

<b>SECTION:</b> Administration		<b>POLICY #:</b> ADM-005
<b>Date Approved:</b> December 10, 2007		<b>Accountability and Transparency</b>
<b>Revision Date:</b> July 11, 2016	<b>Review Date:</b> July 11, 2016	
<b>Authority:</b> Reports CAO-13-07; CAO-05-16		

## 1. PURPOSE/APPLICATION

The *Municipal Act, 2001* (the Act) requires that all municipalities adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the manner in which the municipality will try to ensure that it is accountable to the public for its actions, and the manner in which the municipality will try to ensure that its actions are transparent to the public. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the delivery of the municipality's activities and services in accordance with the principles as outlined herein. This policy has been developed in accordance with the Act to comply with section 270.

## 2. DEFINITIONS: Accountability; Transparency

In this policy, the terms "accountability" and "transparency" have the following meaning:

**Accountability** – The principle that the municipality is obligated to demonstrate and will take responsibility for how councillors and staff are held accountable for their actions; and how actions are explained and justified in terms of appropriate criteria and in sufficient detail.

**Transparency** – The principle that the municipality will conduct its business so that outside parties have the ability to observe how decisions are made and implemented.

## 3. POLICY STATEMENT

The Council of the Town of Hanover acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good government for its stakeholders in an accountable and transparent manner by:

- Encouraging public access and participation to ensure that decision making is responsive to the needs of its constituents and receptive to their opinions;
- Delivering high quality services to our citizens; and
- Promoting the efficient use of public resources.

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the municipality adopting measures ensuring, to the best of its ability, that all activities and services are undertaken utilizing a process that is open and accessible to its stakeholders. In addition, wherever possible, the municipality will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision making process which will be open, visible and transparent to the public.

## 4. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally to the political process and decision making and to the administrative management of the municipality.

## 4.1 Financial Accountability, Oversight and Reporting

The municipality will be open, accountable and transparent to its stakeholders in its financial dealings as required under the Act. Some examples of how the municipality provides such accountability and transparency are as follows:

- External audits and reports
- Annual financial statements
- Annual budget reports
- Asset Management
- Purchasing/procurement practices
- Sale of land practices and procedures
- Budget process open to the public

Financial policies include:

- Tangible Capital Assets Policy
- Tangible Capital Asset Amortization Policy
- Investment Policy
- Property Tax & Collection Policy
- Corporate Credit Card Policy
- Conferences & Conventions Policy
- Council Per Diem Policy
- Asset Management Program (AMP)

## 4.2 Internal Accountability and Ethical Standards

The municipality's administrative practices ensure specific accountability on the part of its employees through the following initiatives:

- Human Resources Policies and Procedures including:
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Council, Advisory Committees and Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Progressive Corrective Measures
- Respect in the Workplace (Harrassment & Violence)
- Performance Management and Evaluation Program
- Health and Safety Policies and Procedures
- Orientation / Continuing Education
- Work/Life Balance
- Compensation /Benefit
- Responsibility for ensuring that administrative practices and procedures recognize Council's commitment to accountability and transparency.

## 4.3 Legislated Requirements

The Town is accountable and transparent to its stakeholders by fulfilling various legislative responsibilities and disclosure of information, and shall conduct its business within its jurisdiction in accordance with the Provincial Statues, Ontario Regulations and any other applicable laws including but not limited to the *Municipal Act, 2001*, *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*; *Provincial Offences Act*; *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; *Public Health Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; and *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act*.

#### **4.4 Public Participation and Information Sharing**

The municipality ensures that it is open and accountable to its stakeholders through implementing processes outlining how, when and under what rules meetings will take place. The municipality's meetings will be open to the public when and as required under the Act, and members of the public will have an opportunity to make delegations or comments in writing on specific items at these meetings. In addition, the municipality has adopted policies which ensure that participation by the public can be meaningful and effective, through timely disclosure of information by various means including print media, websites, social media, etc. Some specific examples include:

- Council Procedure By-law including Delegation Procedure
- Records Retention By-law
- Public Notice By-law
- Public Posting and Distribution of Council Agenda Meetings
- Procurement By-law
- Land Sale/Disposal By-law
- Social Media Policy
- Planning Process
- Complaints Process (to be formalized)
- Accessible Customer Service Policy & Customer Feedback
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)