

<b>SECTION:</b> Administration		<b>POLICY #:</b> ADM-017
<b>Date Approved:</b> February 19, 2019		Council – Staff Relations
<b>Revision Date:</b>	<b>Review Date:</b>	
<b>Authority:</b> Report CAO-08-19		

## 1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Positive relationships between council and staff are essential to the provision of public service excellence and effective governance in the Town of Hanover. Successful relationships involve mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities, two-way communication, clarity in reporting relationships and direction from council to staff through the CAO/Clerk. These principles can be achieved when high standards of conduct form the basis of all council and staff interaction.

## 2.0 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 270 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as revised by Bill 68 requires council to adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the relationship between members of council and the officers and employees of the corporation. The Council-Staff Relations Policy identifies the legislation, policies, procedures and practices that the municipality complies with in order to promote a respectful relationship between members of council and the officers and employees of the Town of Hanover.

## 3.0 APPLICATION

The guiding principles contained in this policy shall apply to all Town of Hanover staff and members of council.

## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

**Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk:** the head of Town staff, as the only employee of council, manages the day-to-day work of staff as directed by Town council.

**Council Members:** shall mean the members elected as the legislative body of the Town of Hanover council.

**Mayor:** the head of council and the Chief Executive Officer of the Town.

**Staff:** shall mean full-time, part-time, contract workers and volunteers of the Town.

**Town:** shall mean The Corporation of the Town of Hanover.

## 5.0 PROCEDURES

**Roles and Accountabilities:** The role of council is to govern. The role of staff is to advise, implement and manage public service delivery. Council and staff work in partnership with one another, while performing their respective roles. Although the roles of council and staff are distinct, they are interdependent, each one requiring the other to fulfill the Town's mandate and purpose.

### Joint Role of Council Members and Staff:

- Demonstrate commitment to accountability and transparency among council and staff and with the general public;

- Demonstrate leadership by making sound decisions based on knowledge, expert advice and sound judgment;
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters where information is protected under law and/or during the course of business, as prescribed in the *Municipal Act*;
- Enhance public understanding of the political process by providing information about decision making processes;
- Uphold decisions of council as a whole, regardless of personal opinion or belief, and commit to the implementation of those decisions;
- Refrain from disparaging criticism of council members or staff; and
- Seek to achieve and maintain a team approach in an environment of mutual respect and trust, with respect and acknowledgement of the different roles in achieving council's objectives.

### **Respect for Time Priorities**

Priorities and timelines must be respected by all council members 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. Appointments will be made for meetings between staff and council members in order to ensure that all parties are available and prepared for the discussion.

### **Role of Council Members (Mayor and Councillors):**

- The role of council as a whole is three-fold:
  1. Representative role – to represent constituents in dealing with issues before council, keeping the greater good of all constituents in mind
  2. Policy role – to make policy and establish general principles to guide future actions and decisions
  3. Stewardship role – to be stewards of municipal resources, and to ensure financial and administrative resources are being used efficiently, consistent with established policy, legislation and the objectives of council.
- Seek to advance the common good of the community which they serve;
- Truly, faithfully and impartially exercise their role to the best of their knowledge and ability;
- 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 resolution by council as a whole; and
- Govern the management of the organization through the CAO/Clerk.

### **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;
- Acknowledge that the mayor, an individual councillor or informal groups of councillors cannot make a decision on behalf of the council unless authorized by council or statute;
- 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 and credibility;
- Request the CAO/Clerk's input prior to making important policy decisions;
- Respond to concerns from the public and refer concerns to staff members through the mayor and CAO/Clerk for action – elected officials do not have an administrative managerial role in the day-to-day business of the organization;
- Council members should, to the extent possible:
  - discuss issues with staff and advise staff of questions prior to public meetings where the issue will be heard; and
  - request advice from the CAO/Clerk about the appropriate wording of motions, amendments and formal staff directions in accordance with the Procedural By-law.
- Understand that their discussions with staff may be communicated and that a member of council cannot compel a member of staff to confidentiality; and
- Consult with the CAO/Clerk prior to making commitments to agencies, groups, citizens, or likewise.

#### **Role of Town 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;
- Implement council's decisions;
- Manage and identify the means for achieving corporate goals and outcomes;
- 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; and
- Refrain from behaviour that could constitute an act of disorder or misbehavior; is an abuse of power or otherwise amounts to discrimination, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, or the adverse treatment of others; or prejudices the provision of a service or services to the community.

#### **It is expected that Staff Members will:**

- Ensure that council members are aware of any issues that may impact upon their decision-making process;
- Management will ensure that the CAO/Clerk is aware of any issues that may impact upon the municipality and of ongoing activities in each department;
- The CAO/Clerk will ensure that managers are aware of any issues that may impact upon their departments;
- Respond to enquiries from council members (through the CAO/Clerk or mayor) in a timely fashion, when appropriate during business hours with the exception of emergencies;
- Present a professional opinion/recommendation in writing or in person, at council 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; and

- Through the CAO/Clerk, convey feedback to council members who may be unaware of existing policies or staff workload demands, and other related issues.

## **Respectful Reporting Relationship**

The formal relationship between members of council and staff 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/or CAO/Clerk for their consideration. Any request for information from a council member that is not received and answered at a committee or council meeting is to be circulated and responded to in writing and copied to all council members.

## **Expectations of Information Flow Outside of Regular Business Hours**

It will not be expected that responses will be sent or actions taken by staff outside of regular administrative business hours, with the exception of emergencies as defined by the Emergency Response Plan for the Town.

## **6.0 EXCLUSIONS**

There are no exclusions to this policy except as required by law or for matters that are restricted to closed meetings as per the *Municipal Act*.

## **7.0 REFERENCES AND RELATED POLICIES**

This policy shall be read and applied in conjunction with the following corporate documents, as updated from time to time:

Policy ADM-005	Accountability & Transparency
Policy ADM-010	Council Code of Conduct
Policy ADM-010	Advisory Committee Code of Conduct
Policy ADM-015	Use of Corporate Resources for Election Campaign Purposes
Policy HR-002	Employee Code of Conduct
Policy HR-004	Respect in the Workplace (Harassment & Violence)
By-law No. 2943-16	Council Procedure By-law

## **8.0 CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE**

In the interest of strengthening staff and council relationships, both staff and council are encouraged to consider informal discussions and/or mediation prior to the submittal of a formal complaint. The following policies will be referenced for all complaints:

1. Council Code of Conduct
2. Advisory Committee Code of Conduct
3. Employee Code of Conduct
4. Respect in the Workplace (Harassment & Violence)

## **9.0 REVIEW CYCLE**

The Council-Staff Relations Policy (ADM-017) shall be reviewed each term of council or as required due to legislative change.