

TITLE:	Good Governance Policy		
DIVISION:	Corporate		
ADOPTED BY:	Council		
DATE OF ADOPTION:	30 August 2018	DATE OF REVIEW:	August 2022
MOTION NUMBER:	OC 213/18		
POLICY NUMBER:	CP000015		
AUTHORISED:	Chief Executive Officer		

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:

All employees and Elected Members

PREAMBLE

The aim of all policy is for Councillors to provide strategic input into the effective operational framework of the organisation under S.11 of the Local Government Act

SUMMARY

This policy demonstrates the Barkly Regional Council's commitment to the principles of good governance by clearly stating the values by which Council has committed itself to operate.

OBJECTIVES

This policy, and the principles set out in the policy, aim to:

- Achieve the highest standards of governance.
- Ensure legislative compliance
- Seek excellence in governance through continuous improvement;
- Provide guidance to Members and Council staff in achieving good governance.

The Local Government Act establishes the following objectives for the Council:

- Provide open, responsive and accountable government at the local level;
- Be responsive to the needs, interests and aspirations of individuals and groups within its area;
- Cooperate with Territory and national governments in the delivery of services for the benefit of its area;
- Seek to ensure a proper emphasis on environmentally sustainable development within its area and a proper balance between economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations;
- Place a high value on the importance of service to the council's constituency;
- Seek to ensure that council resources are used fairly, effectively and efficiently;
- Seek to provide services, facilities and programs that are appropriate to the needs of its area and to ensure equitable access to its services, facilities and programs;
- Generally to act at all times in the best interests of the community as a whole.

BACKGROUND

The practice of good governance is increasingly seen as critical for ensuring that organisations operate within a legal and ethical framework, that decisions are taken in the interests of stakeholders, and that the organisation behaves as a responsible corporate citizen.

POLICY STATEMENT

Flags

Council will maintain suitable Flags for use on appropriate occasions. The flags raised at the Council Chambers on a daily basis are as follows:

- Australian National Flag
- Northern territory Flag
- Aboriginal Flag

Logo

The base line for our Council logo is the “McDouall Ranges” north of Tennant Creek. There is a row of symbols starting with the Sandover Lily which represents the Urapuntja or Utopia region, the Lizard which symbolises Nyinkka, a sacred symbol in Tennant Creek, and Emu which characterises Elliott and the surrounding region.

The footprint in the centre represents humanity – all of the people of the Barkly – with the Bat representing Alpururulam, Kangaroo characterising Ampilatwatja and Dingo a sacred symbol for Ali Curung.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Council will:

- Ensure, in partnership with the CEO, that the Council has appropriate knowledge and skills to provide leadership to Barkly Regional Council.
- Ensure that a CEO is engaged by the Council in accordance with the Local Government Act.
- Undertake a review of the Council performance.
- Ensure the requirements of the Local Government Act are met by the Council.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will:

- Ensure that the council's policies, plans and lawful decisions are implemented; and
- Undertake the day-to-day management of the council's operations (including the management of council staff);
- Provide or obtain for the council the information and advice the council reasonably requires for effectively carrying out its functions;
- Ensure that the council's constituency is kept properly informed about council policies, programs and decisions and to ensure that appropriate and prompt responses are given to specific requests for information;
- Ensure that the council's assets and resources are properly managed and maintained;

- Ensure that proper standards of financial management are maintained and, in particular, proper controls over expenditure;
- Ensure that financial and other records are properly made and maintained;
- Appoint, manage and, where necessary, terminate the appointment of council staff (other than the CEO);
- Carry out other functions delegated to the CEO by the council or assigned to the CEO under this or any other Act.

Decision Making

Under the Local Government Act, Council is required to either make decisions or delegate the decision-making power to a local authority, a Council committee, a local government subsidiary or the Chief Executive Officer. Barkly Regional Council holds monthly Council meetings on the last Thursday of each month.

Confidential matters

Some matters must be considered in confidence. Reasons why some decisions need to be confidential include decisions involving personal circumstances of a resident, or situations where publicly disclosed information may cause commercial prejudice or confer an unfair commercial advantage on any person.

In order to promote transparency and accountability required for good governance, these provisions are applied only to matters that require high level of confidentiality.

Regional and Long Term Strategic Plan

In order to plan for new initiatives and services in advance, Council must maintain a Plan for the whole Barkly Region.

New plans are prepared by the staff for consideration and adoption by Council during the first year of each new Council. Current plans will be reviewed, evaluated and adjusted annually.

Customer Service

This policy specifically deals with customer requests and not complaints against Council staff or services.

- All customer requests must be recorded and investigated.
- Anonymous requests will be recorded and linked separately.
- Any request considered to be of a sensitive nature must be referred to the Chief Executive Officer along with the reasons why the request is believed to be so.
- Customer requests will be responded to in accordance with the stipulated time frames.
- All correspondence and contact with Members will be treated in accordance with standard customer service response and action procedures.

Additional functions

That pursuant to Section 12(2) of the Local Government Act , the Council determines that it will exercise the following functions:

- (a) to promote its area as a location for appropriate industries or commerce or as an attractive tourist destination; and
- (b) to establish or support organisations or programs that benefit the Council area.

Characteristics of Good Governance

The characteristics of good governance are:

- It is participatory
- It is consensus-oriented
- It is accountable
- It is transparent
- It is responsive
- It is effective and efficient
- It is equitable and inclusive
- It is law-abiding

Principles of Good Governance

Council will apply the following principles:

- Council decision-making will exhibit transparency, honesty and probity;
- Decisions will be made that represent the best long-term interest of the whole area;
- Members will respect the decisions of the majority;
- Members will be accountable for the development of policy and the strategic direction of the Council;
- The CEO and Council officers will be accountable for the implementation of Council policy and decisions except where they apply exclusively to Elected Members;
- All Members and Council staff will observe the Code of Conduct in spirit and in letter.

Key Elements of Good Governance

The four key elements of good governance which Council will apply are:

Ethics and Values

Ethics are the moral principles by which any particular person or organisation is guided; the rules of conduct recognized in a particular profession or area of human life.

Setting an appropriate standard of ethics is an important factor in establishing and enforcing a high ethical culture. It helps Council reduce fraud, corruption, maladministration and wastage and ensures that Council has the respect of the community.

Risk Management and Internal Control

In order to achieve its objectives and operate effectively and in accordance with sound governance principles, Council needs to be aware of key risks that it faces and needs to have appropriate controls in place to deal with those risks.

Decision-making Processes

Sound decision-making processes that comply with the principles of good governance will help Council's individual decisions to withstand scrutiny by regulators, courts, the media and those affected by the decisions.

Monitoring and Review

These processes are important to ensure that Council is operating appropriately and that Council and people at council are accountable for their actions. Monitoring and review also helps to ensure that Council can react to changes in its environment efficiently and effectively.

LEGISLATION, TERMINOLOGY AND REFERENCES

Governance is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not.

Good governance means that the structures, activities and operations of the Council are conducted in accordance with the principles of legal compliance, probity, transparency, accountability, and respect for people within the Council and for all other stakeholders.

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELEGATION

The CEO has delegated authority to implement this policy

LINKS

<https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/LOCAL-GOVERNMENT-ACCOUNTING-REGULATIONS>
<https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/LOCAL-GOVERNMENT-ACT>

RELATED POLICIES

CP000008 Delegations Policy
CP000040 Code of Conduct Policy - Members
CP000052 Code of Conduct - Staff & Contractors

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This Policy is to be reviewed every four (4) years, and may be reviewed at other times at the discretion of Chief Executive Officer.

APPENDIX

Governance Manual