



POLICY GOVERNANCE

Policy No.:	GTC-12	Approved by:	Council Min Ref 54/23	
Version No.:	V2	Approved on:	26 th April 2023	
Responsibility:	General Manager	Review Date:	April 2026	
Document Control				
Rev No.	Date	Revision Details	Reviewer	Approver
1.1	30/03/2023	Update to policy – review	E Moore	DOPSE
1.2	06/04/2023	Review and update of policy	DOPSE	
1.3	17/04/2023	Update of policy in line with Elected Members comments	DOPSE	
2	26/04/2023	Approved by Council	Council	54/23

Contents

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	2
2. TYPE OF POLICY.....	2
3. OBJECTIVE	2
4. SCOPE.....	3
5. DEFINITIONS.....	3
6. LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	3
7. RELATED LEGISLATION	4
8. RISK CONSIDERATIONS	4
9. POLICY.....	4
10. IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW OF POLICY.....	7

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy is written to establish a Policy Governance Framework for the George Town Council and is a tool enabling:

- Effective administration and good governance
- Participants from different parts of Council to work towards a common goal;
- Consistency and predictability throughout Council; and
- Compliance with legal and other requirements.

2. TYPE OF POLICY

This Policy is a Council Policy requiring authorisation by Council.

3. OBJECTIVE

This Policy Governance Policy is intended to fulfil the following objectives:

- To provide Council with high quality policy documents that are easily accessed and readily understood
- To achieve an improved rate of compliance with legislation and other mandated requirements;
- To ensure that Council meets its obligations under the *Local Government Act 1993*;
- To enable Council to achieve enhanced efficiency in its operations;
- To provide appropriate quality assurance and monitoring processes and ensure that the policies are being developed, reviewed and updated appropriately on a rolling systematized cycle;
- To ensure policy documents reflect governance and policy development best practice in Council;

- To establish a Policy Framework; and
- To enable the effective administration and delivery of services to residents, ratepayers and stakeholders.

4. SCOPE

This policy is the authorisation document to all policies and procedures within Council.

5. DEFINITIONS

Act means the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Approval Authority means the Council or General Manager with prescribed authority under this policy to approve a policy document.

Council means the Mayor and Elected Members of George Town Council.

The General Manager means the appointed General Manager in accordance with the Act.

Minor Amendment means an amendment to an approved policy which is minor in nature being:

- the correction of a typographical error;
- the update to the title of governing legislation (where there is no change to the relevant section of that legislation relating to that policy);
- the update of a related Policy name referred to within the policy following an approved change by the Approval Authority; or
- the update of fees and charges that have been approved by Council or relate to Tasmanian Government fee unit changes.

Policy means a statement of the mandatory principals guiding Council's operations and significant decision making.

Procedure means statements of Council's mandatory prescribed processes, practices and/or actions, which give effect to a policy.

Responsible Director means the Director with the relevant portfolio responsibility for a particular policy document.

6. LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Future Direction Four - Leadership and Accountable Governance

1. A culture of engagement and participation
 - i. Trusted, transparent and inclusive community engagement processes.

Future Direction Four - Leadership and Accountable Governance

6. Difficult issues are managed in an open manner without conflict
 - i. Building capacity in change management, understanding and responding to complexity.

- iii. Communicating well.

7. RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1993 (Tasmania)

8. RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This Policy aligns itself with objectives for risk management at George Town Council, namely:

- Set performance standards and regular review and improve practices and procedures.
- Ensures compliance with the Act.

9. POLICY

Policy document Hierarchy

Policy documents operate within a hierarchy, with the requirement that documents lower in the hierarchy are consistent with documents higher in the hierarchy.

The policy document hierarchy for Council is as follows:

1. Legislation.
2. Policy (Council and Operational).
3. Procedures, Strategies and Plans.
4. Guidelines and processes.

Responsible Director

Each policy document will be assigned by the General Manager to a Responsible Director who is responsible for the coordination of development, implementation, and review of that policy document.

Categorisation

Policies for the George Town Council are to be divided into two categories. The two categories are as follows:

- Council -Policies pertaining to the Governance of the Council and the activities of its elected members, including the establishment of Committees, and the government of the municipality including resident and ratepayer compliance policies and by-laws.
- Operational - Policies pertaining to the operational, administrative and internal matters of the Council, including internal governance, internal committees and operational matters of service delivery.

Approval Authority

The Approval Authority for policies is as follows:

Council: The Approval Authority for Council Policies is Council, with policies to be adopted in accordance with *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015*, and enacted as directed by Council.

Operational: The Approval Authority for Operational Policies is the General Manager.

Content and Design

The content and design of all policy documents is to adhere to the following principles. Policy documents:

1. Are principles-based documents, with operational detail incorporated in procedures and guidelines;
2. Are consistent with legislation and local government standards;
3. Support and are consistent with Council's functions, values and strategic plan;
4. Are produced when there is a clearly demonstrated governance or business need;
5. Are relevant and transparent in their purpose and meaning;
6. Are developed with regard for the regulatory/administrative burden of implementation on organisational units, groups and individuals across Council;
7. Are written and presented clearly and succinctly, provide supporting information as specified by the Policy Governance Procedure;
8. Are comprehensive, ensuring that any existing information procedures and approval practices not outlined within a policy document are included; and
9. Take a holistic approach incorporating all aspects of a general topic, rather than segregated into multiple policy documents.

Consultation

Where appropriate Council may direct a consultation process for the consideration and adoption of Council Policies in accordance with its Consultation Policy and Framework, or any other consultation means it determines.

Where appropriate the General Manager may direct a consultation process for the consideration and adoption of Operational Policies, including any relevant internal committees.

Classification and Categorisation

The Policy Governance Procedure has been developed to classify and categorise policies to assist in their identification, ownership and record keeping.

The General Manager shall maintain this procedure and have authority to apply the structure to any new policy or procedure. Council is to be advised of any changes made to the classification and/or categorisation of Operational policies.

Registration and Policy Framework

A visual Policy Framework is to be maintained. This Policy Framework is to represent the policy framework of the Council, the ownership of policies, and the classification of policies. The Policy Framework is to act as a register of policies, whether current or rescinded, and all policies and their

related procedures, forms and templates are to be identified on it. It should include charters and by-laws, or any other administrative governing document.

Templates

A standardised template is to be used for all policies.

Standardised templates are to be used for all procedures, terms of reference, by-laws, and charters, as directed by their parent policy.

Rescinding

A policy document is only to be rescinded with the approval of the relevant Approval Authority.

Amendments

A Minor Amendment may be approved by the following:

1. Approval Authority; or
2. General Manager

If the General Manager approves any Minor Amendment of a Policy document of which they are not the delegated Approval Authority, then Council must be notified of the amendment by way of a Workshop Brief.

Any amendment which is not minor in nature, must be approved by the relevant Approval Authority through a review process.

Consultation and Assessment of Operational Impact

The Responsible Director ensures that all relevant stakeholders are consulted as part of the development of a Policy document, including any legislative obligation for consultation.

The Responsible Director ensures that the policy documents are thoroughly tested in the development state to ensure they can be easily implemented, with likely operational problems identified and resolved prior to approval.

A written log of all consultation undertaken and feedback received is kept throughout the development process.

Auditing and Review

All Policies and their procedures, forms and templates shall be audited and reviewed for compliance and effectiveness at least once within a 36 months period, unless a different period is set out in legislation, by the Director of Organisational Performance, Strategy and Engagement.

The General Manager may establish an internal review committee to assist in this responsibility, with such Terms of Reference as they see fit.

Such a committee shall provide its findings and reporting to the Audit Panel.

Version Control

Version control is the process by which different drafts and versions of a policy are managed providing an audit trail for the revision and update of the policies.

Version control for Policies and Procedures is to be adhered to and maintained as set out in the Policy Governance Procedure.

10. IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW OF POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed within 36 months or in accordance with legislative requirements.

.....
Shane Power
GENERAL MANAGER