year budget for the Office of the Chief Executive Officer.

The full year value of the total remuneration package (including salary, employer contributions to superannuation and motor vehicle arrangements) proposed for the CEO is \$550,000. The value of the total remuneration package is generally in line with comparable local government CEO remuneration packages in South East Queensland. The funding for the remuneration of the CEO is included in the budget for the Office of the Chief Executive Officer.

**CORPORATE PLAN**

**Corporate Plan Goal:** *An outstanding organisation*

**Outcome:** We serve our community by providing this great service

**Operational Activity:** S29 - Governance: providing internal leadership, legal opinion, governance and audit functions ensuring legislative accountability, transparency and ethical obligations are supported.

**CONSULTATION****Councillor Consultation**

All Councillors were consulted on the design of the recruitment and selection process, the composition of the selection panel and kept informed of the selection panel’s progress during the process.

Mayor Natoli, Deputy Mayor Councillor Suarez, Councillor Landsberg, Councillor Johnston and Councillor Bunnag were members of the selection panel.

All Councillors were involved in the assessment of the final shortlisted candidates and in determining the preferred candidate.

**Internal Consultation**

The Head of People and Culture Branch, the Head of the Business Innovation Branch (responsible for Council's Procurement Policy), Acting Group Executive Civic Governance and the Capability and Employee Engagement Lead conducted the Request for Quotation process to select the executive recruitment agency to manage the recruitment and selection for this position.

The development of the proposed Contract of Employment for the CEO (see Confidential **Attachment 4**) was undertaken in conjunction with the Head of People and Culture Branch. No other internal consultation was considered appropriate for a recruitment and selection process of this nature.

**External Consultation**

Beyond the sourcing of confidential referee reports for candidates and the conduct of pre-employment/integrity searches, no other external consultation was undertaken in relation to this appointment.

**Community Engagement**

Community engagement was not appropriate given the confidential nature of this executive recruitment and selection exercise.

**PROPOSAL**

Following the resignation of Council's former CEO, Councillors reviewed the requirements for the position of CEO and established a new Position Profile (see **Attachment 1**) and a comprehensive process to recruit for this position.

The Position Profile establishes:

- the Council's core expectations and priorities for the CEO;
- the demonstrated qualifications and experience which Councillors believe are required to lead an organisation of the size and scale of Council; and
- the values that Councillors expect the CEO to champion, lead and embed within the culture and governance of the organisation and across the workplace.

The key elements of the recruitment process involved:

- Independent sourcing of the widest possible field of candidates by a suitably qualified and experienced executive recruitment agency;
- Initial screening of candidates by the executive recruitment agency to assess candidate suitability;
- A selection panel comprising of 5 Councillors;
- Referee and other screening techniques, including psychometric testing, for the final shortlisted candidates prior to recommendation to Councillors for further consideration;
- Assessment and interviews by all Councillors of the final shortlisted candidates; and
- Pre-employment/integrity searches for the preferred candidate.

**Recruitment Process**

To facilitate a robust executive search strategy and recruitment process, a Request for Quotation was conducted in June 2024, overseen by an assessment panel comprising Council's Head of People and Culture Branch (Chair), the Head of the Business Innovation Branch (responsible for Council's Procurement Policy), Acting Group Executive Civic Governance and the Capability and Employee Engagement Lead. Several agencies, including organisations with a presence on the Sunshine Coast, were invited to respond to the Request for Quotation. From this process, Leading Roles was selected and engaged on 17 July 2024 to manage the executive search and assessment process to secure a new CEO for Council.

Advertising of the position commenced on Tuesday 6 August and online advertisements included on SEEK, LinkedIn, Australian Local Government Job Director, the Leading Roles website and Council's website.

A multi layered sourcing strategy was adopted by Leading Roles which included a sequence of applicant assessment processes being conducted to arrive at a cohort of suitably qualified and experienced candidates involved:

- 138 applications were received, with over 40 detailed briefings provided to prospective applicants.
- The Consultant assessed all applications and 'longlisted' 35 applicants. This list was further reduced to 14 candidates.

To review the recommendations of the Consultant and determine an initial shortlist of suitable candidates for interview, all Councillors met with the Consultant on Monday 16 September 2024 to receive a full briefing on the applicant pool. Councillors reviewed the 14 highest ranked candidates and settled on a shortlist of six candidates for interview.

Interviews were scheduled for Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 September 2024.

**Selection Process**

The selection panel conducted interviews with six candidates on Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 September 2024.

The six interviewed candidates each participated in an interview of 60- 90 minutes duration, which comprised a series of questions and areas for discussion aligned to the Council's agreed recruitment brief and the position profile as included in the published CEO Applicant Pack (**Attachment 2**) and the Leadership Capability Competency Framework aligned to the "*McKinsey Mindsets and Practices of Excellent CEO's*". With Leadership as the key area of focus, the following competencies were the emphasis of questions for the purpose of assessment by the selection panel:

1. Strategic Leadership
2. Leadership of People – Fostering an Inclusive Culture
3. External Stakeholders – Building Strategic Partnerships
4. Internal Stakeholders – Collaborative Decision Making
5. Personal Attributes – Resilience and Adaptability
6. Conflicts of Interest – Identifying and Handling Conflicts of Interest

Following interviews, the selection panel identified three candidates who would be invited to participate in psychometric testing and to be the subject of referee reports. Following the completion of the psychometric tests and the provision of referee reports, the selection panel recommended to all Councillors three candidates for further consideration and interview.

Councillors agreed to conduct interviews with the three recommended candidates on Tuesday 8 October 2024.

Following scheduling of the interviews, one of the three preferred candidates withdrew from the process due to personal reasons.

Subsequently the two remaining candidates were each invited to participate in an interview of two hours duration with all Councillors participating. The candidates were required to respond to the following key areas:

1. Background – provide an overview of their experience and alignment to the role of CEO;
2. A 30 minute presentation - Presenting a plan for assuming leadership and how they would leverage their experience to deliver on the Mayor and Councillors' vision for the Sunshine Coast Council.

The balance of each interview involved a series of questions and areas for discussion, in order to enable Councillors to gain an understanding of the suitability of candidates for the role.

Following the interviews on Tuesday 8 October 2024, Councillors met to discuss the outcomes of the interviews and to identify a preferred candidate. Integrity/pre-employment checks (i.e. Australian Criminal History; Australian Federal Police; Qualifications; and Australian Bankruptcy searches) were subsequently obtained for the preferred candidate.

The Curriculum Vitae of the preferred candidate is provided at Confidential **Attachment 3. Terms and conditions of employment**

A new Contract of Employment has been drafted for the CEO position, incorporating best practice elements from employment contracts with the State and other local governments as well as the expectations of Councillors. The proposed contract of employment is at Confidential **Attachment 4.**

It is proposed the preferred candidate be appointed for a term of five years from the date of commencement, with the contract providing the option to Council to re-appoint the CEO for a further term. Under the terms of the proposed contract of employment, Council will need to determine in June 2029 whether to re-appoint the CEO for a further term.

Taking into account comparability with other local government CEO remuneration packages in South East Queensland, Councillors agreed the total value of the remuneration package for the preferred candidate would be \$550,000 per annum. The total remuneration package includes annual salary, employer contributions to superannuation and motor vehicle arrangements.

### **Legal**

Council is required under section 194 (1) of the *Local Government Act 2009* ("the Act") to appoint a qualified person to be its CEO.

Under section 194 (3) of the Act, a person who is appointed as the CEO must enter into a written contract of employment with the local government.



Under section 194 (4) of the Act, the contract of employment must provide for:

- a) the CEO to meet performance standards set by the local government; and
- b) the CEO's conditions of employment (including remuneration).

The recommendations in this report and the proposed contract of employment satisfy the statutory requirements referenced above.

### **Policy**

There are no significant policy issues associated with the recommendations posed in this report. Council policies in relation to recruitment and selection have been observed in the process adopted for filling this role.

### **Risk**

There are no discernible, significant risks associated with the recommendations in this report. The preferred candidate has been selected through a process which involved eight different elements, which included formal application, three separate interviews, psychometric testing, referee reports and pre-employment and integrity searches.

### **Previous Council Resolution**

There are no previous Council resolutions in relation to this recruitment and selection process.

### **Related Documentation**

- Chief Executive Officer Position Profile
- Position advertisement
- Leading Roles Recruitment Brief and Published Information Package
- Recommended Candidate – Curriculum Vitae and application (Confidential)
- Psychometric Testing Results for the preferred candidate (Confidential)
- Referee reports (3) for the preferred candidate (Confidential)
- Pre-employment search results for the preferred candidate (Confidential)
- Proposed Contract of Employment (Confidential)

All documentation generated throughout the recruitment and selection process will be securely filed with Council's People and Culture Branch and appropriately archived in due course.

### **Critical Dates**

Given the recruitment and selection process commenced on 17 July 2024 following the appointment of Leading Roles, there was a high level of expectation by Council staff and members of the community that an appointment to the CEO role would be finalised in a timely manner. Subject to Council agreeing to the recommendations in this report, the recruitment and selection process will have been completed in four months from the date of appointment of the executive recruitment agency.

**Implementation**

Subject to Council's acceptance of the recommendations in this report, it is proposed that the Mayor will:

- execute the proposed Contract of Employment; and
- announce the appointment to the CEO role.



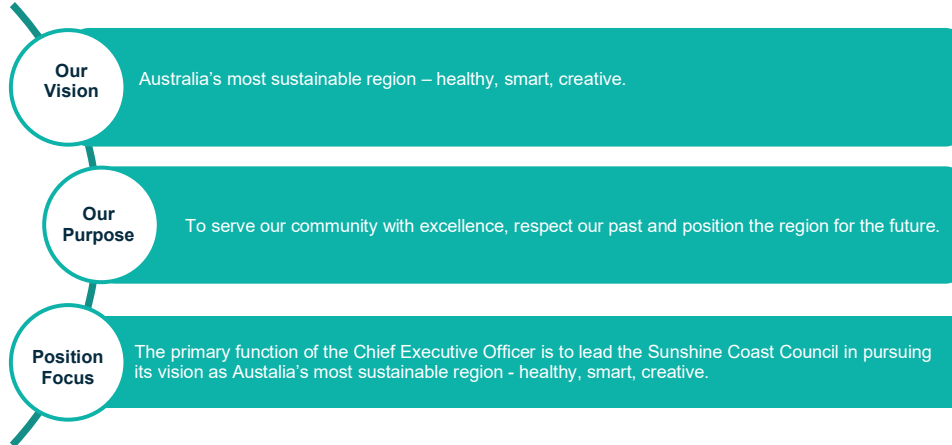
## Position Profile

70001001 – Chief Executive Officer - Office of CEO

### About Council

The Sunshine Coast Council continues to take a lead role in shaping a prosperous future for our community through a vision to be Australia's most sustainable region – healthy, smart, creative.

Sunshine Coast Council is one of the largest local governments in Australia, serving a community of more than 365,000 residents across an area of approximately 2,291 square kilometres. Council's 2024-2028 Corporate Plan aims to deliver a strong community, a healthy environment, a resilient economy, service excellence and an outstanding organisation. These goals provide our community and our organisation with a line of sight to the programs, projects and services provided by council to residents, businesses and visitors across our region every day. Our employees' passion and commitment to the region and their willingness to go above and beyond, is what sets Sunshine Coast Council apart as a local government organisation.



### Our Values

Everything council does is underpinned by its values, which define the culture of the organisation and the behaviours that shape our interaction with the community and each other. Our values are depicted below.













































