



# **Bland Shire Council**

# **Policy Framework**

# Bland Shire Council Policy Framework

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## DOCUMENT AUTHORISATION

<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER (by position title)</b>	Director Corporate and Community Services
<b>AUTHORISED BY (GM or Director Title)</b>	General Manager
<b>DATE ADOPTED:</b>	16 March 2021
<b>ADOPTED BY: (Manex or Council)</b>	Council
<b>MINUTE NO (IF REQUIRED):</b>	
<b>REVIEW DUE DATE: (Four years unless statutorily required sooner)</b>	February 2025
<b>REVISION NUMBER:</b>	1

## DOCUMENT HISTORY

<b>VERSION NO.</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>MINUTE NO (WHERE REQUIRED)</b>

## REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed within (four (4) years – for those policies without statutory time frames - or in according with statutory time frames) from the date of adoption or as required in the event of legislative changes. The Policy may also be changed as a result of other amendments that are to the advantage that Council and in the spirit of this Policy. Any amendment to the Policy must be by way of a Council Resolution or the approval of the General Manager.

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## 1. Purpose

Developing, adopting and reviewing policy is a prime responsibility of the Council under the Local Government Act 1993. A Policy Framework provides a structure and process for the initiation, development, adoption and review of the Council's Policy documents ensuring policies:

- Are developed in a consultative, comprehensive and consistent manner
- Underpin and support Council's strategic objectives as articulated in the Community Strategic Plan
- Provide a clear understanding of the Council and management responsibilities in policy development and review
- Ensure consistency with and meet the compliance requirements of legislation
- Are consistent with and support the current Council's Vision

## 2. Scope

This policy provides the guidelines within which all other Policy documents, such as Policy Procedures, for the Bland Shire Council will be developed, adopted, maintained and reviewed.

## 3. Policy Statement

### Policy Type

Policy sets out an organisation's position and accepted role and assists in decision-making relating to a particular area of activity.

**Council Policies** are Policies or Procedures that are either required by Legislation (i.e. Code of Conduct) or impact on the Community in some way (i.e. Revenue Policy). Many of these policies may require consultation with the community and often relate to the goods, services and activities provided to or by the Council.

**Operational Policies** are those that guide the operational business of Council (i.e. Records Management Policy). Human Resource and WH&S Policies address Policy issues relating to employees of Council (i.e. Annual Leave Policy) and the health and welfare of people in the workplace.

**Policy Procedures** define the specific guidelines or actions required to apply or implement a Policy. Most Policies are supported by procedures, which ensure that Policies are practical and workable. Policies themselves should not document procedural arrangements that are not related to decision making. This information should be laid out in a procedure which is referenced in the relevant Policy document. Out of scope from this framework are standard operating procedures which are separate from council and administration Policies and Policy procedures.

### Policy Approval

Effective Policies must be supported by a formulation, review and approval process to ensure correct implementation and consistency across Council. Details on these are found below:

#### Policy Formulation by Responsible Officer

- Research and analysis of required new Policy
- Compliance with relevant Legislation
- Consultation with key stakeholders eg. Staff members, Consultative Committee, WHS committee etc
- Draft Policy in template format
- Completion of Checklist

#### Policy Review by Governance/Administration/Records

- Ensure compliance with Policy Framework
- Allocate Policy number

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- Submit to Manex for review/endorsement and advise Policy Owner
- Completion of Checklist

## **Policy Content Reviewed by Manex**

- Meeting held consisting of Policy content expert, Director Corporate Performance and Community and General Manager
- Evaluate Policy from a legal and risk perspective
- Approved (*or tracked changes required for resubmission by Policy Owner*)

## **Policy Approval by General Manager or Council**

- Reviewed by General Manager and/or Council for adoption
- Approved (or changes required for resubmission)

## **Policy Implementation post Approval**

- Policy Owner will advise staff and key stakeholders of new Policy and provide training to affected staff if required
- Policy Owner will review policy in accordance with review cycle procedure
- The Governance/Administration/Records Team will enter Policy/Procedure on Policy Register and Council record system, arrange upload of Policy/Procedure on Intranet and/or arrange upload on Council's website (Council Policy only)

## **Policy Review Cycle**

Council Policies will be reviewed and approved at least once every term of Council unless required more frequently under Legislation. Organisational Policies will also be reviewed and approved on a similar cycle by the Management Executive (Manex). Reviews of all policy documents may be on a staggered basis to enable greater consideration to be given to each Policy.

Any changes to Policies will be highlighted using the 'tracked changes' functionality in Microsoft Word to clearly identify any modifications made to an existing Policy to then submit to the relevant Director for final review prior to adoption by Manex, General Manager or Council.

A reminder will be sent electronically three (3) months prior to the review due date to the Policy Owner, with the Policy Review Procedure supporting this process for guidance and consistency.

## **Policy Categorisation**

Both Council and Operational Policies and Procedures can be on the Council's Document Management System under the relevant headings:

- Administration
- Community Services
- Engineering
- Finance
- Governance and Risk
- Health, Building and Planning
- Human Resources
- Infrastructure and Sustainability

## **Content of Policies**

All Policies will be developed in accordance with the Policy Template (See Appendix 1).

There are some basic key principals that should be taken into consideration when developing or reviewing policies.

- No reproduction/duplication of legislation or relevant standards (however reference to the relevant standard or section of legislation should be included)
- Linkage to one or more Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program outcomes and/or objectives e.g. Adopt practices and systems that support a skilled, motivated and community focused workforce

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- Only include Policy material that assists in decision making
- Procedural content should be referred to as a separate procedure or guidelines document
- Consistent naming conventions and terminology
- Provide reference to other related Policies and Procedures
- A standard format for Policies will ensure a consistent and professional approach to the management of Policies.

## Policy Maintenance

The Policy register will be maintained by the Customer Service and Administration team which will ensure the appropriate policies are accessible to the public and staff. This team will also provide guidance in the preparation and development of policies where required.

## 4. Definitions

**Framework** means the structure that underpins and supports the strategic objective, in this case the Policy Framework provides a structure and process for the initiation, development, adoption and review of Council's policy documents.

**Type** refers to Council, Administration or Procedure

**Category** shall mean the department within Bland Shire Council that the policy is essentially owned and responsible for implementation by.

**The Act** shall mean the Local Government Act 1993

**The Regulation** shall mean the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

**Standard Operating Procedures** are out of scope from this framework and are separate from council and administration policies and policy procedures.

## 5. Legal Compliance & References

Legislation / Recognized Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local Government Act 1993</li><li>• Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</li></ul>
Australian / International Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ISO 31000:2009</li></ul>
Risk Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• N/A</li></ul>
Other References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Records Management Policy</li><li>• Governance Framework (currently under development)</li><li>• Policy Review Procedure (Appendix 2)</li><li>• Policy and Policy Procedures Checklist (Appendix 3)</li></ul>

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 - POLICY TEMPLATE

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<...POLICY TITLE...>

## AUTHORISATION

<b>POLICY TYPE:</b> (Council or Operational)	
<b>POLICY LOCATION:</b> (eg Corporate, Engineering, etc)	
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b> (by position title)	
<b>AUTHORISED BY</b> (GM or Director Title)	
<b>DATE ADOPTED:</b>	
<b>ADOPTED BY:</b> (Manex or Council)	
<b>MINUTE NO (IF REQUIRED):</b>	
<b>REVIEW DUE DATE:</b> (Four years unless statutorily required sooner)	
<b>REVISION NUMBER:</b>	###

## DOCUMENT HISTORY

<b>VERSION NO.</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS</b> include names of former policies that this policy will replace if applicable	<b>AMENDED BY (WHERE REQUIRED)</b>

## REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed within four (4) years from the date of adoption or as required in the event of legislative changes. The Policy may also be changed as a result of other amendments that are to the advantage that Council and in the spirit of this Policy. Any amendment to the Policy must be by way of a Council Resolution or the approval of the General Manager.

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**NB – the information included under each of the headings is for guidance only and should be removed from the draft policy document.**

## **1. Purpose:**

In this section, please outline briefly why we have the policy. Preference is for plain English so it is easy for people to understand. For example:

*The purpose of this policy is to guide staff through the process of writing policy documents.*

## **2. Scope:**

This section is where you list all those who are affected by this policy and its procedure documents. An example would be the Code of Conduct document would include something like the following:

*This policy document applies to all elected representatives and Council employees, including contractors and volunteers.*

## **3. Outcomes:**

Here you would include information about what we are trying to achieve with the policy – for example, using a communications policy:

*To clearly advise all those involved with Council or affected by Council decisions with information that is relevant and important to them.*

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities:**

This is where you include position titles of all those who are responsible or authorised to implement this policy as well as those who need to help make it happen such as specific roles that have specific responsibilities.

## **5. Definitions:**

List items and provide explanations as to what it means. Remember, not everyone knows what we are talking about!

Also, if there are any acronyms within the document – please spell those out clearly in this section so everyone knows who or what you are referring to.

## **6. Legislation and Supporting Documents:**

What statutory evidence is there to support this policy?

Include any State, Regional and Local plans – such as those from Regional Development, Roads and Maritime Services, Police etc (depending on what is relevant) as well as any internal Council plans or policies – such as Work Health and Safety, Business Continuity, Investment Policy, etc.

## **7. Relationship to Community Strategic Plan:**

Make reference here to where this policy fits within the Integrated Planning and Reporting process. EG This Policy supports Council's Delivery Program Strategy 10.3 *Ensure the General Manager takes a high level role in implementing the Community Strategic Plan and other Council documents*

## **8. Attachments:**

### **Policy Procedure**

These are the actual working parts that include all the “how to” information. This section is included as an attachment because if it needs to be amended and it is part of a policy which has been adopted by Council, it will need to go through the whole advertising/report writing process. As an attachment, it is an internal working document and, as such, does not necessarily require a Council resolution for it to be authorised. HOWEVER, any changes to procedures WILL need to be signed off by Manex before implementation.

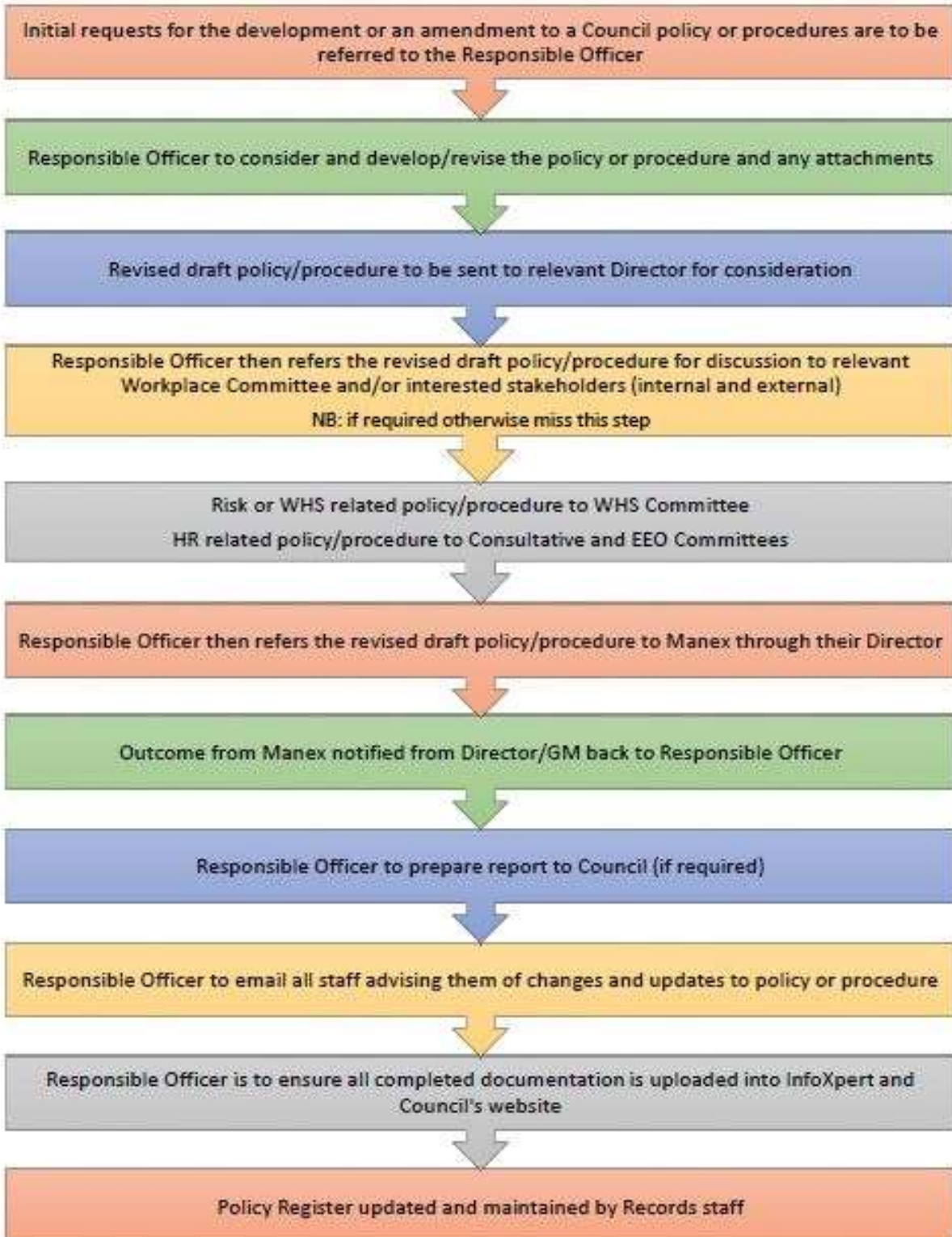


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## Appendix 2 – POLICY APPROVAL PROCESS



### PROCESS FOR POLICY & PROCEDURE DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW



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## Appendix 3 – POLICY & PROCEDURE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENT
<b>Things to consider BEFORE developing policy (responsibility of Policy Author):</b>				
Is there a specific need or purpose for the policy?				
Are the factors driving the need for the policy clearly defined?				
Has the nature and extent of any risk associated with the continuing absence of this policy been determined?				
Will the policy affect Council employees, volunteers and/or Councillors?				
Will the policy affect others outside the Council organisation				
Have you consulted with others in the Council as to whether the policy is needed?				
By what date must this policy be implemented? (if applicable)				
Does the proposed policy:				
• Comply with federal and state laws, rules and regulations?				
• Impact existing policies or bylaws, procedures, forms				
Have you checked similar policies with other Councils?				
Do you need to consult with Council staff committees on the policy? (eg Consultative, WHS etc)				
Do you need to consult with specific Council staff on the policy?				
Was this consultation undertaken? Note time and place in comment section.				
<b>Things the Draft policy should include:</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
Has the policy been prepared using current template?				
Are the policy author and authorising officer titles included?				

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	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENT
The type of policy is identified eg. Council, Operational etc.				
Implementation date (the date the policy comes into force)				
Review date has been included				
Any organisational policies that the policy replaces				
<b>Specific content of policy documents</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
Purpose – Why do we need to have the policy				
Scope – Who does the policy apply to				
Outcomes – Information about what the policy will achieve				
Roles and Responsibilities – who are the people who will need to carry out specific roles for this policy to be implemented				
Definitions – List The key terms that are used in this policy and explain what some of the terms mean so people aren't confused (not everyone is fluent in Council-speak)				
Relationship to the Community Strategic Plan – how does this policy fit within the CSP/Delivery Program &/or Operational Plan?				
Legislation and Supporting Documents – list all legislation that applies (check the legislation to ensure it is current) and include other Council Policies and Plans e.g. code of conduct, risk management plan, corporate plan, audit policy, information management policy, financial management policy				
Attachments – this is where you include the procedure for the policy's implementation.				
<b>Actions for the Policy Author</b>				
Has the Policy approval process been adhered to?				
Policy's adoption including location of the policy, where copies can be found, any training which is required and when it will be held communicated to staff determined				

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	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENT
Method of communication used				
Is training required for the policy?				
Training method used. (List in comments)				
<b>When the policy has been approved (Responsibility of Governance/Administration/Records)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
The policy author, authorising officer, adoption date and any minute numbers relating to its adoption are included				
Save the Policy into the Document Management System (Magiq), intranet, website and policy register (Magiq and Pulse)				
Save checklist into Document Management System (Magiq) and associate with policy				
Policy saved on Council's website?				
For Council Policy documents, has a media release been prepared to inform the community?				