

## Council-Staff Protocol

Effective Date: February 17, 2015  
Last Revised: January 27, 2026

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### 1. Purpose

This policy affirms the City's 'one employee' model, establishes clear communication protocols between Council and City Staff, and defines roles and responsibilities to ensure effective governance and operational accountability.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council members and City Staff.

### 3. Definitions

In this policy:

- a) **City** means the City of Pitt Meadows.
- b) **Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)** means the individual appointed by Council to the position of Chief Administrative Officer, or their designate, who is responsible for managing all City staff and operations in accordance with the *Community Charter*.
- c) **Corporate Leadership Team** or **CLT** means the City's senior leadership team comprised of the CAO and all department heads.
- d) **Council** means Pitt Meadows City Council.
- e) **Staff** is the collective term used to refer to the CAO, CLT, and all other City staff, including full-time, part-time, temporary or seasonal staff, contract staff, students and volunteers. Contractors doing work for the City are considered staff for the purposes of this Policy.

## 4. Policy Statements

### 4.1 One Employee Model

- (1) The CAO is the sole employee of Council and therefore the only employee directly accountable to Council. All other Staff report [directly or indirectly] to the CAO.
- (2) All Staff submissions to Council, including staff reports, delegation requests, and correspondence, must be routed through the CAO.
- (3) All correspondence and directions from Council to Staff will be communicated through the CAO.
- (4) Council will address any concerns regarding Staff performance or conduct by communicating them to the CAO.
- (5) The CAO serves as Council's chief policy advisor and is responsible for providing the background information, analysis, and recommendations necessary for informed policy decisions.
- (6) The CAO ensures that Council decisions are implemented by Staff in a professional, efficient, and politically neutral manner.

### 4.2 Council's Authority

- (1) Council exercises its authority as a unified body and provides direction to Staff through formal instruments such as bylaws, policies, and resolutions adopted in duly convened meetings.
- (2) Individual Council members have no independent authority over Staff or operations, and their decisions, preferences, or directions are not binding on Staff.
- (3) Despite subsection (2), the CAO has discretion to implement recommendations of Council members of an operational nature if the CAO deems it appropriate and the resource impact is minimal.

### 4.3 Roles & Responsibilities

- (1) As the political and law-making body of the City, Council is responsible for:

- a) providing governance and strategic direction for the municipality;
  - b) representing the public interest and advocating for the well-being and best interests of the community;
  - c) establishing the City's vision, goals, and overall policy direction; and
  - d) focusing on strategic and policy-level matters rather than administrative or operational issues.
- (2) As the head and chief executive officer of the City, the Mayor is responsible for:
- a) acting as Council's spokesperson;
  - b) reflecting the will of Council;
  - c) providing leadership to Council, including recommending bylaws, policies, and resolutions to support good governance;
  - d) overseeing and facilitating Council's relationship with the CAO; and
  - e) providing, on behalf of Council, general direction to the CAO.
- (3) The CAO is responsible for:
- a) the overall management of City operations;
  - b) overseeing all City Staff;
  - c) acting as Council's chief policy advisor and providing timely reports that include the background information and analysis necessary to inform Council's decision-making;
  - d) advising Council in a politically neutral and objective manner, free from undue influence by any individual member of Council;
  - e) implementing Council's decisions, including identifying the means for achieving Council's established goals and objectives; and
  - f) providing appropriate follow-up to Council inquiries and keeping Council up-to-date and informed.

#### **4.4 Council-CAO Communication Protocol**

- (1) Council members will:
- a) seek CAO input prior to making important policy decisions and

- share feedback with the CAO;
  - b) discuss issues and ask questions with the CAO before public meetings whenever possible;
  - c) request advice from the CAO on the appropriate wording of resolutions; and
  - d) consult with the Mayor and CAO before making significant commitments to constituents.
- (2) The CAO will:
- a) ensure Council is informed of any issues that may affect their decision-making process;
  - b) provide professional advice when required or requested;
  - c) provide Council with timely updates on significant operational matters;
  - d) notify Council of important legislative changes or any unintended or unexpected impacts of policy decisions through timely email, written reports, or verbal updates; and
  - e) communicate feedback to Council members regarding existing policies, workload demands, and related operational pressures or issues.

#### **4.5 Council-Staff Communication Protocol**

- (1) The CAO is the primary liaison between Council and Staff. All Council directives, correspondence, and requests for information must be routed through the CAO, who will assign them to the appropriate Staff member and ensure timely follow-up.
- (2) As an exception, Council members may email CLT members directly, provided the CAO is copied, to request routinely released, non-sensitive information, such as documents and facts that are readily available to the public.
- (3) Council members must copy the Mayor on all correspondence to the CAO related to City business, to ensure the mayor remains informed of Council members' priorities.
- (4) The CAO is responsible for establishing internal Staff protocols for communicating with Council.



- (5) Any significant information provided by Staff to an individual Council member that may influence debate or decision-making will be shared with all Council members.
- (6) If, in Staff's opinion, preparing requested information for a Council member would significantly impact performance or workload, the CAO will advise the requesting Council member that a formal Council motion is required to proceed.
- (7) Council and Staff will maintain respectful, professional interactions and adhere to their respective Codes of Conduct.
- (8) The Mayor will refer matters requiring administrative or operational action to the CAO.

#### **4.6 Organizational Tools**

- (1) Council and Staff will actively use the following organizational tools to support good communication, a productive and respectful working relationship, and effective governance:
  - a) **Staff Reports:** Staff will prepare clear and concise reports, approved by the CAO, to provide Council with the necessary information for decision-making and to keep Council informed of pertinent issues.
  - b) **Council Direction:** Council will provide clear and concise direction to Staff through bylaws, policies, and resolutions adopted at Council meetings.
  - c) **Information Updates:** Council members will share updates on matters of importance with Staff through established communication protocols.
  - d) **Council Procedure Bylaw:** Council and Staff will adhere to the Procedure Bylaw as the framework for parliamentary procedure and effective decision-making.
  - e) **Corporate Financial Planning:** Council and Staff will engage in an annual business planning and budget process that aligns with Council's strategic direction.
  - f) **Good Governance Check-ins:** Council will engage in governance check-in sessions at least twice a year to ensure compliance with

this policy, the Community Charter, and municipal best practices.

## 5. Related Policies

Other related policies include:

- (1) Council Code of Conduct [C100]
- (2) Good Governance Policy [C109]
- (3) Council Procedure Bylaw No. 2939, 2023