

Introduction

An organisations policy framework is a vital component of the decision making and management principle of good governance. The framework supports transparent, consistent, and efficient decision making, that aligns with the Shire’s legislative requirements, strategic priorities, and objectives.

Purpose

To provide the principles and standards for development and management of policies and ensure the Council are effectively engaged in in all aspects of the process.

The framework:

1. Identifies the hierarchy of governing documents
2. Sets out the requirements for developing policies and procedures
3. Provides the roles and responsibilities for development, approval, publication, and review.

Policy statement

The *Local Government Act 1995* section 2.7(2)(b) states the Council is to determine the local government’s policies.

The development of a policy document is required to establish the Shire’s objective on an issue or to provide further guidance on a legislative requirement.

The policy requirement may result from:

- new legislative requirements
- new or changing industry standards
- Reinforcement of the Shire’s strategic objectives
- Response to community needs or expectations, or
- a Council resolution.

The policy document should provide:

- Clarity and consistency in decision making
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness
- Improved customer and community outcomes.

1. Policy Document Hierarchy

Council Policy

A Council policy is adopted by the Council to provide the Chief Executive Officer with direction. Policies should guide the Shire’s actions and decision making, and may reflect:

- **Legislative Policy:** A policy that is required by law or created to supplement the Shire’s Local Planning Scheme of a Local Law.

- **General Council Policy:** A policy adopted by the Council that includes directives on general matters not specifically originating from a legislative head of power.

A guideline may be developed to support the interpretation and implementation of a Council policy. These guidelines are to be appended to the relevant policy and approved by the Council (**Council policy documents**).

Management Procedure

A Management procedure governs the day-to-day operations of the Shire and does not require Council approval. Management procedures are approved by the Executive Management Team (EMT) and are not for public comment or publication as they are internally focussed.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

SOPs are the steps undertaken to implement a Management procedure or undertake specific tasks in a business unit. SOPs should be prescriptive but able to be amended by the relevant Director or Manger as outlined in the SOP.

2. Policy Format

Council Policies will be drafted in the following format:

- Policy name
- Introduction
- Purpose
- Policy Statement
- Application
- Document control box

Legislative policy that has a prescribed format is not subject to this policy (eg. Local Planning Scheme).

3. Development and Review

The initiation of a Policy or Management Procedure will require the development of a discussion paper that outlines:

- The situation(background), showing the need for a policy/procedure, and a draft objective for the policy/procedure
- How the policy objectives will align with the SCP
- Available approaches, precedents, risks and issues
- The level of community engagement that may be required
- An assessment of where the policy may sit in the policy framework and any need for a guideline
- Review timeframe
- Any financial impacts, including impact on adopted budget or LTFP.

Council Policy schedule

1. Policy paper provided to the Council for minimum 7 day review
2. Facilitated Councillor workshop to help inform draft policy documents
3. Draft policy documents and report to Council Meeting for support
4. Draft policy documents published on Shire website for 14 day community consultation period
5. Development of final draft policy documents
6. Final draft policy documents, summary of community submissions and report presented to Council Meeting for adoption
7. Publication on Shire website within 14 days and implementation by responsible Shire officer

Management Procedure schedule

1. Policy paper, draft procedure and SOP (if required) presented to joint EMT and Managers meeting
2. Once supported by EMT, publication on Shire internal system within 7 days and implementation by responsible Shire officer

SOP schedule

1. Draft SOP presented to Manager and Director for review, assessment of appropriate approval level (Director or Manager) and adoption.
2. Once supported, shared within team and on the Shire's internal system within 7 days.

4. Review timeline

Council and Management procedures will be allocated a risk rating which determines the review period:

Risk rating	Review timeframe
Extreme or high	Annually
Medium	Biannually
Low	Four yearly

Policies may be reviewed or revoked earlier than the scheduled date due to legislative changes or decisions of the Council that affect the validity or applicability of the Policy.

The CEO is responsible for the effectiveness of Management procedures and the maintenance of an appropriate review cycle.

Application

This Policy applies to the development and review of policy documents by the Shire.

Department:	Corporate Services	Next review:	
Reviewer:	Strategic Governance & Risk Coordinator	Legislation:	Local Government Act 1995
Adopted:	Minute OC057/2022, 30.03.22	Delegation:	
Amended:		Risk:	
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