

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT – TIPS AND HINTS

### WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A POLICY AND A PROCEDURE?

Policies support the strategic direction and are a statement (terms and conditions) of principles or position that guide and direct the Council (Including staff) in decision making and it provides the principles that dictate how the members of council should act. They support the achievement of Council’s vision and objectives.

Procedures are the sequential steps that direct the people in completing any activity. These can also be called Work Instructions.

#### Policy’s Role

- Set standard and position of Council.
- Ensure compliance with legal and statutory requirements.
- Guide Council towards the achievement of its strategic plan.
- Provide a framework for action and decision making.
- Improve the management of risk.

This is a general guide and Councils are welcome to customise this document for their own corporate reference document library

#### Policies Are...

- Clear simple statements of how Council intends to conduct its services, actions or business.
- Guiding principles to help with decision making.
- Council’s position on a specific matter.
- Documents that demand compliance and non-compliance may be actionable through appropriate conduct policies.

#### Policies Are Not...

- Long and complicated.
- More than a couple of pages (generally).
- Adhoc or to support once off decision making.

### DRAFTING HINTS

Write in plain English	Be clear and concise
Avoid the use of should and shall, use must or recommended	Use present tense
Avoid gender specific pronouns	Do not replace legislation
Include key criteria for decision making	Do not include procedures

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR UPDATING AND REVIEWING THE CONTENT OF A POLICY?

The Owner/Responsible department is the content and knowledge expert and is responsible for:

- Developing /reviewing the policy;
- Consulting with all relevant stakeholders; and
- Requesting approval of the Policy.

All associated and/or supporting documents (procedures, guidelines, plans, flowcharts, forms) should also be reviewed at the same time as the policy to ensure accuracy and continuity.

## WHO SHOULD I CONSULT WITH WHEN I UNDERTAKE A REVIEW?

It is recommended that managers/or reviewer consult with other stakeholders. This are mostly internal and could include those impacted, interested parties, peers or just generally to receive feedback so your policy is a well-considered and functional document.

*Note: If the policy is staff-related, consultation with the relevant employee/union committee may be required.*

## WHO VERSION CONTROLS MY DOCUMENTS?

You may find that a Department/Branch such as Governance will facilitate version controlling and recording the information in relevant registers.

## IS THERE A PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING A POLICY?

Generally, the process is as follows:

1. Approval/support to proceed	5. Document approval
2. Drafting	6. Publication and communication/awareness
3. Consultation	7. Implementation
4. Update and document control	8. Evaluation and review

## POINTS TO NOTE

- Always ensure that if you are proposing a new policy, that it is not in conflict with any other current policy.
- Identify if there is conflict and either propose amendments to that policy as well and/or consider if it needs to be replaced/repealed (or combined).
- Ensure you consult with the owner of the Policy if it is not in your Department/Branch/Unit.

## IS THERE A DOCUMENT I CAN READ FOR FURTHER HELP?

You can refer to the LG Central resource template entitled “Corporate Policy Framework and Guideline” which provides instruction and guidance on policy types, approval authorities, review protocols, guidelines and development stages.

*<Councils can use this template Framework document and can customise for their own purposes>*

## WHO DO I GO TO FOR HELP?

*<Councils can populate this with their own contact points>*