

1 Purpose

This policy establishes the framework for the management of policies, procedures and supporting documents at Council. A policy is a high level strategic directive that establishes a principle-based approach to a subject. A policy should be adopted for any area of Council operations where direction or purpose needs to be set in order to conduct Council business and maintain good governance.

A policy is operationalised through procedures which give instructions and set out processes to implement a policy. In order to effectively and efficiently manage policies and procedures, this Framework establishes a hierarchy and categories of policies and procedures and sets out the requirements and standards for each step of the development and improvement process. All policies and procedures must be developed, deployed, monitored and revised in accordance with this policy.

2 Scope and applications

This Framework applies to all policy categories at Council:

- Strategic Policy;
- Council and Organisational Policies; and
- Organisational, Group and Branch Procedures.

2.1 Applicability of policy and procedure

A policy or procedure will remain in force unless formally repealed by the relevant Approval Authority or superseded by another policy or procedure or local law or subordinate local law.

Where organisational structure change results in a different Approval Authority or other role referenced in a particular policy or procedure, the existing responsibilities and accountabilities will remain in force until the policy or procedure is amended to reflect the new or amended position title, authority or role that takes its place.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or the Manager Governance and Legal Services may determine what is and what is not an Immaterial Change to a policy or procedure and has the authority to approve Immaterial Changes to a policy or procedure without the need for undertaking the full review process (Policy Update).

3 Principles

3.1 Characteristics

This section specifies the essential characteristics of acceptable policy and procedure at Council. All policies and procedures resulting from the Policy Framework must uphold the principles and priorities outlined in the Strategic Policy in a balanced and integrated manner in order to be approved.

3.1.1 Content

The content of policies and procedures will:

- uphold the 'General Principles' and 'Goals' as outlined in the Strategic Policy and the Code of Conduct for Employees' core values, mission and strategic goals;
- ensure compliance with legislative and industrial requirements;
- be consistent with Council's practices;
- clearly articulate expectations and accountability;
- clearly assign responsibility for actions and outcomes;
- show due consideration of risk mitigation;
- consider the precautionary principle in order to minimise potential harm; and
- where practical include a diagrammatic workflow reflecting the procedures.

3.1.2 Process

The process of development, deployment and review of policies and procedures will be:

- appropriately consultative (minimum of 5 business days to a maximum of 28 business days);
- directed by the principles of continuous improvement;
- expeditious and not unnecessarily burdensome;
- informed by prevailing legislative requirements, sector better practice and Council's Corporate Plan;
- appropriately communicated;
- developed and approved in a transparent and accountable manner;
- open to continuous review and improvement; and
- regularly reviewed to confirm the effectiveness and efficiency of the process, and relevance of the document.

3.1.3 Presentation

All documentation will be:

- consistent with approved organisational templates;
- retained according to the prevailing standard;
- centrally registered;
- accessible;
- current and accurate; and
- clear and comprehensible.

4 Content

Policies are developed in order to provide parameters and guidelines for the achievement of the Council's strategic and operational objectives, giving consideration to statutory, better practice and quality management requirements.

The Policy Framework requires that the Strategic Policy, Council and Organisational Policies, Organisational, Group and Branch Procedures are written in clear, concise English, conform to adopted guidelines, are approved as per the Strategic Policy, and are regularly reviewed by the Policy Owner.

4.1 Compliance

Policies must comply with the relevant principles set out in the Strategic Policy, relevant legislation, Council resolutions, the Corporate Plan and Policy Development Style Guide.

4.2 Consistency

Terminology used in the policy should reflect that used in the legislation, if appropriate. Use of the prescribed Policy Development Manual, Policy Templates and the Policy Development Style Guide will ensure consistency of format, content, and process.

4.3 Clarity

The two dimensions relating to clarity in the development of policy are:

1. **Clarity of approval:** All policies will clearly state where responsibility for final approval lies, when approval was formally given and the effective date of the policy.
2. **Clarity of writing:** All policy documents will contain clear, concise English, enabling a wide range of users to understand the content. Where prescribed terminology is used (e.g. extracted from legislation) a clear description of the terminology must be given in the definitions section of the policy document, to allow cross-referencing and comprehension.

4.4 Stages of policy development

The five stages of policy development are:

4.4.1 Needs identification

This stage includes identifying the matter to be addressed, seeking authority to proceed, and selection of the appropriate policy level which will contribute to achievement of Corporate Plan goals.

4.4.2 Policy development

This stage incorporates the identification of appropriate stakeholders, commencement of the consultation process, gathering relevant background information, authoring the policy document, and incorporating feedback. Prior to commencing the draft policy, it is essential that the policy drafter contacts the Coordinator Council Policies to discuss the relevant processes. The Policy Review Schedule will be maintained by the Coordinator Council Policies

4.4.3 Policy endorsement and approval

This stage includes notifying the appropriate officers and/or Council, of the requirement to evaluate the draft policy, and submitting it for endorsement and approval in accordance with section 5.1 of this policy.

4.4.4 Policy implementation

This is the final stage in the policy process but is ongoing. It includes such activities as activating the policy, notification, distribution, awareness and education.

4.4.5 Policy review

During the policy drafting stage, consideration will be given to the appropriate timelines for reviewing the policy. A review schedule will be incorporated into the policy document, which will commence once implementation has occurred.

4.5 Policy Owner and Contact Officer

A Policy Owner will be designated responsibility for each policy (i.e. the Group or Branch). Once a policy is approved, a nominated Contact Officer will bear responsibility for regular reviews of the policy and incorporating the required changes as well as undertaking an assessment to ascertain the following in relation to the policy:

- Has the intent of document changed?
- Is the intent clearly expressed?
- Is the policy still relevant and has it been affected by any changes in legislation or similar?
- Do associated forms, work instructions or similar conform to the objectives of the policy?
- Who needs to be notified/educated subsequent to the revision?
- Is the policy/procedure embedded in business processes as 'business as usual'?

4.6 Relationship/impact on other policies

It is the responsibility of the proposed policy drafter to assess any areas of overlap, contradiction, or integration with other existing or draft policies and to discuss these issues with other involved Policy Owner(s). The policy drafter will consider the various levels (i.e. categorisations) of Strategic Policy, Council and Organisational Policies and Organisational, Group and Branch Procedures. References to related policies must be clearly articulated in the policy document.

4.7 Policy currency

The electronic version of each policy will be verifiable as the current version, whilst printed versions will contain a disclaimer warning that the version may be superseded.

4.8 Policy categorisation and numbering

Policies will be categorised as either a Strategic Policy, Council Policy, Organisational Policy, Organisational Procedure, Group Procedure or Branch Procedure. Policy numbering will reflect the category and classification of the policy. The Coordinator Council Policies will provide numbers for all categories of policies.

4.9 Policy review

All policies will have specified time frames for review. In seeking approval to adopt a policy/procedure consideration of any risks must be presented to the decision maker. If risks are identified, any control measures to off-set the risk/s must also be outlined. Risks identified may result in reviews being scheduled earlier than the standard review timeframes.

New policies are to be reviewed within 12 months of adoption. Thereafter, policies will be reviewed within 3 years taking into consideration legislative requirements to review, completion of programs i.e. grants or other changes identified before the set review date.

Once the review has been completed, any Material Changes will be required to be progressed through the full policy development process as outlined in the Policy Development Manual.

However, any changes considered to be of an immaterial nature can be undertaken by the Coordinator Council Policies subject to the completion of all of the relevant review documentation.

The Policy Development Manual outlines the process for amending policies with immaterial changes.

4.10 Functional grouping

Where possible, all content and directions relating to a particular subject matter or task will be grouped in one policy.

4.11 Linking to forms, work instructions and similar

Where the policy has other documents related to it, these documents will be listed. If the document is recorded in the Policy Register and Review Schedule, the user is to be directed to the Policy Register and Review Schedule to ensure the user is accessing the current version of the document.

Other relevant forms, work instructions or similar may be hyperlinked. The development, maintenance and review of these documents are integral parts of the policy process. All hyperlinks must be checked during the review process to check the links are still valid and navigate the user to the right document.

4.12 Policy access

Employees with computer access can access the Strategic Policy, Council and Organisational Policies, Organisational, Group and Branch Procedures using the Policy Register and Review Schedule published on Council's Intranet.

Employees without access to Council's Intranet will be notified by their Supervisor or Manager when policies are approved. Printed copies may be obtained upon request from supervisors and a copy of all approved policies relevant to the Branch's operations must be available at all Council offices and depots where staff do not have internet access.

The public will have access to relevant policies through TRC's external website. Printed copies of these policies will be made available on request.

4.13 Publication of policies and procedures

4.13.1 Intranet

The Coordinator Council Policies will update as soon as practicably reasonable, all approved (new and reviewed) policies and procedures in the Policy Register and Review Schedule and under the Policies section (“New policies”) on the Intranet.

4.13.2 TRC external website

The Coordinator Council Policies will be responsible for the publication of Council Policies on Council's external website.

5 Responsibilities/accountabilities

5.1 Endorsement and approval process

The Policy Drafter will draft/review policies and procedures in accordance with this policy. All policies and procedures developed and Material Changes to existing policies and procedures are to be endorsed and approved in accordance with the following table before they become operational.

Category	Endorse	Approve
Strategic Policy	CEO	Council
Council Policy	CEO	Council
Organisational Policy	General Manager	CEO
Organisational Procedure	General Manager	CEO
Group Procedure	Manager	General Manager
Branch Procedure	Principal/Supervisor	Manager

Immaterial Changes to all existing policies and procedures are to be endorsed and approved as follows:

Policy update/review	Endorse	Approve
Immaterial Changes (as a result of a policy review)	Principal/Supervisor	Manager
Immaterial Changes (Policy Update outside of a policy review)	Coordinator of Council Policies or Policy Officer	Manager Governance and Legal Services or CEO

If a policy or procedure is no longer relevant or needed and therefore needs to be repealed due to other documentation superseding the policy or procedure, discontinuation of the grant/function addressed, changes to legislation, or operational changes, approval must be provided by the relevant General Manager to rescind, or for Branch Procedures, the relevant Manager.

6 Relevant laws

Not applicable

7 Related policies/documents

Members of the public can access Council policies on Council's website. If a policy listed below does not appear on the website please contact 131 872 or email info@tr.qld.gov.au to request a copy. Staff may access policies via the [Policy Register and Review Schedule](#).

Council policies

1.01 Strategic Policy

5.25 Enterprise Risk Management Procedure

Other documents

[Policy Register and Review Schedule DM#7047747](#)

[Policy Development Manual DM#8624392](#)

[Policy Development Style Guide DM#5245581](#)

[Corporate Plan 2024 - 2029](#)

8 Related forms

[Policy Approval Coversheet DM#6662323](#)

[Policy Consultation, Education and Awareness Plan DM#5245421](#)

[Policy Template DM#10304219](#)

9 Definitions

Term	Definition
Strategic Policy	The Strategic Policy is the highest level of policy and serves as the head of power for all other policies. It sets out general principles and goals by which Council intends to conduct its activities.
Council Policy	Council Policies are those which may have significant public interest or a community focus or are required by legislation.
Organisational Policy	Organisational Policies have an internal focus and can affect the whole or the majority of the Organisation. An Organisational Policy derives its power from the Strategic Policy and therefore does not need to be linked to a Council Policy. The CEO may, at their discretion, refer an Organisational Policy to Council for consideration and feedback prior to approval by the CEO.
Organisational Procedure	Organisational Procedures have an internal focus and can affect the whole or the majority of the Organisation. Organisational Procedures provide practical guidance on the implementation of a policy. Organisational Procedures must be linked to a Council Policy or an Organisational Policy. A

Term	Definition
	number of Organisational Procedures may be linked to the same policy.
Group Procedure	A Group Procedure applies to a specific Group within TRC. These procedures provide practical guidance on the implementation of a policy. A Group Procedure need not be linked to a Council Policy or an Organisational Policy. A number of Group Procedures may be attached to the same policy.
Branch Procedure	A Branch Procedure applies to a specific Branch within the Group. These procedures provide practical guidance on how to implement a policy. A Branch Procedure need not be linked to a Council Policy or an Organisational Policy. A number of Branch Procedures can be attached to the same policy.
Affiliate	An Affiliate includes contractors, suppliers, volunteers, members of Committees, controlled entities, work experience students and other people or groups who have a particular relationship with Council.
Approval Authority	The person or entity occupying the level indicated in the approval process having the authority to approve a new policy, to approve material changes to an existing policy, or to rescind/repeal a policy.
Coordinator Council Policies	<p>The officer responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing and maintaining the Strategic Policy, Policy Framework, Policy Development Manual and all associated templates; • Providing advice and guidance on policy development and access; • Maintaining the policy register and review schedule; • Maintaining Intranet content related to policy at Council; • Publication of Council Policies on Council's external website; • Endorsing policies in conjunction with the Policy Drafter, Endorser and Approver; • Assisting with policy reviews; and • Updating policies with immaterial changes.
Consultation	Consultation is an integral part of the policy development and implementation process. Consultation involves identifying and meeting with

Term	Definition
	relevant stakeholders to gain their input and feedback during the development of any type of policy.
Contact Officer	Once the policy has been approved, the nominated Contact Officer has functional responsibility and accountability for the policy.
General Manager	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Manager Environment and Community Services • General Manager Corporate Services • General Manager Infrastructure Services • General Manager Planning and Development Services • General Manager Water and Waste Services
Immaterial Changes	A housekeeping change to a policy or procedure such as clarifying wording, updating a section or position name, contact person, typographical errors or reference to legislation which does not alter the scope, purpose or intent of the document.
Material Changes	Changes to the purpose, scope or significant changes to the content, responsibilities, limits, assignment of powers etc. of a policy or procedure.
Policy	Concise formal statements of principles that indicate how Council will act in a particular aspect of its operation. In this way, policies regulate and direct actions and conduct. Note: whilst three of the policy categories have the word 'procedure' in their title, they are still a category of policy. The use of the term 'procedure' in the title shows that it is a policy with an operational focus.
Policy Development	The various stages from concept to implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of a policy need; • development of the policy document; • consideration and approval of the policy; • implementation of the policy; and • review of the policy.
Policy Drafter	The position responsible for drafting the policy and who should be contacted for any matters relating to the specific policy, or procedure prior to the approval process.
Policy Owner	The Policy Owner is the Group, Branch or Section responsible for the preparation and implementation

Term	Definition
	of the Policy and when necessary, publishes the Policy on TRC’s external website.
Policy Register and Review Schedule	Current policies and procedures approved in accordance with the Policy Framework and the schedule of policies and procedures to be developed.
Policy Update	An update made to a policy or procedure outside of a policy review that only contains Immaterial Changes and is approved either by the CEO or the Manager Governance and Legal Services.
Precautionary Principle	The precautionary principle states that if an action or policy or procedure has a suspected risk of causing harm to the public or to the environment, in the absence of scientific consensus that the action or policy or procedure is harmful, the burden of proof that it is not harmful falls on those taking the action.
Procedure	An operational instruction that sets out the process to operationalise a policy.

10 Policy details

Policy category:	Council Policy	Policy version number¹:	5.00
Date adopted/approved:	25 August 2025	Effective date:	25 August 2025
Approval authority:	Council		
Policy Owner:	Governance and Legal Services Branch – Office of the CEO		
Contact officer:	Manager, Governance and Legal Services		
Review date:	August 2028		

11 Revision history

Policy version	Approval date	DM Reference
1.00	17 August 2018	7162001v2
2.00	19 September 2019	8431238v2

¹ Printed copies are uncontrolled. It is the user’s responsibility to ensure that any copies of policy documents are the current issue. Any delegations should be verified via the relevant Delegation Register as it takes precedence if there is a conflict. The Chief Executive Officer will, if necessary, be the sole arbiter in resolving any issues of conflict

Policy version	Approval date	DM Reference
3.00	16 March 2021	9612164v2
4.00	29 August 2022	10296097v3
5.00	25 August 2025	11785873v3