# GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK



## APPROVAL / REVIEW SCHEDULE

Adopted by	Council	
Responsible Director	Director Corporate Performance	
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance, Risk and Performance	
Date adopted	11 December 2024	
Scheduled for review	This framework will be reviewed four years from the date of adoption, or sooner if required.	

## DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Summary of Changes		Approved by	Date
1	Original Framework adopted	Council	11/12/2024

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## PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Under the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) the role of a Council is to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community.

The purpose of the Governance Framework is to detail Council's principles and elements of good governance that support our vision and values and shape decision-making for Council.

The Framework outlines the mechanisms Moira Shire Council has or is currently embedding to ensure good governance.

In addition to the Governance Principles set out in the Act, the following themes are the foundation Council will use to strengthen good governance.

Direction and Leadership
Culture and Behaviour
Structure, Systems and Policies
Decision Making
Communications and Community Engagement
Performance and Capability
Risk and Compliance
Monitoring and Review

To implement good governance across the organisation, Council uses a number of tools which include documents, systems, and procedures. A summary of the tools is set out by the themes.

Good governance is integral to the operations and performance of every organisation. Moira Shire Council aims to strengthen good governance in order to deliver in both compliance and performance. Compliance and integrity are outcomes of an organisation meeting its obligations and is made sustainable by embedding it in the culture of the organisation and in the behaviour and attitude of employees.

While a best practice organisation maintains the rigorous independence of its governance, legal and audit functions, it must also ensure that compliance and integrity management is integrated with the organisation's financial, risk, quality, environmental, and health and safety management processes and its operational requirements and procedures.

Council is governed under various legislation including but not limited to the Act, *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014, Freedom of Information Act 1982 and Gender Equality Act 2020.* 

To strengthen good governance across the organisation, Moira Shire Council has developed several mechanisms including documents, systems, and procedures. A summary of the mechanisms, their purpose and the review cycle has been identified below and categorised by theme.

#### What is good governance?

Good governance means Council has appropriate rules, processes, and policies in place to help Councillors and Council officers make and implement decisions, while maintaining ethical and legal standards, as well as achieving organisational objectives.

A Council demonstrates good governance if it performs its role in accordance with the following overarching governance principles as set out in the Act.

Council decisions are made, and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

Priority is given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decisionmaking.

Collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought.

Innovation and continuous improvement are to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

This framework applies to Moira Shire Council (Council).

The community expect that Moira Shire is governed to the highest standards of integrity and transparency and that Council exercises and demonstrates good governance.

This framework outlines the mechanisms Council has or is currently embedding to ensure good governance is at the core of Council's work.

## DEFINITIONS

The Act	means the Local Government Act 2020	
The Moira Act	Means the Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act 2023	
Employee	Moira Shire Council employees, volunteers, contractors.	
Council	means Moira Shire Council.	
<b>Councillor</b> Has the same meaning as the definition in the <i>Local Govern</i> 2020.		
	In accordance with the <i>Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act</i> 2023, Moira Shire Council has a Panel of two Administrators appointed. Administrators fulfill the role of Councillors and the Chair Administrator fulfills the role of Mayor.	
	While under Administration, any reference to the term Councillor/s can be deemed to be a reference to Administrator/s.	
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	

## GOOD GOVERNANCE THEMES

Direction and Leadership	Council's direction as outlined in our Council Plan is guided by our community's needs and expectations which are determined through consultation. Consultation allows us to gain deeper insights from our community and informs the priority areas for Moira Shire to focus on over a four-year period. This means that Council can support the provision of relevant services, facilities, and infrastructure for our municipality.
Culture and Behaviour	Council's leadership model contributes to the culture of the organisation by allowing employees the opportunity to be involved in decision-making, encouraging transparency, and providing a safe environment to share ideas, feedback, and autonomy. Council has developed expectations regarding behaviours to support
	the organisational values, empower each other, and make our community proud.
Structure, Systems and Policies	Structures, systems, and policies ensure that our operations are streamlined, fair, accountable, informed and aligned to our community's vision. Often the community can engage with Council and provide feedback on key pieces of work.

Decision-making	Under the Act, Council can make decisions on any matter of importance to the municipality.
	Decisions can be made by Council at scheduled or unscheduled Council meetings. Council makes decisions on strategic matters, however, may delegate to the CEO or Council Officers to make decisions in line with the Act and under delegated authority.
	Council has developed Governance Rules which show how these decisions are made from a procedural perspective.
Communications and Community Engagement	Engaging with our local community is important to Council. By engaging with us, it helps us to understand what the community need and expect and clarifies what Council can provide in line with legislative and regulatory responsibilities.
	Council actively seeks feedback and engages with our community through Council meetings including public question time, social media platforms, Moira Matters, the Council website, and through targeted community consultation campaigns.
Performance and Capability	At Council we understand that our employees commence working with us with skills and capabilities, and that these can be developed over time.
	Performance appraisals are conducted annually, this provides an opportunity to provide feedback, monitor and identify new interest or pathways employees want to take.
Risk and Compliance	Council provides a variety of services to the municipality while also enforcing federal and state laws. These services present their own risks and opportunities which must be considered, actively monitored, and managed for the benefit of our community.
	Local Government also has responsibilities under over 120 Acts and regulations. These responsibilities are relevant to specific functions and must be complied with.
	In this time of innovation and change, Council encounters a range of risks that may threaten its ability to meet its objectives and faces positive opportunities that, if embraced in a considered and constructive manner, will greatly assist in improving service delivery and performance. Risk and opportunity management is the proactive management of these uncertain events.
Monitoring and Review	Council monitors and reviews our systems, processes, and compliance so that we can be accountable for our work and if our mechanisms are found not to be effective, we adjust as required.
	Council engages an external auditor to monitor and review our systems, processes, and compliance. Any recommendations which arise are impartial. These recommendations are then presented to the Audit and Risk Committee and subsequently to Council.

## 1. Direction and Leadership

Tool	Description	Cycle
Community Vision	The Community Vision is a requirement under Section 89 of the Act, It must describe the municipal community's aspirations for the future of the municipality.	By 31 October in the year following a general election.
Council Plan	The Council Plan is a key medium-term strategic plan and should reflect the outcome of stakeholder and community engagement. The Council Plan describes the strategic objectives, ways to achieve the objectives, indicators for measuring progress and the resources required to implement the plan for at least four years. Council Plans are developed based on the feedback from our community engagement program.	By 31 October in the year following a general election.
Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP)	Development of a Financial Plan is a requirement under Section 91 of the Act. The plan outlines the financial resources required to give effect to the Council Plan and other strategic plans of Council.	By 31 October in the year following a general election.
Budget and Capital Works Program	Development of a Budget is a requirement under Section 94 of the Act. The budget describes the services, initiatives, and major initiatives to be funded, including service performance outcome indicators to help monitor performance. The Budget must contain financial statements and other information including capital works, human resources, grants and rating information.	By 30 June each year.
Revenue and Rating Plan	Development of a Revenue and Rating Plan is a requirement under Section 93 of the Act. The plan provides a medium-term strategy for how Council will generate income to deliver on the Council Plan, programs, services and capital works commitments.	By 30 June in the year following a general election.
Moira Planning Scheme	The Moira Planning Scheme sets out policies and provisions for the use, development, and protection of land in the shire.	no later than one year after each date by which it is required to approve a Council Plan or within such longer period as is
		determined by the Minister.
Wellbeing for All Ages Strategy	Councils Wellbeing for All Ages Strategy (Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan) is a requirement under the <i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.</i> The strategy provides Council and the community with a clear and strategic planning approach that integrates planning for health and wellbeing across all stages of life.	Within 12 months of a general election, with review of the plan required annually.
Road Management Plan	A Road Management Plan describes road and road- related infrastructure within road reserves for which Council is responsible. The plan is in accordance with the <i>Road Management Act 2004</i> .	By 31 October in the year following a general election.

## 2. Culture and Behaviour

Tool	Description	Cycle
Council Values	<ul> <li>We will provide leadership based on these guiding values and behaviours: <ul> <li>Respect</li> <li>Teamwork</li> <li>Honesty</li> <li>Integrity</li> <li>Accountability</li> </ul> </li> <li>Ethical leadership underpins our decision-making and operations. At all levels, we seek to ensure that underlying behaviours are consistent with our values-based culture.</li> </ul>	As required
Employee Code of Conduct	In accordance with Section 49 of the Act, the CEO must develop and implement a code of conduct. The code prescribes the behaviour expected of all employees.	4 years
Model Councillor Code of Conduct	The Model Councillor Code of Conduct must be observed by Councillors under Section 139 of the Act. The code sets out standards of conduct expected to be observed by Councillors in the course of performing their duties and functions as Councillors, including prohibiting discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) and vilification.	Ongoing
Customer Experience Commitment	Council is committed to providing quality service to its customers and has provided details as to how a customer can access our services and the standard of service they can expect to receive.	As required
Administrator and Staff Interaction Protocol	This protocol has been developed to address the requirements of Section 46(3)(c) of the Act. The protocol provides guidance and support for the interaction between Councillors, council staff and contractors in performance of their duties.	4 years
Gift, Benefit and Hospitality Policy	Council's policy has been developed in accordance with Section 138 of the Act. The policy provides clear guidance to Councillors and employees on responding to the acceptance, or otherwise, of gifts, benefits and hospitality from individuals or other entities external to Council.	4 years
Gender Equality Action Plan	Development of a Gender Equality Action Plan is a requirement under the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i> . The plan outlines Council's commitment to ensuring everyone has equal opportunities and are respected and supported to reach their full potential.	4 years
Complaint Handling Policy	Council's Complaint Handling Policy has been developed in accordance with Section 107 of the Act and aims to ensure that customers can raise their complaints easily and with confidence and that Council will listen to their concerns, be responsive and handle their complaints fairly and objectively.	4 years

Tool	Description	Cycle
Volunteers support and recognition	Council has a Volunteering Policy that outlines the guidelines and expectations for identifiable volunteers serving within the Moira Shire and aims to ensure a positive, community driven experience while maintaining ethical and sustainable practices, staff and volunteer satisfaction, recognition and legal compliance.	4 Years
Roles of Councillors, CEO, and employees understood	The roles of Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer and employees are set out in the Act. Councillors undertake a mandatory induction program in accordance with the <i>Local Government (Governance</i> <i>and Integrity) Regulations 2020.</i> Staff including the CEO participate in an induction program upon commencement of their employment that includes understanding their roles, responsibilities and obligations under the Act.	Induction following a general election. As required following appointment of CEO and new staff members.
Learning and Development Programs and Policies	People and Culture delivers the training program annually. The Training Conference and Professional Development Policy sets out employee entitlements obligations and departmental level responsibilities for approving and monitoring employees receiving training, conference and professional development assistance. This policy is to be applied in conjunction with the Award and Council's Enterprise Agreement training provisions.	Annually Policy review 4 Years

## 3. Structure, Systems & Policies

Tool	Description	Review
Organisational Structure	The Chief Executive Officer must develop and maintain a workforce plan in accordance with Section 46 (4) of the Act.	As required.
Council adopted policies	<ul> <li>Council policies convey a course or principle of action that supports the work of Council. A Council Policy has at least one of the following characteristics: <ul> <li>it relates to or impacts the community.</li> <li>is connected to or may influence the Council's strategic direction.</li> <li>is required by legislation (such as Child Safe Policy, Procurement Policy).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	As required in line with policy review schedule.
CEO endorsed policies	<ul> <li>A CEO policy conveys a course or principle of action that relates to internal or operational issues. A CEO Policy has at least one of the following characteristics:</li> <li>It relates to the internal business of the Council; operational management, administrative or staffing matters of the Council.</li> <li>It relates to the functions of the Chief Executive Officer as defined in the Act.</li> </ul>	As required in line with policy review schedule.
Council meeting structures and systems	Support is provided to Councillors and the Executive Management team. We aim to be transparent, while respecting the provisions under relevant legislation and regulations.	As required
Corporate systems, processes and procedures	Corporate Systems such as Authority and Content Manager are maintained by limited departments.	As required
Discretionary Expenditure, Policy, Schedule and Guidelines	This framework provides direction and consistency for staff in dealing with expenditures of a personal or discretionary kind, bearing in mind that Council is the steward of public funds.	4 years
CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy	This policy provides direction and guidance on the management of the life cycle of the Chief Executive Officer's employment including recruitment, performance and end of contract processes in accordance with Section 45 of the Act.	4 years
Departmental systems, processes and procedures	Each department maintains their systems, processes and procedures.	As required
Protected Data Security Plan	In accordance with Section 89 of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 Council has developed and will maintain a Protective Data Security Plan (PDSP). This plan identifies risk profiles of data sets and the security applied to this data in line with the protective data security standards.	2 years

## 4. Decision-Making

Tool	Description	Cycle
Strong Governance Support	We support Councillors, and Council Officers to understand and comply with the Act and Regulations.	As required
Governance Rules	In accordance with Section 60 of the Act, Council has a set of Governance Rules which provide guidance on the conduct of Council meetings and delegated committees, meeting records, election of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor and conflicts of interest.	4 years
Local Laws	Council may make local laws for or with respect to any act, matter or thing in respect of which the Council has a function or power under this Act or any other Act. Council has made the Use of the Common Seal and Conduct at Council Meetings Local Law No. 1 2021 and the Community Amenity Local Law 2023.	10 years
Formal Schedule of Delegations	Delegations empower employees and committees with the authority to make binding decisions on behalf of their council. In the context of local government, delegation is the giving of decision- making power by Councillors and/or the CEO to Council staff.	As required
Authorisations	An Authorised Officer is a person, other than a Councillor, appointed by Council to carry out a compliance function or an enforcement function under legislation related to the functions and powers of the Council.	As required
Evidence-based decisions	Council Officers conduct research engage with the community and refer to relevant legislation and regulations prior to proposing and making decisions. This information is often captured in reports and presented at Council Meetings for decisions. All decisions are made at Council meetings or under delegated authority to others. How decisions are made at these meetings are governed by the Act and our Governance Rules. Members of the public can attend Council meetings. Council also live-stream meetings on Facebook. The decisions made at Council meetings (minutes) are published on Council's website.	Scheduled Council meetings occur once a month. Unscheduled Council meetings are additional meetings scheduled to discuss specific topics.
Record of decisions and implementation plans	Council meeting minutes are the primary record of decisions made by Council. Council receives a regular status report on the decisions of Council.	Monthly

Council Meetings	Meeting of the Council convened in accordance with the Governance Rules which includes a Scheduled meeting and Unscheduled meeting where decisions are made by the Council.	Monthly - Scheduled meetings As required – Unscheduled meetings
External expertise is used as appropriate	External expertise is used as required	As required.
Council and Staff Conflict of Interest managed	Councillors and Council staff have a responsibility to identify and disclose conflicts of interest in accordance with Section 126 of the Act.	As required
Advocacy Plan	This plan outlines the strategic approach to promoting positive change and improving the quality of life for all residents.	Annually

## 5. Communications and Community Engagement

Tool	Description	Cycle
Community Engagement Policy	Development of a Community Engagement Policy is a requirement under Section 55 of the Act. This policy outlines council's commitment to providing opportunities for the community to influence the decisions, policies and plans by actively participating in engagement programs and processes.	4 years
Communications Strategy	The 2024 - 2025 Advocacy Plan supports Moira Shire Council's vision to be a welcoming, healthy, and sustainable community that encourages diversity, business ingenuity, and inclusion.	Annually
Public Transparency Policy	This policy supports Council in its ongoing drive for good governance and the importance of open and accountable conduct and how council information is to be made publicly available. The policy is a requirement under Section 57 of the Act.	4 years
Live Streaming and Publishing Recordings of Council Meetings	Live streaming of meetings and making recordings available on Council's website provide greater flexibility and convenient access for residents. Council's policy outlines the requirements associated with the live streaming and publishing of recordings.	4 years
Freedom of Information requests	The <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i> gives the community a general right of access to documents held by Council. This includes documents created by Council and documents supplied to Council by external organisations or individuals.	As required
Social Media Policy and Protocol	This policy provides direction to staff, including Councillors, on professional use of social media on behalf of Council, personal use of social media and legal considerations	4 years

Spokesperson Protocol	This protocol establishes Council's commitment to effectively respond to the media, wider community and stakeholders in a professional, timely and positive manner. The policy nominates the official spokesperson(s) for Council and the approval processes to enable statements by Council.	4 years
Council Website	The Moira Shire Council website provides access and information to all our services online.	As required
Moira Matters	Moira Matters is an online engagement tool that allows us to ask our community about specific projects, programs, endorsed documents or general feedback. This means our work is informed and relevant to our community.	As required

## 6. Performance and Capability

Tool	Description	Cycle
Workforce Plan	Section 46(4)(a) of the Act. The Chief Executive Officer is required to develop and maintain a workforce plan.	4 years
Recruitment and retention of skilled staff	This policy applies to all employees of Council involved in the recruitment and selection of staff, inclusive of internal recruitment & selection processes and decisions. The Recruitment and Selection Policy must be maintained and have clear linkages to Council's Workforce Plan.	4 years
Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan	The Business Continuity Plan starts from the point that a disruption event occurs. It provides guidance on what may be interrupted and how to effectively return to business as usual as soon as is practicable.	Annual review
Robust Human Resource (HR) systems and policies	Council maintains a range of HR and OHS policies to support the performance and capability of our staff.	4 years
Resources and training to support Mayor and Councillors	The CEO ensures adequate resources and training are available to the Mayor and Councillors or Administrators through the Councillor Professional Development Policy.	As required
Staff and Councillor training in bullying, OH&S, diversity and discrimination	Council coordinates regular training and professional development to staff to prevent bullying and discrimination.	As required
Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure	The policy and procedure ensure that all recruitment and selection decisions comply with Section 48 of the Act and that the best candidate for the role is selected on merit.	4 years
Induction training	New employees undertake an induction program with key areas of the organisation.	Upon commencement of new staff

Management of poor / under performance	The Disciplinary Procedure aims to provide consistency in the treatment of all staff.	4 Years
Training in corporate systems, policies, processes and procedures	Council coordinates training in relation to the implementation of systems, processes and procedures to ensure staff have awareness and comply.	As required

## 7. Risk and Compliance

Tool	Description	Cycle
Legislative compliance	Council subscribes to systems that provide legislative compliance and is updated as required.	As required
Audit and Risk Committee Charter	The Audit & Risk Committee Charter provides the governance framework to guide the Audit and Risk Committee.	2 years
Risk Management Policy and Framework	Council's Risk Management Policy outlines our commitment to identifying, managing and mitigating Council's risk exposure, and includes Council's Risk Appetite Statement.	4 years
Privacy policies and confidentiality procedures	The Privacy Policy outlines Council's commitment to compliance with our obligations for the collection, management, and disclosure of personal information.	4 years
Fraud Prevention and Control Policy	This policy sets out how Council will protect public funds and Council property from fraud and outlines the measures to be taken by Council to prevent, detect and manage fraudulent behaviour.	4 years
Independent third- party audits	Independent Auditors are appointed by Council and following a risk assessment an audit schedule is developed. Audits are conducted in accordance with an annual program.	Annual audit program Auditors appointed every 4 years
Legislative Registers	Council subscribes to systems that provides legislative registers and is updated as required.	As required
Insurance, liability and litigation controls	Council maintains comprehensive insurance coverage that includes liability and litigation protection.	Annually
Procurement Policy and Procurement and Contract Management Guidelines	The Procurement framework provides guidance on the procurement processes undertaken by, or on behalf of, Council in accordance with Section 108 of the Act.	4 years.
Public Interest Disclosure Policy	The policy ensures there is an effective process for facilitating the receipt of protected disclosures, their assessment and notification and provides protection for those who make a disclosure in accordance with the <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012</i> (Act) and the <i>Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011</i> .	4 years

Tool	Description	Cycle
Personal Interest Returns	Nominated officers must disclose certain information through an initial personal interest return or a biannual personal interest return in accordance with Sections 132-136 of the Act.	Twice yearly

### 8. Monitoring and Review

Tool	Description	Cycle
Assessment of Council's Governance Framework	The Governance Framework assessment will be conducted annually to assess the effectiveness of the framework.	Annually
Annual Report and quarterly financial and performance reports	The Annual Report details Council's performance during the year. Quarterly financial and performance reports track/compare Council's actual results to the budget.	Annually Quarterly
Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan	The Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan forms part of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter and ensure the committee are meeting their obligations to facilitate the organisations ethical development.	2 years
Policy Review Framework	The purpose of the Policy Framework is to set out the process to be followed for the development, approval, implementation, monitoring and review of policies and associated documents.	4 years
Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF)	The LGPRF is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils. The framework is made up of many measures, including for roads, planning, animal management and waste.	Twice yearly
Audit recommendations monitored and reported	Audit reports and the action plan to address recommendations are reported to the Audit & Risk Committee and Council.	Quarterly
Service Reviews	Service Planning Framework outlines the purpose and scope of service reviews.	5 years
Staff engagement surveys	Staff engagement surveys are conducted annually.	Annually
Staff performance reviews	The annual performance appraisal cycle for all employees to helps create a culture that promotes professional and personal success, along with collaboration.	Annually

## RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020 Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act 2023 Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 Road Management Act 2004 Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Gender Equality Act 2020

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Governance Rules Policy Review Framework Audit and Risk Committee Charter Moira Shire Council Workforce Plan Service Planning Framework Public Interest Disclosure Policy Procurement Policy and Procurement and Contract Management Guidelines Fraud Prevention and Control Policy **Risk Management Policy and Framework Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure Councillor Professional Development Policy** Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan **Spokesperson Protocol** Social Media Policy and Protocol Live Streaming and Publishing Recordings of Council Meetings Policy Public Transparency Policy **Community Engagement Policy** Advocacy Plan Use of the Common Seal and Conduct at Council Meetings Local Law No. 1 2021 Community Amenity Local Law 2023. Protected Data Security Plan **CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy** Discretionary Expenditure, Policy, Schedule and Guidelines Training Conference and Professional Development Policy **Complaint Handling Policy** Volunteering Policy Gender Equality Action Plan Gift, Benefit and Hospitality Policy Administrator and Staff Interaction Protocol **Customer Experience Commitment Employee Code of Conduct** Model Councillor Code of Conduct **Community Vision** Council Plan Wellbeing for All Ages Strategy Long Term Financial Plan Annual Budget Report Revenue and Rating Plan Moira Planning Scheme **Road Management Plan**