Council Policy Framework

Reference Number:	2.1
Type:	Council
Category:	Corporate Governance
Relevant Community Plan Outcome:	• Provide accessible social infrastructure and services that engage our diverse community. • An urban environment that is adaptive to a changing and growing City. • Enhance the state of the City's environment and biodiversity. • Be bold and innovative in our practices, leadership and decision making.
Responsible Officer(s):	General Manager Corporate Services
First Issued/Approved:	March 2007
Minutes Reference:	CoS 4/07/2022, Item 4.23
Last Reviewed:	July 2022
Next Review Due:	July 2024
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999 Work Health & Safety Act 2012 Return to Work Act 2014
Related Policies:	All
Related Procedures:	

1. Purpose

Developing, adopting and reviewing policy is a prime responsibility of the Council under Section 59 of the Local Government Act 1999. A Council Policy Framework provides a structure and process for the initiation, development, adoption and review of the Council's policy documents ensuring policies:

- are developed in a consultative, comprehensive and consistent manner
- underpin and support Councils strategic objectives as articulated in the Community Plan
- provide a clear understanding of the Council and management responsibilities in policy development and review
- ensure consistency with and meet the compliance requirements of legislation.

2. Scope

This Policy provides the guidelines within which all other policy documents for the City of Charles Sturt will be developed.

Our Ref: 12/255035

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3. **Policy Statement**

Policy Classifications

Policy sets out an organisation's position and accepted role and assists in decision-making relating to a particular area of activity.

Council Policies (also referred to as External / Public policies) are policies or procedures that are either required by legislation or impact on the Community in some way. Many of these policies may require consultation with the community and often relate to the goods, services and activities provided to or by the Council.

Administrative / Human Resource / Work, Health & Safety (OH&S) Policies (also referred to as internal policies). Administrative policies address the organisation business of Council. Human Resource and Work Health and Safety Policies address policy issues relating to employees of Council and the health and welfare of people in the workplace.

Procedures
Procedures define the specific guidelines or actions required to apply or implement a policy. Most policies are supported by procedures, which ensure that policies are practical and workable. Policies themselves should not document procedural arrangements that are not related to decision making. This information should be laid out in a procedure which is referenced in the relevant policy document.

Policy Approval

As Council policies detail Council's position and accepted role in relation to goods, services and activities provided to or by Council, these policies may be reviewed by the Committee relevant to the topic being considered, and then referred to the Corporate Services Committee who is responsible for the development and review of Council policies in accordance with the 'Council and Its Committees – Membership and Terms of Reference' document. This enables Committees to provide input and comment on policies that are relevant to the functions within their Terms of Reference, while still ensuring a consistent approval process.

Administrative / Human Resource and Work, Health & Safety policies relate specifically to the operational management, administrative or staffing matters of Council, which is the function of the Chief Executive (refer s99 and s107 of the Local Government Act 1999). These policies are subject to a separate administrative review and approval process to Council policies and must be approved by the Executive Management Team after development or review by the relevant member(s) of the Leadership Team.

Review Cycle

Council Policies will be reviewed and approved every 2 years by the relevant Committee, unless required more frequently under legislation. Administrative and Human Resource Policies are also reviewed and approved on a similar cycle by the Executive Management Team. These reviews are conducted on a rolling or staggered basis to enable greater consideration to be given to each policy, and more even distribution of policies over Committee meetings.

Policy Categorisation

On Council's website the Council policies will be displayed and accessed under the following headings.

- Corporate Governance
- Council Members
- Development & Infrastructure
- Environment & Open Space
- Finance
- Safety & Community

Content of Policies

All policies will be developed in accordance with the Policy Template.

There are some basic key principles that should be applied when developing or reviewing policies.

- No reproduction/duplication of legislation or relevant standards (however reference to the relevant standard or section of legislation should be included).
- Consideration of coverage/incorporation of the policy issue into existing policies
- Linkage to one or more Community Plan outcomes and/or objectives
- Only include policy material that assists in decision making. Procedural content should be referred to as a separate procedure or guidelines document.
- Consistent naming conventions and terminology
- Provide reference to related policies and procedures
- Policies should be reviewed holistically with the aim of consolidating policies on associated topics where feasible to minimise confusion or the need to take guidance from multiple policies.
- Care should be taken to ensure a Policy is actually required on a given topic or whether a simple decision of Council is a better instrument. Generally, this will be guided on the frequency of the situation and the consistency of general conditions, if both of these are low; a decision of Council may be the preferred option.

A standard format for policies will ensure a consistent and professional approach to the management of policies.

Policy Maintenance

The General Manager Corporate Services will ensure the Policy register is maintained and the appropriate policies are accessible to the public.

4. **Definitions**

   Nil