

LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE INDEPENDENT MEMBER

Expression of interest information pack

May 2025



CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
2	About Loddon	1
3	Background	2
4	Committee functions.....	2
5	Committee composition	2
6	EOI process and timeline	3
7	About this EOI	4
8	Overview of the role and skills requirements	5
9	Information to be provided.....	6
10	Evaluation	7
11	Communication	7
12	Submission of responses.....	8
13	Next stage of the EOI process	9
14	Definitions of terms or abbreviations used	10

1 Introduction

Loddon Shire Council is seeking expressions of interest from suitably skilled, community focused persons to be appointed as an Independent Member of its Audit and Risk Committee.

Ideally, the successful candidate will have experience in local government, financial management, risk management or public sector management. Additionally, candidates with a background in business or strong local community knowledge and involvement in Loddon Shire are also strongly encouraged to apply.

Council's Audit and Risk Committee operates under Section 54 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and plays an important role in providing oversight of Loddon Shire Council's governance, risk management and internal control practices. The Committee meets quarterly in Wedderburn with in person attendance required for at least three of the four meetings.

2 About Loddon

The Shire

Loddon Shire is located in northern Victoria, 200km north of Melbourne and within proximity to the major town centres of Bendigo and Echuca. The municipality, covering 6,696 km², is characterised by rural landscapes, parks, waterways, wetlands and reserves supporting local industries, particularly agriculture and tourism.

Council

Loddon Shire Council serves a community of 7,755 and has approximately 151 full-time, part-time and casual employees. Most of our staff work from depots, or in office environments.

Community vision

Creating a community where everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to live, work and thrive.

Loddon vision

Loddon will be a resilient, sustainable and prosperous community of communities.

Our values

- We respect
- We communicate
- We collaborate
- We innovate
- We deliver

Our strategic objectives

- A sustainable built and natural environment
- A growing and vibrant community
- A diverse and expanding economy
- A supported and accessible community

3 Background

Council is committed to proactively managing all risks inherent in its operations. To provide oversight of the risk management process Council has a risk framework in place as well as an Audit and Risk Committee.

Loddon Shire Council's Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) operates pursuant to section 53(2) of the Act. The Committee is an advisory committee and does not have any delegated powers, including executive powers, management functions, or delegated financial responsibility. The role of the Committee is to provide independent oversight of Council's governance, risk management and internal control practices, and to provide assurance to the Council.

4 Committee functions

In accordance with section 54(2) of the Act, the functions and responsibilities of the Committee include:

1. Monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with the overarching governance principles and the *Local Government Act 2020* and the regulations and any ministerial directions (Section 54(2a))
2. Monitor internal controls
3. Monitor compliance with relevant laws and regulations
4. Monitor Council financial and performance reporting (Section 54(2b))
5. Monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls. (Section 54(2c))
6. Oversee internal audit function (Section 54(2d))
7. Oversee external audit function (Section 54(2d))
8. Related-party transactions

The Committee is not responsible for the executive management of these functions but rather engages with management in a constructive and professional manner in discharging its responsibilities and formulating its advice to the Council.

The Council cannot abrogate or delegate its responsibilities to the Committee. The Committee can advise the Council on how best to fulfil its responsibilities and facilitate decision making by providing a forum for improving communication between the Council members and management, finance, risk and compliance officers, internal auditors and external auditors.

5 Committee composition

The Committee comprises of five members:

- one Councillor; and
- four independent external members, appointed by Council.

The Chair of the Committee must be an independent member.

The Act requires the Committee to have collective expertise in financial management and risk; and experience in public sector management. The independent members of the Committee are drawn from relevant sectors and industry professionals with expertise aligned to the requirements of the Act and Committee accountabilities

6 EOI process and timeline

Please Note: this timeline provides applicants with an indication of the timing of the EOI process. The schedule is indicative only and may be changed by Council at any time.

5 May	EOI opens
30 May	EOI closes – all submissions to be received by 5pm
2 – 13 June	Submissions reviewed and shortlisted
23 - 27 June	Interviews conducted*
Tuesday 22 July	Council resolves at its scheduled meeting to appoint the preferred candidate, appointment to take effect from 1 September. Successful candidate notified Unsuccessful applicants notified
August	Successful candidate - induction to Council and Audit and Risk Committee
Monday 1 September	Attendance at first Audit and Risk Committee Meeting

* Ideally Interviews will be undertaken in person and at Council's Wedderburn Office. Council may at its discretion conduct interviews virtually via MS Teams.

7 About this EOI

Organisation details

Organisation name:	Loddon Shire Council
EOI title:	Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee

Organisation contacts

Contact Person	
Name:	Michelle Stedman
Position title:	Director Corporate
Contact details:	michelle.stedman@loddon.vic.gov.au 0436 637 048

Contact Person	
Name:	Lisa Clue
Position title:	Manager Governance
Contact details:	lclue@loddon.vic.gov.au 0447 044 592

Closing time

Australian Eastern Standard Time	5 pm Friday, 30 May 2025
----------------------------------	---------------------------------

Submission details

Electronic Submission – preferred method	
email address	loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au
Information to be in the title of the email	Email submissions should be marked in the Subject as “EOI – Audit and Risk Committee Independent Member” All emails will be acknowledged.
Hardcopy Submission	
Postal Address	Loddon Shire Council PO Box 21 WEDDERBURN VIC 3518 Council must receive applications before the closing time and day.
Information to be marked on the package containing the submission	Submissions must be marked with “EOI – Audit and Risk Committee Independent Member.”

8 Overview of the role and skills requirements

8.1 Committee meetings

Meetings of the Committee are held quarterly, in February, May, September and November, in the Wedderburn Council Chambers. Remote access is available for members unable to attend in person from time to time.

Meetings commence at 9.00am and are generally up to three hours in duration, depending on the number and content of agenda items.

8.2 Term of appointment

Council is seeking expressions of interest to fill a vacancy for a four-year term, commencing 1 September 2025. The Committee's Charter details the full responsibilities of the Committee and is available on the Council's website www.loddon.vic.gov.au

8.3 Remuneration

Independent members of the Audit and Risk Committee will receive quarterly remuneration, currently \$585 (an extra quarter payment is made to the Chair during a one year term).

Reimbursement for travel is available to Independent members.

Remuneration and travel reimbursement is determined annually by resolution of Council.

8.4 Capability

The suite of skills and experience sought for each Independent Member position are different and intended to ensure a balance in the collective expertise of the Committee. Successful applicants will have relevant experience, tertiary qualifications in a related field and be able to provide specialist knowledge across a range of the following skills:

Capability/Skills
Strategic and Operational Risk Management - frameworks, processes and controls
Strategic financial skills with exceptional financial literacy and the ability to understand and interrogate financial statements
Local Government or Public Sector Management Experience
Data Governance (information technology systems and controls, including information security)
Knowledge of fraud/corruption prevention and controls
Knowledge of Audit Process (internal and external)
Compliance - Local Government Accountability Frameworks
The application of accounting, auditing and assurance standards
Planning and Strategic thinking
The operations of government and the public sector, including accountability frameworks
Executive Leadership and Management skills (CEO/CRO/CFO)
Legal / legislative awareness

Capability/Skills (continued)
Public integrity knowledge and awareness
Project and program management
Human resources and industrial relations
Audit and Risk Committee / Board membership
Understanding of governance in a government context regarding stakeholders etc.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate the following personal attributes:

Personal Attributes
Demonstrated motivation for the role
Professional - Integrity/ethics and modelling organisational values
Effective listener
Strategic Questioning
Influencing / negotiation skills
Critical and innovative thinking capability
Willingness to constructively challenge management practices.

It is also highly desirable that applicants have:

- AICD Training
- Association with Loddon Shire or the Loddon Mallee region

Independence of Application

Applicants must apply in their individual capacity and not as a representative of any organisation, firm, or employer. Applications submitted on behalf of a business or accompanied by corporate branding, such as a letterhead or email signature indicating representation, will not be considered.

The Audit and Risk Committee requires members to act independently and free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from organisational affiliations.

9 Information to be provided

Council prefers expressions of interest to be submitted electronically and include the following as pdf documents:

1. Cover letter
2. CV/Resume
3. One to two-page summary of the applicant's skills as they apply to, or address the listed Skills Requirements
4. Minimum of two referees, including contact details.

Please note that while applicants are not required to provide evidence of qualifications with the application, they will be required for verification if selected for appointment.

10 Evaluation

10.1 Evaluation Process

A panel consisting the Loddon Shire Council Mayor, CEO and Director Corporate, and the Audit and Risk Committee Chair (or a delegated Independent Audit and Risk Committee Member) will evaluate and shortlist submissions received. Suitable applicants will be invited to attend an interview.

10.2 Unsuccessful and Disqualified Responses

Unsuccessful applicants will be formally notified. Council may, in its absolute discretion:

- Reject any response that does not include all requested information or is not in the format specified;
- After concluding a preliminary evaluation, reject any response that in its opinion is unacceptable;
- Disregard any content in an applicant's response that is illegible and will be under no obligation whatsoever to seek clarification from the Applicant;
- Disqualify any incomplete response or evaluate it solely on the information contained within it;
- Alter the structure and/or the timing of the EOI process; and
- Vary or extend any time or date specified in this EOI.

11 Communication

11.1 Communication Protocol

Questions or inquiries relating to this invitation and the EOI process are to be directed to the contact person(s) specified in this document.

Requests for clarification:

1. All requests for further information or clarification regarding this EOI process are to be submitted before the closing date.
2. Council is not obliged to respond to any question or request for clarification or further information.
3. Council may make available to other prospective applicants information or clarification provided in response to a request, in which case those details shall form part of this invitation.

11.2 Complaints about this EOI

An Applicant with a complaint about this EOI process must notify the contact person to seek resolution in the first instance. If that contact does not resolve the issue, the Applicant must then follow Council's Complaint Handling Policy, a copy of which will be provided upon request.

12 Submission of responses

12.1 Providing a Submission

It is the Applicant's responsibility to:

- understand the requirements of the EOI process and any reference documentation;
- ensure that their submission contains the information requested;
- ensure that their submission is in the correct format, complies with all EOI requirements, and is accurate and complete;
- make their enquiries regarding the EOI process;
- ensure that they comply with all applicable laws regarding the EOI process;
- cover all costs and expenses related to the preparation and submission of their response, any subsequent negotiation, and any future process connected with or relating to the EOI process.

12.2 Submission

Submissions must be received by the EOI closing time. Council may extend the closing time in its absolute discretion by providing public notice.

All responses submitted after the EOI closing time will be recorded by Council. The determination of Council as to the actual time that the response is submitted is final.

Submissions must be marked and submitted as detailed in 'Submission details'.

12.3 Late Submission

Submissions received after the EOI closing time will be disqualified from the EOI process and ineligible for consideration unless:

- the applicant can document to the satisfaction of Council that an event of exceptional circumstances resulted in the Applicant being unable to have their submission received by Council by EOI closing time; and
- Council is satisfied that accepting a late submission would not compromise the integrity of the EOI process.

Council will inform an applicant whose submission is received after the EOI closing time if their submission is ineligible for consideration.

12.4 Obligation to Notify Errors

If an applicant identifies an error in their submission (excluding clerical errors which would have no bearing on the evaluation), they must promptly notify Council.

12.5 Use of a Response

By submission of their response, each Applicant grants to Council a non-transferable licence to use and reproduce the whole or any portion of the Applicant's response solely to evaluate the merits of the Applicant.

12.6 Withdrawal of a Response

An Applicant who wishes to withdraw a previously submitted response must immediately notify Council in writing of their withdrawal. Upon receipt of such notification, Council will cease to consider the Applicant's response.

12.7 Disclosure of EOI Contents and EOI Information

Applicant's responses will be treated as confidential by Council. Council will not disclose the information contained in the response, except:

- as required by law (including, for the avoidance of doubt, as required under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic))
- for investigations by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission or other government authorities having relevant jurisdiction; or
- to external consultants and advisers of Council engaged to assist with the EOI process.

13 Next stage of the EOI process

13.1 Options Available to Council

After evaluating all submissions, Council may without limiting other options available to it, do any of the following:

- Prepare a short list of Applicants and invite them to attend an interview;
- Conduct a subsequent EOI process calling for the services or any similar related services;
- Decide not to proceed further with the EOI process or any other process for the services; or
- Commence a new process for calling for submissions on a similar or different basis to that outlined in the original invitation.

13.2 Applicant Warranties

By submitting a response, an applicant warrants that:

- they have examined information and documents made available by Council relating to the EOI process;
- they have sought and examined all necessary information which is obtainable by making reasonable enquiries relevant to the risks and other circumstances affecting its response;
- they otherwise accept and will comply with requirements set out in this Information Pack; and
- they will provide additional information promptly as requested by Council to clarify any matters contained in the response.

13.3 Council Rights

Council reserves the right, in its absolute discretion at any time, to:

- vary or extend any time or date specified in this EOI for all or any applicants; or
- terminate the participation of any applicant or any other person in the EOI process.

14 Definitions of terms or abbreviations used

Term	Definition
Applicant	means a person who submits an applicant's response
Applicant's response or submission	means a document submitted by an applicant in response to this EOI.
Council	means Loddon Shire Council
EOI closing time	indicates the time specified by which the Council must receive responses
EOI process	means the process commenced by advertising an invitation for responses and concluding upon either early termination of the process or a subsequent procurement process
EOI	means the Expression of Interest set out in each of the documents identified in the Introduction, the EOI process and any other materials so designated by Council
Item	means an item of this EOI
Overview of requirements	means the summary of requirements for completing this EOI
Representative	means a party and its agents, servants, employees, contractors, associates, invitees and anyone else for whom that party is responsible
Services	means the services required by the organisation as stipulated in this EOI