Election Signs Policy

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

1.1 establish the Council's position in relation to the placement, removal and enforcement of Election signs for Federal, State and local government elections.

1.2 Provide clear guidance to staff, elected members, political candidates and the community.

1.3 Mitigate public safety risks and ensure roads remain safe and accessible.

2. DEFINITIONS

Elected Member	a Council Member of the District Council of Karoonda East Murray.
Election	any election, referendum or poll conducted for Federal, State or Local Governments.
Election Period	For State/Commonwealth: from issue of writs to close of polls. For Local Government: close of nominations to close of voting.
Election sign	means a candidate sign relating to an election.
Electoral advertising poster	An Electoral Advertising Poster is any poster, notice, sign, sticker, or similar display material that contains electoral matter, as defined in section 4(1) of the *Electoral Act 1985* (SA).
Infrastructure	includes (but not limited to) poles, poles, light poles, traffic signs, traffic lights, traffic control boxes, and other traffic control devices, transformer boxes, trees, fences, bridges whether owned or under the care, control or management of SA Power Networks, DPTI or the Council.

LGA	means Local Government Association.
Local Government Election	means an election held under the LG Act or the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* (SA).
Public Road	For local elections, has the same meaning in the *Local Government Act 1999* and for State and Commonwealth elections, the same meaning as in the *Road Traffic Act 1961*.
Road-related area	has the same meaning as in the *Road Traffic Act 1961*.

3. SCOPE

3.1 Applies to all Election Signs displayed during or in anticipation of an Election Period.

3.2 Applies to all candidates, campaign workers, volunteers and any person displaying Election Signs in the Council area.

3.3 Policy is based on principles of equity, safety and consistency for all candidates.

3.4 Applies to all Council-controlled land and roads, excluding DIT-controlled roads and private land.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Council recognises that South Australian Legislation prohibits the placement of Election signage on public roads and road related areas, subject to limited exemptions. *(e.g. handheld posters, signage on private land, signage within 50 metres of polling booths during voting)*.

5. PRINCIPLES

5.1 For State or Commonwealth elections, Council will follow the LGA's *'Guideline for Councils – State and Commonwealth Elections Signs on Roads'* dated March 2025. (Appendix 1).

5.2 Election Signs are prohibited on all public roads, public infrastructure and road-related areas in accordance with the *Electoral Act 1985* (as amended 2024).

5.3 Council will provide candidates, upon request, with a copy of this policy and guidelines.

5.4 Should complaints be received that a sign owner has breached relevant guidelines, the owner will be contacted and advised.

5.5 Where a sign endangers safety, obstructs road use, or has been vandalised, Council may require immediate removal.

5.6 If removal is not undertaken within 24 hours, Council may remove and dispose of the sign, with costs recoverable from the owner.

6. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND OTHER REFERENCES

The Policy is to be read in conjunction with any relevant legislation, including but not limited to the following:

- *Local Government Act 1999* (SA).
- *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*
- *Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act 2016*
- *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*
- *Planning, Development and Infrastructure (General) Regulations 2017*
- *Electoral Act 1985 (SA)*
- *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (Cth)*
- *Road Traffic Act 1961*

Other references:

- District Council of Karoonda East Murray, Moveable Signs By-Law 2022
- District Council of Karoonda East Murray – Elections Signs – General Approval Guidelines
- LGA SA Guidelines for the Control of Election Signs.

Nothing in this policy authorises signage that is prohibited by legislation.

7. COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

7.1 All grievances must be submitted in writing to the CEO.

7.2 Should a complaint be received that sign owner has breached relevant guidelines, Council's authorised officer will investigate the complaint, take any necessary action and attempt to contact the owner. Where breaches of the policy occur, candidates will generally be given no more than 24 hours' notice to rectify the breach.

7.3 If an Election sign is considered to unreasonably endanger the safety of members of the pubic, or restrict the use of a road, or has been vandalised (including offensive language), Council's authorised officer will instruct the sign owner to remove it from the road.

7.4 If the owner of the Election sign fails to complete within 24 hours, the authorised officer will remove and dispose of the sign. Any direct costs incurred by Council in relation to the remove of the sign will be charged to the owner of the sign.

7.5 Any inconsistences between this Policy and applicable legislation, the legislation will prevail.

7.6 In the event of any inconsistency between this Policy and the LGA Guidelines for State and Commonwealth Elections, the LGA Guidelines apply to those elections only.

8. REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL OF ELECTION SIGNS IN ROAD OR ROAD RELATED AREA

Council authorised officers may remove non-compliant signage under s227 of the *Local Government Act 1999*:

8.1 Notify responsible persons and require removal within 24 hours.

8.2 Remove signs after 24 hours or immediately where safety requires.

8.3 Issue expiation notices where evidence supports offences under relevant legislation.

9. ALTERATIONS TO POLICY

The CEO may authorise minor variations to this policy during the election process in order to enhance or clarify any part of the policy.

10. DOCUMENT AND ADMINISTRATION CONTROL

COUNCIL POLICY	
Policy title:	Election Signs Policy (previously Election Signs in Public Places)
Responsible officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Version:	V4 – Not yet reviewed by CEO
Status:	Council Policy
First issued / adopted:	July 2004
Review frequency:	Every 4 years or at least six (6) prior to a local government general election or as otherwise required.
Last reviewed:	March 2026
Next review date:	March 2030

ELECTION SIGNS

GENERAL APPROVAL GUIDELINES

(Consistent with legislative changes effective 21 February 2024.)

These Guidelines operates to provide a General Approval to authorise the placement or affixation of moveable signs, Election signs.

Provided that the requirements of these Guidelines are fully complied with, it is not necessary to make application to the Council or the Relevant Authorities for permission to display moveable Election signs in this manner.

1. PURPOSE

To support the Policy by clarifying prohibited signage, legislated exemptions, and expectations for lawful conduct.

2. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES – Public Roads and Road Related Areas

Pursuant to the *Electoral Act 1985* (SA), **electoral advertising posters must not be exhibited on**:

- Public roads, roadways, verges, medians and traffic islands;
- Footpaths and nature strips;
- Light poles, power poles, street signs, fences and trees;
- Other public infrastructure, including DIT, SAPN, Aurizon.

3. LEGISLATED EXEMPTIONS

Current South Australian Law allows:

- **Hand-held posters** displayed by a person (must be removed when person leaves)
- **Signs on private property** with consent (no encroachment onto road area)
- **Signage within 50 metres of polling booth entrances** while voting is open
- Limited temporary A-frames at approved events (e.g. polling days)

Further guidelines in relation to the above exemptions are as follows:

3.1 Handheld Signs

Election signage may be display where:

- The sign is held by a person;
- The sign is not affixed to the ground, infrastructure or vegetation;
- The sign is removed immediately when the person leaves the location; and

- Unattended hand held signs are not permitted.

3.2 Signs on vehicles

Permitted where:

- Vehicle is registered and roadworthy;
- Signage is securely affixed;
- Vehicle is **not** parked primarily to display election signage (no static advertising on roads).

3.3 Temporary Display at Events/Meetings

Election signage may be displayed at public meetings, rallies or campaign events where:

- Signage is displayed only for the duration of the event;
- Signage is removed immediately after the event concludes; and
- consent has been obtained from the event organiser and landowner.

3.4 Private Property Signage

Election signage on private property is permitted where:

- The landowner or occupier has provided consent (evidence of consent must be produced upon request by an authorised person);
- Signage does not encroach onto a public road or road related area; and
- Signage is removed within a reasonable period after the election.

These Guidelines do not authorise the placement of election material on private land or infrastructure without the permission of the private landowner**.** All signs must be pursuant to Clause 1(f) of Schedule 4 of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure (General) Regulations 2017*.

4. APPROVAL GUIDELINES

These conditions apply only where any exemption exists.

4.1 Safety

Election signage must:

- Not obstruct sightlines or create hazards;
- Not damage infrastructure;
- Be securely fastened;
- Not exceed 1 m^2;

- Be installed/removed safely without traffic disruption.

Must **not**:

- Be illuminated, reflective, moving, flashing or otherwise distract drivers.

4.2 Conduct and Duration

- Exempt signage must be temporary and supervised whilst in a public place;
- Signs must not be left unattended in public places; and
- Signs should be removed within 48 hours from the close of voting.