



# NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

## POLICY MANUAL

### REPORTING

**Originated Date:** Adopted 20 November 2006 – Min. No. 414/06 (as Policy 50)

**Amended Date/s:** Endorsed 14 April 2014 – Min. No. 93/14  
Endorsed 27 June 2016 – Min. No. 159/16

**Applicable Legislation:**

**Objective** To provide Council with relevant information covering external reports sought by Council Officers.

**Administration:** Governance

**Review Cycle/Date:** Next review 2020.

### OVERVIEW

Good governance relies on successful working relationships between all parties, an understanding of role differences, and sharing of relevant information. In practice, council members and officers work together in all domains of a council's work. However, for good governance to be practiced the relationships between the various parties, councillors, General Manager and staff, should foster partnership, maturity, a high level of respect and above all, trust.

Communities expect their Councils to be well managed with the efficient and effective provision of services and facilities and the efficient and effective management of assets. If elected members are to provide the necessary assurance to their communities about the performance of the Council, they must be kept appropriately informed of governance issues.

Elected members need access to information on a wide range of subjects. The Local Government Act requires council to

- monitor the implementation of strategic plans and budgets; and
- monitor the application of policies, plans and programs.

The General Manager needs to ensure that elected members have appropriate access to such information to enable appropriate monitoring of these areas.

### OBJECTIVES

The Council Report is the formal means for providing advice to councillors, giving them relevant data, issues, options and advice that will enable them to consider the matter at hand and make a decision.

Council engages professional staff to advise Council and the professional staff use their knowledge, experience, research and other specialist skills to prepare reports for the council that meet the requirements set out above. Professional staff may, as part of their duties, seek advice and reports from external parties to assist in the implementation of Council's plans, policies and programmes or to prepare for the future or proposed programmes.

This policy has been put in place to ensure a co-operative working relationship between Councillors and management is maintained. These guidelines are designed to assist Councillors receive information necessary for them to fulfil their obligations as councillors, yet enable managers to manage the policies, projects and plans for which they have stewardship and responsibility. It recognises that whilst the Council monitors performance it does not unduly interfere in the day to day operations of Council for which professional staff have been engaged and given responsibility. Tensions often arise when there is inappropriate interference by one element in the role of another.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Council's Communication Policy.

### FUNCTIONS:

1. The Council has the following functions:
  - to develop and monitor the implementation of strategic plans and budgets;



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- to determine and monitor the application of policies, plans and programs;
  - to determine and review the council's resource allocation and expenditure activities;
  - to monitor the manner in which services are provided by the council.
2. The General Manager has the following functions:
- to implement the decisions, policies, plans and programs of the council;
  - to be responsible for the day-to-day operations and affairs of the council;
  - to provide advice and reports to the council on the exercise and performance of its powers and functions and any other matter requested by the council;
  - to liaise with the mayor on the affairs of the council and the performance of its functions; and
  - provide leadership to staff under his or her management
  - appoint staff, including senior managers to manage the implementation of decisions, policies, plans and programs of the council;
  - seek appropriate professional advice and reports as are required to fulfil the obligations of the position and ensure the policies, plans and programs of the Council are carried out or to plan or prepare for the future.
3. Senior Management have the following functions:
- provide leadership to staff under their management,
  - ensure that the Department meets its requirements and targets under the Council's Operating Plan and Strategic Plan.
  - manage the staff within the Business Unit.
  - participate as a member of the senior management team in the planning and implementation of Council's corporate objectives.
  - ensure that all matters are carried out in accordance with policy and within budgetary constraints.
  - prepare briefs and reports on issues related to their department either for internal or external use.
  - manage and co-ordinate their area of responsibility within the Council,
  - attend Council meetings, Committee meetings and other meetings as required and prepare reports arising out of recommendations by Council.
  - make recommendations to the General Manager on relevant policies and ensure that all relevant policies are adhered to and understood within the appropriate section of the Business Unit.
  - comply with Council's policies and procedures.
  - seek appropriate professional advice and reports as are required to fulfil the obligations of the position and ensure the policies, plans and programs of the Council are carried out or to plan or prepare for the future.

### PROCEDURES

1. Subject to the provisions below, the General Manager shall ensure that Councillors are given access to all information necessary for them to properly perform their functions and fulfil their responsibilities as elected members.
2. Professional staff shall, where appropriate, seek advice and reports from external parties to assist in carrying out the requirements of their position and the undertaking of programmes and policies.
3. Budgets for specific projects or programmes will include an amount for external consultancy if required to undertake the project.
4. The General Manager shall provide a weekly briefing report to Council which shall include:-
  - a) A list of reports sought by Council officers where the report is not a report required for operational purposes.
  - b) A list of reports received by Council.
5. Council will be advised of the nature of the reports obtained for a particular programme or project and its cost when the final report on the project or programme is provided to Council.



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6. Any advice or report concerning staffing or employment matters will not be disclosed to Council unless in the opinion of the General Manager such disclosure is necessary.
7. Reports should be accurate and professional.

These guidelines have been put in place to ensure a co-operative working relationship between Council and senior managers is maintained. These guidelines are designed to assist Council to receive appropriate and timely reporting on the implementation and progress of its policies, plans and programs.

These guidelines are also designed to assist the General Manager and senior managers in fulfilling their obligations as employees of the Council.