

Policy & Procedure Development and Review

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1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of the *Policy & Procedure Development and Review Policy* is to ensure a uniform process when developing and reviewing public and corporate policies and procedures. This policy aims to:

1. Provide guidance for the development and review of all public and corporate policies and procedures that is consistent with the standards of good governance and the *Local Government Act, 1993*.
2. Ensure that all current and proposed policies and procedures undergo a thorough review on a regular four yearly cycle, or earlier if circumstances require more frequent adjustments.
3. Ensure all public and corporate policies and procedures are created and presented for adoption in the same format for them to make sound decisions in relation to reaffirming, amendment, rescission, or adoption.

2. Objectives

2.1. Policy Statement

Shoalhaven City Council is committed to transparency in the decision-making processes, and through the *Policy & Procedure Development and Review Policy* we communicate the way in which we develop and review public and corporate policies and procedures. A clearly defined process supports our commitment to accountability and effective governance. Policy and procedure development, implementation and review are a key requirement of Council as they define what we do, and how we do it

3. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Public Policy	A document that outlines a clear and contemporary direction reflecting the Councils position on matters that affect the community.
Corporate Policy	A document that provides guidance, support, and effectively leads the Council to ensure contemporary organisational decision making.
Procedure	A document that outlines clear steps to achieve consistency and adherence to applicable policies.
Directives	A document providing clear mandatory instructions on applicable legislation and requirements.
CEO	The General Manager of the Council under s.335 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> .
EMT	The Executive Management Team of the Council made up of CEO and Directors.

Responsible Officer	The body or position assigned the responsibility to oversee the development, implementation and review of a policy.
SLT	Senior Leadership Team of the Council

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. Provisions

This policy applies to all Shoalhaven City Council staff, policies, and procedures. This policy:

1. Ensures the development and review of policies and procedures is driven by good governance principles.
2. Articulates the process for the development and review of public and corporate policies and procedures; and
3. Mitigates risk and supports the achievement of quality outcomes.

4.2. Implementation

- 4.2.1. All policies and procedures are assigned a responsible officer who will be responsible for the management, development and review process.
- 4.2.2. All policies and procedures (both Public and Corporate) are to be reviewed and updated according to specific directions or within the term of every new Council (being four years), or earlier should circumstances warrant a revision e.g. as required under legislation.
- 4.2.3. It is the responsible officer's responsibility to ensure that:
 - a. all policies assigned to them are current and meet current legislation.
 - b. The stages of development are adhered to when developing, creating, or amending a policy or procedure.
 - c. A communication strategy is developed to educate any new or amended policies and procedures.

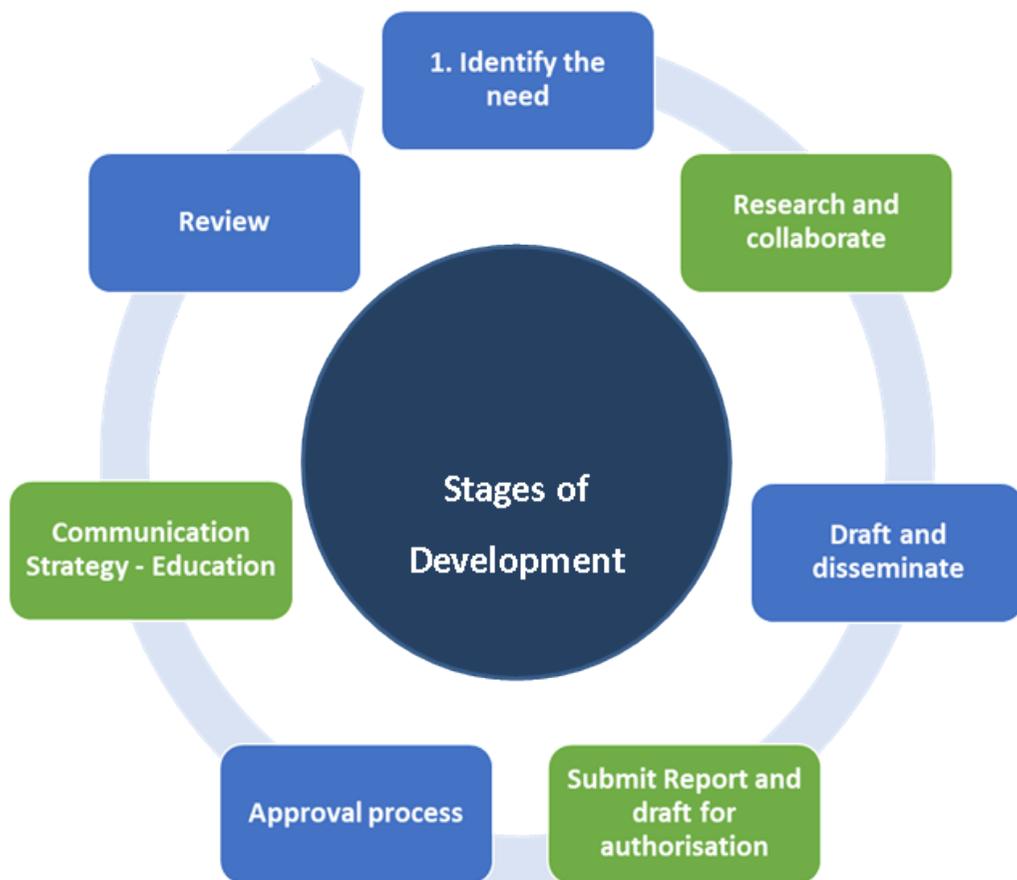
Public and corporate policies will be produced by the relevant department where required by various Legislation that outlines a specific requirement for a formal policy, or where a policy direction has been requested by the Elected Council, the CEO, EMT, or any other person to address an identified gap.

5. Related Legislation, Policies, and Procedures

This policy has been developed to support Shoalhaven City Council to comply with good governance and its obligations pursuant to the following legislation, policies and procedures:

- *Local Government Act 1993.*
- *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021;* and
- Policy & Procedure Development and Review Procedure.

5.1. Stages of Development



1. Identify the risk – Once the need is identified, the policy or procedure is developed or reviewed. Identify the risk of not having the policy.
2. Research and Collaborate – The responsible officer will research any applicable legislation or regulations, identify risks and establish the intended audience for the policy. They will collaborate with internal and/or external stakeholders to develop or review the policy or procedure.
3. Draft and disseminate – Once all information has been collected, the responsible officer will draft the policy or procedure and disseminate to relevant key stakeholders and where appropriate with the Senior Leadership Team prior to submitting for authorisation.
4. Submit Report and draft for authorisation – Once the draft policy or procedure has been disseminated and returned, the responsible officer will submit in accordance with the outlined procedures.
5. Approval Process – Require either Director, Council, or EMT approval. All public policies are required to be adopted by the elected Council
6. Communication Strategy – Education – Communication and / or Education program is developed and implemented to educate all impacted stakeholders.
7. Review – All policies and procedures will have a review period. It is the responsibility of the responsible officer and directorate to ensure the review is completed and presented for adoption

5.2. Policy Framework

The Policy Framework is built around TRUST that guides how we manage policy and procedure review and development. It embodies our obligations to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements, communicate effectively, and carry out quality control to ensure a level of consistency in our policy and procedure process. TRUST ensures the best outcomes for all Shoalhaven City Council staff, Council and the Shoalhaven.

Teamwork: We work cross functionally within Council where required, and with the community to produce policies and procedures. Working together to create, develop, and review policies and procedures ensures the best outcomes for Council and the community.

Responsibility: We develop and review all policies and procedures to provide compliance and accountability for our operations, public assets, and support our community.

Uniformity: Our aim for all policies and procedures is simplicity, consistency, and ease of implementation. To ensure this, all responsible officers will adhere to the *Policy & Procedure Development and Review Policy and Procedure*. There are specific policy and procedure templates to assist in the development and review of all policies. This uniform approach ensures a level of consistency and cohesiveness in all policies and procedures.

Standards: All policies will comply with statutory requirements set out by the Local Government Act, 1993, other relevant Acts, and regulatory requirements when reviewing or developing policies. All procedures will clearly define the process to adhere to these requirements. This ensures we manage risks and maintain internal and external oversight to ensure we act with integrity.

Transparency: We exhibit all public policies highlighting our transparent and consistent approach to the way we meet legislation and make decisions in conjunction with the community. We invite the community to provide feedback during the public exhibition period where new public policies are developed to ensure the communities voice is heard.

5.3. Policy and Procedure Principles

Shoalhaven City Council will:

- 5.3.1. Develop and adopt policies that are consistent with the Local Government Act 1993 and other relevant legislation.
- 5.3.2. Maintain a distinction between public policy adopted by Council and corporate policy adopted or authorised by EMT or the relevant Director.
- 5.3.3. Present all public policies for formal adoption by Council and corporate policies authorised for adoption by the relevant Director, or EMT.
- 5.3.4. Rescind policies that have been reviewed and deemed no longer relevant or have been amalgamated into other policies.

- 5.3.5. Make all public policies available on the Shoalhaven City Council website.
- 5.3.6. Develop and adopt procedures to align with respective policies where required.
- 5.3.7. Ensure that all policies and procedures are strengthened by the principles of good governance and demonstrate that they are in the interests of the community and the organisation.
- 5.3.8. Ensure all procedures are produced in the same format, setting out detailed instructions for the development, approval, implementation, review and rescission.

5.4. Policy and Procedure Templates

We aim to ensure consistency in the way policy documents are created and presented to Directors, Executive Management Team and Council for consideration. Shoalhaven City Council utilises two policy templates, one for public and one for corporate policies, along with a procedure template. All templates have mandatory and non-mandatory headings.

All policies and procedures will succinct and be written in clear English. Ideally, they should not exceed three to four pages, however, this is not always possible. Policies may vary in length depending on the complexity involved.

5.5. Review

Where practical, all policies and procedures will have a four year review period. At times, policies and procedures will require more frequent review due to business and legislative needs. All policies and procedures will remain in effect until otherwise replaced or rescinded.

EMT will receive periodic updates with respect to all policies. A report providing a list of policies and procedures, along with their review dates will be provided annually to EMT. The responsibility for policy and procedure development and review will remain with individual directorates.

6. Risk Assessment

This document mitigates Council's risk of:

1. Non-compliance with legislation and poor governance practices.
2. Unfair or inequitable decision making, or decisions not based on applicable legislation.
3. Out of date or irrelevant policies or procedures that add no value to Council or that are maintained when they no longer serve a useful purpose.
4. Lack of clarity in respect of key strategic or operations matters affecting Council.

All policies represent an integral part of our internal control environment and provide a level of confidence that internal risks faced by Council are decreased or contained to appropriate levels.

7. Monitor and Review

This policy will be reviewed within the term of every new Council (within 4 years) or earlier should circumstances arise that warrant revision.

Council may amend or rescind an adopted policy whether it be part or all under the Local Government Act 1993, s. 165 (4)

8. Ownership and Approval

Responsibility	Role
City Performance	Governance
Endorser	Executive Management Team
Approver	Council