



# Municipality of Dysart et al

## Policies and Procedures Manual

### Staff Council Relations

Policy No. 52

#### Scope

This Policy shall apply to all Municipal Staff, Officers and members of Council.

The intent of this Policy is to ensure that the relationship between Members of Council and the Officers and Staff of the Municipality is co-operative and supportive with a clear understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities.

Should there be any conflicts or discrepancies between this policy and the Code of Conduct for Elected or Appointed Officials, the Code of Conduct shall prevail.

#### Purpose

This policy provides guidance on how the Municipality of Dysart et al ensures a respectful, tolerant and harassment-free relationship and workplace between members of Council and the officers and employees of the Corporation.

#### Policy Statement

The Municipality of Dysart et al will promote a respectful, tolerant and harassment free relationship and workplace between members of Council and the officers and employees of the Corporation.

#### PROCEDURE

##### Members of Council and Staff Shall:

- Demonstrate a commitment to accountability and transparency among Council and staff and with the general public;
- Demonstrate leadership by making sound decisions based on knowledge, areas of expertise and sound judgment;
- Demonstrate a high degree of confidentiality;

- Enhance public education about the political process by providing context and process information about decision making;
- Uphold the decisions of Council, regardless of personal opinion or belief, and commit to the implementation of those decisions;
- Refrain from publically criticizing members of Council or staff; and
- Seek to achieve a team approach in an environment of mutual respect and trust, with acceptance of the different roles in achieving Council's objectives.

### **Respect for Time**

Priorities and timelines must be respected by all members of Council and staff. It is expected that all participants will be well prepared for meetings and will prioritize appropriately, according to direction given by management or Council.

Staff will spend time on significant projects only once direction is given by Council to do so. It is expected that, when possible, appointments will be made for meetings between staff members and Council members in order to ensure that all parties are available and prepared for the discussion.

### **Role of Members of Council**

- Seek to advance the common good of the community which they serve;
- Govern and provide political direction;
- Act in a way that enhances public confidence in local government;
- Set strategic objectives and goals for the organization based on consultation with staff and community members;
- Give direction to staff through Council as a whole in accordance with the Municipality's operational practices and procedures;
- Govern the management of the organization through the CAO;
- Respond to enquiries and concerns from the public, and, when necessary or appropriate, include the Mayor and/or CAO in such communication;
- Council does not have an administrative role;
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct for Elected or Appointed Officials and the oath of office sworn at the inaugural meeting of each term of Council.

### **It is Expected That Council Members Will:**

- Acknowledge that only Council as a whole has the capacity to direct staff members to carry out specific tasks or functions;
- Refrain from using their position to improperly influence members of staff in their duties or functions or to gain an advantage for themselves or others;
- Refrain from publicly criticizing individual members of staff in a way that casts aspersions on their professional competence or personal credibility;
- Make important policy decisions as a Council through a consultative process;
- Direct concerns regarding staff or departmental activities to the Mayor and/or CAO;
- Seek answers and clarifications on agenda-related items prior to Council or committee meetings to help ensure staff are prepared to provide Council (or Committee) with information that assists in decision-making;
- Understand that a member of Council cannot compel a member of staff to confidentiality and that Council member discussions with staff regarding Municipal business may be communicated to other appropriate parties;
- Consult with the CAO, Department Head, or Mayor, as appropriate, prior to making corporate commitments to agencies, groups, citizens, or likewise, as the commitments may require Council approval, or have other financial, administrative or corporate implications; and,
- Refrain from behaviour that could constitute an act of disorder or misbehaviour; is an abuse of power or otherwise amounts to discrimination, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, or the adverse treatment of others; or which prejudices the provision of a service or services to the community.

### **Intergovernmental Relations**

The Mayor is the spokesperson for Council regarding communications with other governments or agencies. If a member of Council is interested in formally communicating with another government or agency, they should take their request to the Mayor.

Members of Council do not individually have the authority to bind the Corporation and therefore, shall not directly contact any regulatory bodies, contractors, corporate advisors, agencies or likewise, regarding any regulatory compliance concerns.

This does not in any way preclude a member of Council from seeking information for their own purposes to assist them in performing their role as a member of Council or for their own personal

knowledge, provided there are no corporate representational implications for the Municipality by the member seeking such information.

Members of Council may seek information or advice from the Municipal Integrity Commissioner at their discretion, in accordance with any Municipal policies.

Individual members of Council shall not be directly involved in any negotiations to secure contracts or agreements on behalf of the Municipality, unless direction is given to this effect through resolution by Council as a whole.

### **Role of Members of Staff**

- Provide timely reports to Council outlining factors that will assist in their decision making process and provide information based upon professional expertise and good judgement, and free from undue influence from any individual member or members of Council;
- Research policy issues as required;
- Diligently and impartially, implement Council's decisions;
- Manage and identify the means for achieving corporate goals and outcomes; including necessary staffing and resources, and,
- Provide appropriate follow-up to Council inquiries and keep members of Council up-to-date and informed, as appropriate.
- Staff do not have a political role.

### **It is Expected That Staff Members Will:**

- Acknowledge that Council is the collective decision-making and governing body of the Township and is ultimately responsible to the electorate for the good governance of the Municipality;
- Implement Council's decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out Council's decisions and any duties specifically assigned to them by Council;
- Assist Council in their decision-making process with respect to its decisions, policies and programs by providing Council with information based on professional expertise, research and good judgement in a professional manner;
- Acknowledge that all members shall be treated with courtesy, respect and professionalism;

- Refrain from becoming involved in the policy and decision-making process of Council, outside of ensuring that Council is provided with the information and advice necessary in order to make their decisions;
- Not speak publicly on any matter respecting any of Council's decisions or policies without authorization to do so, from the Mayor or CAO, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, shall not publicly criticize any decision or policy of Council;
- Keep the Department Head and/or CAO aware of any issues that may impact the municipality and of ongoing activities in each department;
- Be kept informed by the Department Head and/or CAO of any issues that may impact their departments;
- Respond to inquiries from Council members (and where appropriate, copy or notify the CAO and Mayor) in a timely fashion during business hours, with the exception of emergencies;
- Present a professional opinion/recommendation in writing or in person, at Council meetings or Committee meetings;
- Notify Council members of changes to legislation and any unexpected impacts of policy decisions through written material circulated electronically or at a Council or Committee meeting;
- Through the CAO, convey feedback to Council members who may be unaware of existing policies or staff workload demands, and other related issues;
- Refrain from behaviour that could constitute an act of disorder or misbehaviour; is an abuse of power or otherwise amounts to discrimination, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, or the adverse treatment of others; or which prejudices the provision of a service or services to the community; and,
- At all times comply with any policies relating to staff that the Council may implement from time to time.

### **Respectful Reporting Relationship**

The formal relationship between staff and members of Council must be respected to ensure that all members of staff and Council are treated equally. There is a chain of command in place to deal with significant issues, and Council members are encouraged to primarily direct questions and concerns to the Mayor and CAO for their consideration. If, during a Council meeting, any request for information from a Council member that is not received and answered by staff, shall be answered and circulated in writing to all Council members and the CAO following the meeting.

### **Policy Review Procedure**

All members of Council will sign a Staff Council Relations Policy Acknowledgement Statement upon the passing of this policy.

All members of Council will sign a Staff Council Relations Policy Acknowledgement Statement each time there is an amendment to the Policy.

All members of Council will sign a Staff Council Relations Policy Acknowledgement Statement at the beginning of each term of Council.

All staff will sign a Staff Council Relations Policy Acknowledgment Statement during recruitment.

The Staff Council Relations Policy will be reviewed by Council, within one year of the municipal election, during future terms of Council.



**Municipality of Dysart et al**

**Staff Council Relations Acknowledgement Form**

I confirm that I have read and understand the Municipality of Dysart et al Staff Council Relations Policy.

I agree to comply with the terms of the Staff Council Relations Policy in my undertakings relating to my position as a member of Council.

As a member/employee of the Municipality of Dysart et al, I am committed to discharging my duties conscientiously and to the best of my ability.

**Council/Staff Member Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Council/Staff Member Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_