Draft Controlled Documents Policy

MSC25E

Authorised by:		**Minute No:**	
Date:		**Document Type:**	Policy
Review due date:		**Internal/External:**	External
Review timeframe:	4 years		
Department:	Governance and Risk		
Document Owner:	Manager Governance and Risk		

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1. Policy Objective

This policy describes Muswellbrook Shire Council's objectives and principles for development, review and rescission of controlled documents to ensure high quality, consistent documents that comply with legislative requirements, ensure document control, reduce risk and which are readily accessible and understood by Council Officials and the community.

2. Risks being addressed

This policy mitigates the potential risk of Council's Policies and other Controlled Documents not meeting statutory and organisational requirements.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors, Council Staff and the development, authorisation, management, and review of all Controlled Documents at Muswellbrook Shire Council.

This policy does not apply to the Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents Suite.

4. General Definitions

Term	Definition
Council	Muswellbrook Shire Council
Council Official	Includes paid employees, Councillors, committee members, contractors, subcontractors, work placement/work experience, and volunteers.
DLG	Directorate Leadership Team
EDRMS	Council's Electronic Document Records Management System
MLG	Management Leadership Team

5. Controlled Document Types and definitions

The purpose of formulating a Controlled Document is to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and support operational objectives. A Controlled Document may be developed in response to current or anticipated circumstances or risks.

Documents will be classified as per the below Document Type definitions table and with reference to the below Document Classification Flowchart.

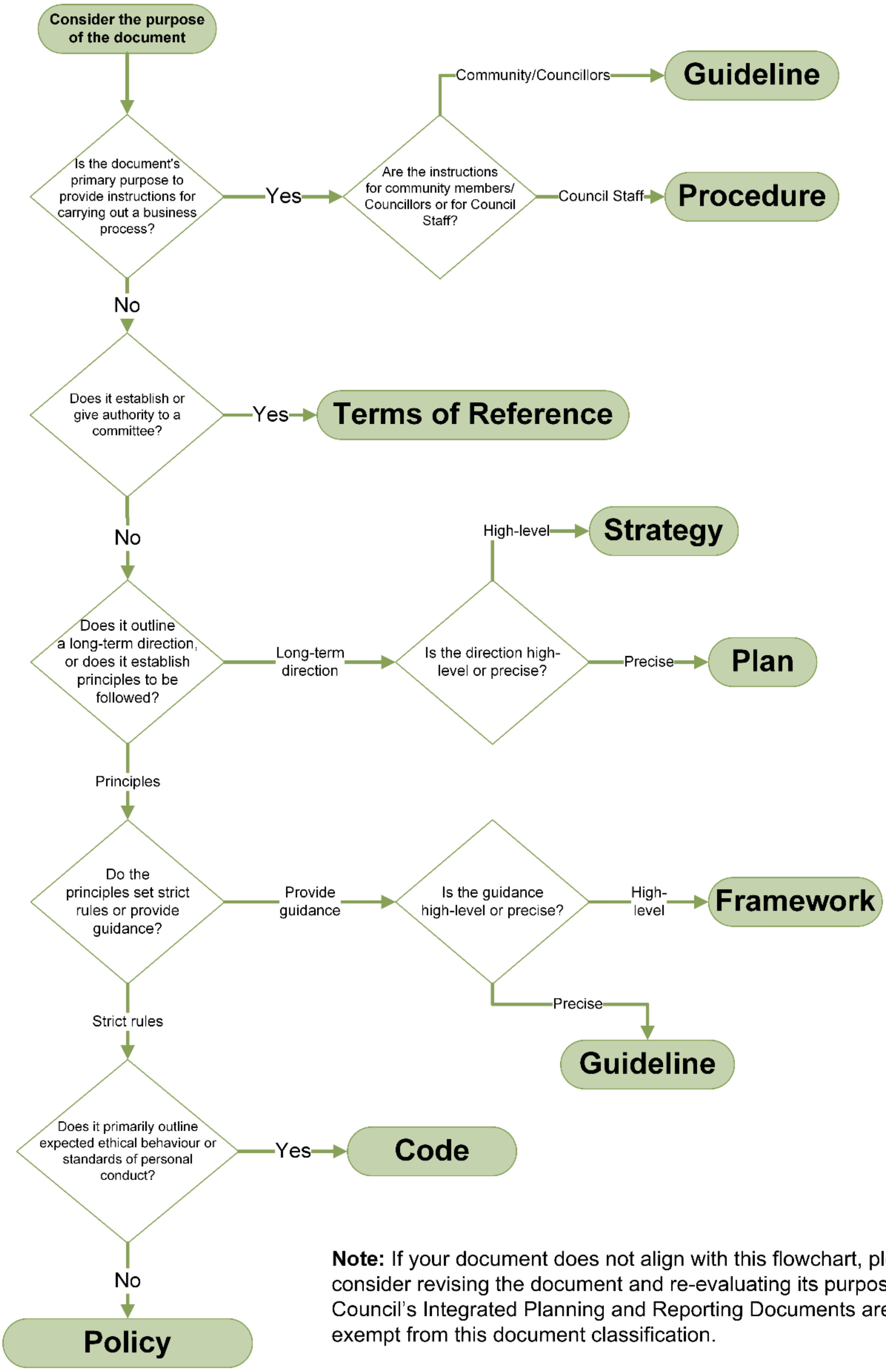
A sub-category of "External" will be assigned to documents that have a direct impact on the community, councillors, individuals, or businesses. Procedures for Council staff that are identified by Directors or the General Manager to be publicly available to Councillors and/or the Community will also be sub-categorised as "External". All other documents will be sub-categorised as "Internal".

Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents are exempt from this document classification.

Some historical Controlled Documents may not adhere to this policy in terms of their classification. As part of the document's review process, its document classification will be updated to reflect this policy.

Document Type	Definition
Code	A formal statement of Council that establishes principles and requirements expected ethical behaviour or standards of personal conduct.
Framework	A structured set of interrelated principles, policies, and arrangements that establishes Council's approach to a topic, providing high-level guidance without prescribing detailed or mandatory requirements.
Guideline	Provides advisory guidance or recommended approaches to support the application of Council policies, frameworks, or processes, without establishing mandatory requirements. Guidance for the community and/or Councillors.
Plan	Specifies objectives, actions, responsibilities, and resources to achieve defined outcomes within a specified timeframe.
Policy	A formal statement of Council's position that establishes intentions and direction, providing principles to guide decision-making, service delivery, and the fulfilment of statutory responsibilities.
Procedure	A specified and mandatory way to carry out an activity or process, providing instructions to ensure consistent implementation of policies and operational requirements. Applies to Council staff.
Strategy	Establishes long-term direction, priorities, and objectives to achieve desired outcomes.
Term of Reference	Defines the purpose, authority, scope, roles, responsibilities, and governance arrangements of a committee or group.

Document Classification Flowchart



Note: If your document does not align with this flowchart, please consider revising the document and re-evaluating its purpose. Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents are exempt from this document classification.

6. Authorisation Process

Documents are first reviewed and endorsed by the Review Body and then adopted by the Authorising Body as detailed in the below table depending on document type and category.

Public exhibition, where required, is for a minimum of 28 days via Council's website.

Documents that have a direct or significant impact on Staff will also be reported to the Staff Consultative Committee (SCC) after the Review Body and prior to the Authorisation Body for consultation and review.

Documents related to Work, Health and Safety will also be reported to the Work, Health and Safety Committee (WHS Committee) after the Review Body and prior to the Authorisation Body for consultation and review.

The following table details the Authorisation required for each document type for both External and Internal categories.

	External Documents			Internal Documents	
Document Type	Authorisation Body	Review Body	Public Exhibition?	Authorisation Body	Review Body
Code	Council	MLG	Yes	DLG	MLG
Framework	Council	DLG	No		
Guideline	Council	MLG	No	DLG	None
Plan	Council	MLG	Yes	DLG	MLG
Policy	Council	MLG	Yes	MLG	SCC
Procedure				MLG	None/SCC (as applicable)
Strategy	Council	DLG	Yes	DLG	MLG
Term of Reference	Council	Relevant Committee (where established) or DLG	No	DLG	Relevant Committee (where established) or MLG

7. Document review

Reviews of Controlled Documents are conducted as needed by organisational or legislative needs. All policies and codes are reviewed at least once every four years unless otherwise legislated.

Administrative changes of updating the following information are made without requiring re-authorisation:

- Position and Department title updates as changed in the Organisational Structure under a restructure; (a change of responsibilities to a different position requires re-authorisation);
- Related Documents;
- Hyperlinks; or
- Re-formatting.

All other changes require re-adoption of the Controlled Document.

8. Policy and Document Rescission

When it is determined that a policy is no longer necessary it will be recommended for rescission. External policies are rescinded by Council and Internal policies are rescinded by MLG.

When it is determined that other types of Controlled Documents are no longer necessary it is recommended to its Authorising Body for rescission. Controlled Documents that are only set for a particular timeframe will expire automatically.

9. Consultation and communication

Controlled Documents that require public exhibition are publicly exhibited on Council's website for a minimum of 28 days, unless otherwise legislated, and available in hardcopy at Council's Administration Centre and Library branches.

Public exhibition gives the community an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Controlled Document via a submission. Submissions are accepted until the close of business of the last day of public exhibition and are managed according to Council's *Privacy Management Plan*.

All external adopted policies and external authorised Controlled Documents are available for public viewing on Council's Policy Register: https://www.muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au/policies/

10. Roles, Responsibilities and Delegations

Each document will be assigned a Document Owner, whose position title will be noted on the front page of the document. The Document Owner is responsible for the function covered by the Controlled Document and ensures the content of the document aligns with organisational and legislative requirements.

Administrative tasks, such as updating Council's EDRMS, and the coordination of public exhibition will be the responsibility of the Coordinator Business Improvement.

The following positions are responsible for:

Role	Responsibility

Coordinator Business Improvement	• Implementation of this policy • Development of appropriate templates for policies and other Controlled Documents • Maintain a Controlled Documents Register with all policies, codes, external procedures, external guidelines and their review dates, document owners and adoption details • Maintain the Policy folder in Council's EDRMS • Facilitate policy reviews with document owners • Prepare and complete reports to Authorisation and Review bodies where required • Coordinate the Public Exhibition of documents as required • Ensure the Policies Register on Council's website reflects current external policies • Communicate adopted policies to Council employees
Community	• Provide feedback on policies via submissions
Council Staff	• Adhere to Council's policies • Where applicable provide feedback on policies • Assist with reviews as part of project teams as required
Councillors	• Consider community submissions • Identify new policies required • Review draft Controlled Documents • Endorse Controlled Documents for public exhibition • Adopt and Endorse Controlled Documents • Rescind Controlled Documents where applicable
Council's Administration Centre	• Publicly exhibit draft controlled documents at Council's Administration Centre during the exhibition period when requested
Digital Media Officer	• Publish draft documents on Council's website for public exhibition when requested • Publish controlled documents on Council's website when requested • Update controlled documents on Council's website when requested
DLG	• Review, Endorse and/or provide feedback for draft controlled documents • Rescind controlled documents where applicable • Directors may approve an internal procedure that effects only their directorate with submitting to MLG for endorsement
Document Controller	• Maintain the document in Council's EDRMS and Controlled Document Register • Facilitate document reviews in line with required review dates

	• Prepare and complete reports to Authorisation and Review bodies relating to documents • Coordinate the Public Exhibition of documents where applicable • Ensure Council's website reflects current external documents • Communicate adopted and endorsed documents to Council employees
Document Owner	• Review policy in line with legislative and organisational timeframes and requirements • Include Coordinator Business Improvement in policy review process • Prepare and complete reports to Authorisation and Review bodies
MLG	• Review, Endorse and/or provide feedback for draft controlled documents • Rescind Controlled Documents where applicable
Muswellbrook and Denman Libraries	• Publicly exhibit draft controlled documents at the library branches during the exhibition period when requested
Staff Consultative Committee	• Review, Endorse and/or provide feedback for draft controlled documents that have a direct or significant impact on staff.
Work, Health & Safety Committee	• Review, Endorse and/or provide feedback for draft controlled documents related to Work, Health and Safety.

11. Enforcement

Clause 3.1(b) of Council's *Code of Conduct* provides that Council Officials must not conduct themselves in a manner that is contrary to statutory requirements or Council's administrative requirements or policies. A breach of a policy may also constitute a breach of Council's *Code of Conduct*.

12. Dispute Resolution

The General Manager is the interpreter of this policy. If Controlled Documents conflict, the later document will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency.

13. Related Documents

Legislation and Guidelines

- Local Government Act 1993
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

Policies and Procedures

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- Controlled Documents Procedure
- Code of Conduct (Doc ID: 1436817)
- Code of Conduct Procedures (Doc ID: 429616)

- Privacy Management Plan (Doc ID: 433422)

Other Supporting Documents

- N/A

14. Version history

This section identifies authors who reviewed the Policy and the date that it became effective.

V.	Date	Modified by	Amendments/Previous adoption details
1.	23/05/2023	Business Improvement Officer	Adopted by Council 23/05/2023, minute number 395
2	26/05/2025	Manager Governance and Risk	Name of policy changed from "Policy on Policy Making" to "Controlled Documents Policy" to broaden scope of policy. Policy re-write to reflect change.

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