# Policy & Procedure Framework

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| **Procedure Number** | PRO-POLPROV2 |
| **File Number** | 9/PRO/POLPRO/2 |
| **Responsible Officer** | Chief Executive Officer |
| **Adopted** | 8 December 2020 |
| **Last reviewed at Council Meeting** | 16 June 2026 |
| **Minute Number** | C06-26/014 |
| **Due date of next Review** | June 2030 |

## 1. Purpose

1.1 Developing, adopting and reviewing policies is a key responsibility of Council under Section 59 of the *Local Government Act 1999*. This Policy & Procedure Framework (the Framework) provides a clear and consistent structure for the initiation, development, adoption, publication and review of Mid Murray Council's policy documents, procedures and protocols.

1.2 The framework ensures that documents:

- Are developed in a consultative, comprehensive and consistent manner;
- Underpin and support Council's strategic objectives as articulated in the strategic plans;
- Provide a clear understanding of Council's and management's responsibilities in policy development and review; and
- Are consistent with and meet the compliance requirements of legislation.

## 2. Framework

### 2.1 Document Types

2.1.1 A Policy is a statement of principles or position that is intended to direct decision-making and operations that supports the achievement of Council's vision and objectives. Policies have a long-term focus and are applied across Council as a whole. They form the foundation of Council's governance processes and the basis of the quality system.

2.1.2 Policies support the achievement of quality outcomes, address compliance with legislative obligations, and reduce organisational risk by establishing standards and internal controls. The principles outlined in policy are shaped by:

- the legislation and regulations that govern Council;
- the values and vision Council articulates in its strategic plan; and
- best practice and community expectations.

2.1.3 Policies may require Procedures to guide implementation. A Procedure addresses processes and actions aligned with the policy principles. They outline the operational steps required to implement a policy. Procedures:

- provide clear instructions on the way policy will be implemented;
- step through the actions required to implement policy principles;
- assign responsibilities; and
- enable monitoring of policy implementation.

| POLICY TYPE | DEFINITITION | APPROVAL BODY | ACCESS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Statutory Policies** | • Statutory Policies are required by law to give effect to legislative obligations and administer delegations, authorities and codes.<br>• May require public consultation to be conducted prior to the adoption/ endorsement of the policy as legislated by the Act. | • If within the scope of a Council committee's jurisdiction, recommended by WHS Committee to Council.<br>• Adopted by Council in the first instance.<br>• Endorsed by Council for subsequent amendments. | • Synergy<br>• Council's Website |
| **Council Policies & Procedures** | • Council Policies facilitate strategic outcomes with reference to Council's strategic planning framework.<br>• A Council Policy or Procedure is defined as:<br>▪ **Strategic Policies** assist Council in implementing Council's Community and Strategic Direction plans, focussing upon Council's environmental, economic, social, and infrastructure objectives.<br>▪ **Governance Policies** assist Council to meet its civic, corporate and community governance responsibilities.<br>▪ **Service Provision Policies** describe specific services to the community and set out the service level to be provided. | • If within the scope of a Council committee's jurisdiction, recommended by WHS Committee to Council.<br>• Adopted by Council in the first instance.<br>• Endorsed by Council for subsequent amendments. | • Synergy<br>• Council's Website |
| **Internal Policies** | • Internal policies relate to internal actions and controls of Council, and articulate both operational necessities and outlines principles for administrative activities.<br>• Internal Policies do not duplicate Council policies.<br>• The policy document only includes procedural arrangements related to the direct decision making processes within that Policy. Additional guidance should be presented in a procedure that is referenced in the relevant policy document. | • Adopted by Senior Management Team (SMT),<br>• Endorsed by SMT for subsequent amendments. | • Synergy<br>• Intranet |

| POLICY TYPE | DEFINITITION | APPROVAL BODY | ACCESS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Procedures** | • Procedures define the specific guidelines or actions required to apply or implement either a Statutory, Council or Internal Policy. | • If a Statutory and Council procedure, adopted or endorsed by Council.<br>• Adopted by SMT.<br>• Endorsed by SMT for subsequent amendments. | • Synergy<br>• Intranet |
| **Internal WHS Policies & Procedures** | • WHS Policies and Procedures are administrative policies that relate specifically to the operations, management, administrative or staffing matters of Council and are a function of the Chief Executive Officer (refer sections 99 and 107 of the *Local Government Act 1999*).<br>• Administrative policies which address the business of Council in the specific areas of WHS. | • Recommended by WHS Committee to SMT.<br>• Adopted by SMT.<br>• Endorsed by SMT for subsequent amendments. | • Skytrust<br>• Synergy<br>• Intranet |

# 3. Content

3.1 All policies are to be developed in accordance with appropriate Policy/Procedure/Protocol Template (Annexure A). The standard format for policies and procedures will ensure a consistent and professional approach to the management of policies and procedures.

3.2 Policies and procedures should be relevant, transparent in their intent and meaning, and developed in consultation with Council's key stakeholders.

3.3 The key principles to be applied when developing or reviewing policies are as follows:

- Clear and concise language.
- Consistent naming conventions and terminology.
- Relevant standards or sections of legislation are referenced, rather than duplicated, within the policy
- Relevant Strategic Plan outcome and/or objective are referenced.
- Related policies and procedures are referenced.
- Authority and process for required decisions are clearly identified.

3.4 Policies should be reviewed holistically with the aim of consolidating policies on associated topics where feasible to minimise confusion or the need to take guidance from multiple policies.

3.5 Care should be taken to ensure a Policy is actually required on a given topic or whether a simple decision of Council is a better instrument. Generally, this will be guided on the frequency of the situation and the consistency of general conditions, if both are low; a decision of Council may be the preferred option.

# 4. Development

The development of Policies should be a collaborative process that meets an identified need rather than a one off situation. When developing Policies the following steps should be followed.

**Identify Need**

- Compliance with legislation, national standards, best practice or new activity.
- Reacting to changes in strategy or circumstance.
- Resolution of difficulties in implementing and interpreting legislation and policy.
- Correction of gaps identified in policy coverage.

**Gather Information**

- Review standards, legislation and source examples or model documents available.
- Identify stakeholders.
- Undertake research, benchmarking and preliminary consultation with stakeholders to confirm the need.

**Evaluate**

- Examine existing policies to see if these cover the issue identified or could be amended to cover the issue without adding an additional document.
- Consider if the proposed policy impacts upon or conflicts with legislation or existing policies.

**Draft Document**

- Utilise the templates available from Governance via the Staff Intranet.
- Ensure that the document is not lengthy, unnecessarily wordy and is able to be easily understood.
- Workshop with relevant stakeholders in development of Draft.

**Consult**

- Consult with the appropriate stakeholders including Senior Management Team and Governance on the Draft.
- Internal policies relating to staff are to be circulated for staff comment for a period of two (2) weeks.
- Workshop new, amended and rescission of Council and Statutory policies with Elected Members at least two (2) weeks prior to presentation at Council Meeting.
- Following review, Council/SMT may give initial approval for consultation on Policy/Procedure, if required.
- Consultation may identify issues not previously considered, and these should be consdered/addressed prior to approval process.

**Approval**

- Stategic and Council Policies and Procedures are required to be adopted by Council.
- Internal Policies and Procedures required to be endoresed by Senior Management Team.
- If consulted upon, Council/SMT to consider submissions and amend if required.
- Adopted/endorsed, with delegation to the CEO for minor amendment.

**Publish**

- Once approved, the policy will be minuted, registered in Synergy in both the Records and Policy Register, formatted and published to the appropriate platform by the Governance.

# 5. Approvals

5.1 Where a Policy or Procedure has been drafted and consulted upon, it should be listed on the appropriate agenda for recommendation, adoption or endorsement.

5.2 Notwithstanding clause 5.1, a new or amended draft Statutory or Council policy is to be presented to the Elected Members for review, at least two (2) weeks prior to being presented for adoption or endorsement by Council. This requirement also applies to proposals seeking the rescission of policies previously adopted by Council.

5.3 Where possible, Financial, Governance, and Risk Management Policies should also be provided to the Audit Committee members for review, at least two (2) weeks prior to being presented for recommendation to Council.

# 6. Maintenance

6.1 Governance will ensure that the Policy Register is maintained and the appropriate policies are available to the public. The Policy Register is reported twice a year to the Audit Committee.

6.2 When a policy or procedure is revoked, the Website team is to be notified to have the policy or procedure removed from the website and the intranet.

# 7. Review

7.1 All policies and procedures of Council are subject to a process of periodic review to ensure that the information contained in the document is still correct, accurately reflects the practices of Council and ensures compliance with legislation and Council's Strategic Plan.

7.2 Scheduled reviews for each Council policy will occur once each Council term after the conclusion of the periodic election.

7.3 Reviews of Council policies can be carried out at any time if it becomes evident that the document requires amendment due to the changes to legislation, operations or community needs.

7.4 Current legislation mandates that some Council policies are reviewed within 12 months after the conclusion of each periodic election or on an annual basis.

7.5 Governance will initiate the review process by contacting the officer responsible for the policy (Responsible Officer) to request a review of the policy.

7.6 Responsible Officers have overarching responsibility for their designated policies and related procedures, are responsible for conducting the review process, and are accountable for the implementation and compliance of the policy, unless documented otherwise.

# 8. Policy Delegations

The powers under this Policy are retained by the Council.

# 9. Availability/Accessibility

9.1 This Framework and Council's Fees and Charges Register are available to be downloaded free of charge from Council's website: www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au.

9.2 This Framework is available for inspection at Council's principal office during ordinary business hours. Hard copies, for a fee in accordance with Council's schedule of Fees and Charges, can be provided upon request.

# 10. Legislative Framework / Other References

*Local Government Act 1999*

# 11. Document History

This Policy shall be reviewed at least every four (4) years or more frequently if legislation or Council requires.

| Version | Adopted | Minute | Description of Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 8 December 2020 | 21059/5 | Adopted |
| | 10 July 2025 | | Added to new template, updated Responsible Manager's title and referenced under Clause 6.1 |
| 2 | 16 June 2026 | C06-26/014 | Review of document, clarification to Clause 5.2 and minor grammatical changes. |