

Policy Framework

Council Policy

Renmark Paringa Council

Responsible Officer	Director Corporate and Community Services
Relevant Legislation	Local Government Act 1999
Adopted	August 20202
Reviewed	
Next Review	August 2024

Purpose

This Policy Framework provides direction on the management of Council level and Administration level policies, procedures and guidelines.

The Policy Framework is designed to:

- ensure that a clear and consistent governance and management approach is adopted in the development of all Council and administration policies, procedures and guidelines that enables improved compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements;
- enable efficient and effective decision making, which incorporates quality assurance and risk management practices, where appropriate; and
- establish clear accountabilities and delegated authorities for individual roles and groups.

The Policy Framework strives to deliver good governance, while operating within and implementing laws, including the Local Government Act 1999 (the Act).

Objective

Written documentation is essential for effective and consistent communication within the organisation. The provision of clear, policies, procedures and guidelines that reflect current practice and community expectations assists in delivering transparency and accountability.

Written policies, procedures and guidelines provide tangible evidence of intended practices that are consistent with the organisation's values, and should be regularly reviewed, evaluated and updated.



A Policy Framework guides the development of policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure those documents are consistent and user friendly.

The key elements of the Policy Framework are the:

- Hierarchy – sets out the levels of documents, in order of precedence.
- Development process – sets out the process for creating policies / procedures / guidelines, including document templates.
- Roles and responsibilities – sets out who is involved in the development of policies / procedures / guidelines.

Policy

This policy framework applies to the drafting, approval, review, amendment, and distribution of Council level policies, procedures, and guidelines.

It does not apply to Council delegations, authorisations, by-laws, strategic management plans or similar.

Statutory requirements

The Act requires Councils to have a number of public policies and codes. Council endeavours to provide up-to-date versions of all statutory policies and codes on its [website](#).

Statutory policies, codes of practice and codes of conduct are fundamental components of a Council's good governance framework. Councils use them to:

- set directions;
- guide decision making by the elected Council and administration; and
- inform the public about how Council will normally act.

Laws are the highest forms of policy. Everyone must live under the rule of law, and Council developed policies cannot require a Council to act in a way, which would be contrary to any law.

Strategic Management Plans (SMPs) are outside the scope of this Policy Framework but are also required by the Act and are the top level documents which set out a Council's aspirations for its community. The SMPs include the Strategic Plan, the Long Term Financial Plan and the Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan. The SMPs often provide guidance for the development of related policies, procedures and guidelines, which reflect the directions of the SMPs.

Hierarchy

The following documents are considered within the scope of the Policy Framework:

Document Type	Approval	Review
<p><u>Policy:</u></p> <p>Prescribes a purpose, objectives, principles and success measures, as set by Council or the Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statutory Policy - Council Policy 	<p>Policy Review Committee or Council</p>	<p>At least every 4 years</p>
<p><u>Procedure:</u></p> <p>Describes how decisions or actions must be undertaken with respect to a policy. It supplements a policy document and is used primarily to enable business areas to implement Council/Administration intentions.</p> <p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statutory Procedure - Council Procedure 	<p>Policy Review Committee, Council or CEO/ELT</p>	<p>In conjunction with or after the associated policy is updated</p>
<p><u>Guideline:</u></p> <p>Less prescriptive than a procedure, guidelines set out a best or safest practice for Council/Administration to follow.</p>	<p>Council or CEO/ELT</p>	<p>As required</p>

Development process

Policy / procedure / guideline documents are to be developed, implemented and reviewed through the process of a Policy Lifecycle, as defined below:





Roles and responsibilities

Setting out the roles and responsibilities are essential to an effective Policy Framework. This includes:

- the need for clear authority for the formulation of policy / procedure / guideline documents (i.e., delegations of authority), and
- guidance concerning the responsibilities of policy / procedure / guideline owners for how the document is formulated, approved and disseminated.

A policy / procedure / guideline document must be approved by the highest delegated authority. For example, the Council (for all new / amended Council policy / procedure / guideline documents).

The role of Council Members in development of policies and codes

In the creation of new policies / procedures / guidelines, or where major revisions are anticipated, it is important to understand the preferences of the Elected Members of Council at an early stage of the process.

After each comprehensive review of a Council's SMPs, the Council should be engaged in a process which considers the need for new policies and provides the Administration with a starting point for development such documents.

The role of the Chief Executive Officer and Administration

It is essential that there is a sense of corporate ownership of adopted policies / procedures / guidelines. Once drafted, these documents should be circulated internally for input from officers of all relevant disciplines and departments to ensure all of the issues likely to arise are adequately covered. Documents that relate to financial governance of a Council should also be referred to Council's Audit Committee for feedback.

Consulting the Community

The Act requires some Council policies / procedures / guidelines (and codes) to undergo a process of public consultation before they are adopted or amended. These provisions are further explored within Council's (statutory) [Public Consultation Policy](#)

Review and monitoring

Taking into account the normal term of Local Government elections, where practicable Council policies / procedures / guidelines will have a four year tenure before Council review. Notwithstanding, Council policies remain in effect until otherwise replaced.

Trigger points that may require an earlier review of a policy, procedure, or guideline include (but are not limited to):

- change in legislation which has a bearing on the document
- change in senior management
- change in Council's position on a particular subject area
- recommendation from a governance body (e.g., Audit Committee, Internal Audit etc.)
- quality assurance due to continuous improvement initiatives, and/or
- changes in Council's agreed service levels.

Recordkeeping

Information Management is responsible for ensuring that all policies / procedures / guidelines are appropriately stored on the electronic content management system. Legislation requires Council to preserve records until they are dealt with under the Act. This places a statutory obligation on Council to ensure that all records, regardless of format, remain available while they are in the custody of the Council.

Availability

Generally, all Council policies / procedures / guidelines are available from the Council [website](#). A register of current Council Policies will be maintained presented to Council in accordance with legislative requirements.

References/Related Documents

Attachment 1: Policy/Procedure/Guideline Templates

Document Control

Version #	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
1.0	12 August 2020	Policy Review Committee	New Policy



Policy Name

Council or Statutory Policy

Renmark Paringa Council

Responsible Officer	
Relevant Legislation	
Adopted	
Reviewed	
Next Review	

Purpose

Style Guide reminder:

Body of text – Arial, size 12, black colour, justified

Objective

Policy

References/Related Documents

Document Control

Version #	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment



Procedure Name

Procedure

Renmark Paringa Council

Responsible Officer	
Adopted	
Reviewed	
Next Review	

Purpose

Style Guide reminder:

Body of text – Arial, size 12, black colour, justified

Procedure

References/Related Documents

Document Control

Version #	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment



Guideline Name

Guideline

Renmark Paringa Council

Responsible Officer	
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Purpose

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Guideline

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