Functional Area: ORGANISATIONAL

POLICY: Council Owned Housing

Purpose
This policy provides guidance to enable consistent allocation and good management of Council owned housing, to meet organisational and community needs.

Policy Statement
Council owned housing is allocated and managed to support:

- attraction and retention of employees to meet organisational needs
- accommodation of Council contractors, general contractors and members of the community where there is sufficient housing stock beyond organisational needs
- effective use and maintenance of Council housing assets.

Scope
This policy applies to all Council employees, Council contractors, general contractors and members of the community who are tenants of Council owned housing.

This policy does not refer to or include Council owned properties that are used for business activities and are either leased or managed separately.

Definitions
Council: The administrative governing body - Barcoo Shire Council.
Tenant (under a Lease): A tenant who has the exclusive right to occupy a residential premises under a Residential Tenancy Agreement (lease).
Licensee (under a Licence to Occupy): A licensee who has the right to occupy a premises, with no right to exclude others. For example, where more than one Contractor working on a project may seek to share a house.
Council Contractor: A person who has a contract to perform work on behalf of Barcoo Shire Council while acting as a representative of Council.
Contractor/general contractor: A person who has a contract to perform work in the Barcoo Shire and operates as their own entity.
Members of the community: General public who live in the Barcoo Shire.
Residential Tenancy Agreement (Lease): A legally binding contract between Barcoo Shie Council (landlord) and tenant, for the purpose of occupying residential housing.
Licence to Occupy: Also known as an occupancy licence, a legal agreement that grants a person or entity the right to occupy and use a specific property for a defined period, usually short term for a specific purpose.

Responsibilities
Community Services Manager: Has the overall responsibility of the effective allocation and management of Council owned housing.
Chief Executive Officer: Provides discretionary decision-making for exceptional and or extenuating circumstances.
Community and Facilities and or Housing Officers: Supports the handling and administration of Council's housing, leasing arrangements, routine inspections, and maintenance coordination, while also assisting with the management and upkeep of Council facilities and assets.
People and Culture Specialist: Has the responsibility to ensure they communicate housing needs during a recruitment process to the Housing and Facilities Officer and or Manager of Community Services. The People and Culture team must supply the necessary pre-documentation to the tenant to streamline the allocation of housing.

Governing Legislation and Regulations

Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (Qld)

Eligibility and Allocation

All prospective tenants or licensees of Council owned housing must complete and submit the Barcoo Shire Council Housing Application Form.

All decisions on eligibility and allocation of Council housing will be made to best meet Council and community needs.

The Barcoo Shire Council Chief Executive Officer has the ability to apply discretion in relation to eligibility assessment of any application, to meet exceptional circumstances, or particular organisational or community needs. The Chief Executive Officer may give consideration to identifying people who have alternative housing options, ensuring that Council housing is available to best meet Council and community needs.

Subject to availability, Council housing will be allocated to eligible tenants or licensees in line with the following priorities:

1. Council employees in senior positions, or positions that are identified as specialised or hard to fill, where the provision of Council owned housing will form part of an employment package or contract
2. Permanent, full time Council employees
3. Permanent, part-time Council employees
4. Casual Council employees
5. Council contractors
6. General contractors or members of the community

Housing allocation will be made based on household need and match to property, except where housing is reserved for a specific position (such as the Chief Executive Officer) or purpose.

Council owned housing may be held vacant for a period to ensure availability to meet future needs, or to provide flexibility to enable maintenance cycles or responsiveness to extraordinary circumstances.

Tenancy Agreement and Management

Tenants

All tenants occupying Council owned housing will be required to sign a Residential Tenancy Agreement and must abide by the terms of the Agreement.

The initial term of any Residential Tenancy Agreement will be for a term of six (6) months.
Subsequent Residential Tenancy Agreements may be negotiated for a term of one (1) year or two (2) years.

Where the tenant is a Council employee or Council contractor, if the employee or contractor resigns, vacates or is terminated from their employment with Council, the property will be vacated within four weeks in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*. If the employee wishes to remain a tenant at the property, or at another Council owned property, then a new Housing Application Form is to be submitted.

Where the tenant is a casual employee of Council, a general contractor or a member of the community, tenancy will be reviewed at the end of every agreement with regard to eligibility and allocation priorities. There is no guarantee of continuing housing.

Licensees

Short term occupation (less than six months) of Council owned housing will be agreed in a Licence to Occupy.
A Licence to Occupy will contain specifically agreed terms and period of occupancy.

Rental Rates and Subsidies

Rental rates for Public Rental Accommodation and Employee Rental Accommodation, including bonds, are set by Council in its annual Adopted Fees and Charges.

Public Rental Accommodation rates apply to members of the community (general public) or general contractors under a Residential Tenancy Agreement.

Public Rental Accommodation rates apply to accommodation provided to Licensees under a Licence to Occupy.

Employee Rental Accommodation rates (50% subsidy) apply to permanent full-time and permanent part-time employees.

Employee Rental Accommodation rates (50% subsidy) apply to Council contractors. Further subsidies may be negotiated as part of the employment process and contract.

Rental subsidies of up to 100% may be negotiated as part of the employment process, salary packaging and contracts for senior positions or positions that are identified as specialised or hard to fill.

Rental accommodation rates for casual Council employees will reference the Public Rental Accommodation rates, however, rental subsidies may be negotiated with consideration to the nature and extent of the employee's work with Council.

The Barcoo Shire Council Chief Executive Officer has the discretion to negotiate rental subsidies on a case-by-case basis, to meet Council and community needs.

Some Council owned housing will have furniture and chattels supplied for a fee, set by Council in its annual Adopted Fees and Charges.

Policy Owner:	Manager, Community Services
Policy Reference No.:	BSC - 014
Related Policies:	Barcoo Shire Council People Strategy 2023-2028
Related Procedures:	
Related Forms:	Housing Register Housing Application Form Residential Tenancy Agreement Licence to Occupy
Version:	5
Council Resolution No:	2026.02.011
Date Approved:	18/02/2026
Review:	Policy is to be reviewed at intervals of no more than two years