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RELATED LEGISLATION:	Local Government Act 2020 Local Government (Planning and Performance) Regulations 2014 Victoria Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 National Competition Policy
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Signed by Chief Executive Officer

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Service Planning Framework Policy v1.docx

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This document is available in alternative formats (e.g. larger font) if requested.

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a 'Service Planning Framework'.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to Councillors and staff.

3 POLICY

Council has a strong commitment to continuously plan, strategically review and improve its services.

In line with the Service Planning Framework set out in this policy, Council will ensure community expectations and standards are met in a cost-effective manner; and that the overall services provided, and outcomes delivered, are financially sustainable, aligned to Council's long-term strategic objectives and comply with relevant legislation and policy.

Council's approach to Service Planning will be informed by the Loddon Shire Council Plan.

Council's Service Planning Framework will provide for comparative choice between services to enable Council to ultimately determine the range of services provided and the preferred level of service for the Loddon community.

Council is also committed to continuous improvement and Best Value Principles as espoused in the Local Government Act 1989 and intends to apply these when undertaking Service Reviews of individual services.

3.1 Service Planning Framework

3.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of Council's Service Planning Framework are to:

- develop a clear understanding and agreement on the purpose, scope and desired outcomes of Council's services
- identify service provision demands, trends, priorities and changes to ensure services continue to meet Council, community and organisational need, and understand the implications these have on both current and future service delivery
- assist in understanding the true cost, resources and benefits in delivering services and understand the long-term sustainability of the agreed service offering to the community
- support Council decision making with regard to:
 - the range, demand and level of services Council provides; and
 - ensuring the services are financially sustainable and relevant in the long term
- inform sustainable financial planning of Council's budget and capital works program relative to supporting Council's service provision. Service Plans will inform asset management and planning, in accordance with the Municipal Association Victoria (MAV) STEP Program (a program run by MAV that supports councils in their continuing journey to achieve positive outcomes for the services they deliver to their communities).
- develop an evidence-based culture and commitment to regularly reviewing service delivery in a collaborative manner, consistent with Council values.

3.1.2 Council engagement

Two engagement processes will be held with Councillors as part of the Service Planning Framework and development of each Service Review. Councillors will be provided with documentation, and their guidance will be sought following the completion of:

- Service Planning – for guidance on the preferred strategic service direction and key recommendations.
- Service Reviews – upon completion of a draft Service Review, for guidance on the proposed changes to levels of service arising from a Service Review including resource and cost implications.

Additional engagement with Councillors may be undertaken during the development of Service Reviews.

3.2 **Service Planning**

When undertaking Service Planning, we aim to:

- determine the purpose and desired outcomes of each service, in line with Council's strategic objectives
- ensure services meet the requirements of relevant Federal and State Government legislation, regulations and frameworks, and are delivered consistent with Council policies
- determine the standards for the service (levels of service) being delivered, including service demand, service priority and consider if the current service levels are sustainable in the longer term
- clarify 'Council's role' in the service, determine if Council is the most appropriate and cost-effective agency to deliver the service, and identify if the community's capacity to access other services or programs external to Council would better meet their needs.

3.3 **Service Reviews**

3.3.1 Aims

When undertaking individual Service Reviews, we aim to:

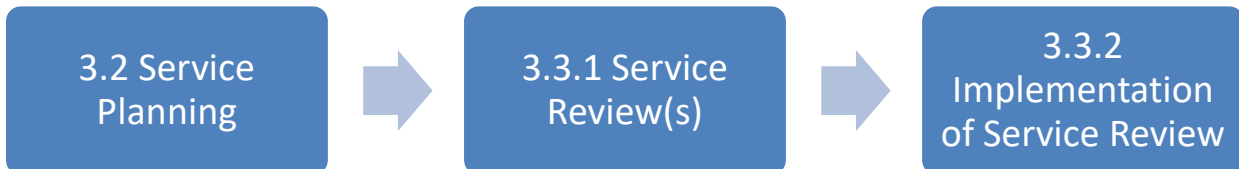
- consider, and as required, seek community/service users' feedback about the adequacy and satisfaction of services in responding to needs and expectations
- assess and monitor the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of the service delivery model
- identify service resource requirements for the longer term and consider what impact changes in service levels, if any, this will have on Council's long-term sustainability
- consider, and if necessary take steps to manage risks and community impacts associated with delivering (or not delivering) the service
- ensure services have appropriate measures in place to maintain key business activities, resources and services throughout a business interruption and minimise any adverse effects to the community or organisation
- ensure that services are being delivered in a responsible, prudent and cost-effective manner, providing value for ratepayer money
- ensure that services have regard to, and meet the Best Value Principles, as outlined in the Local Government Act 1989.

3.3.2 Implementation of Service Reviews

Any Service Review which requires changes to existing services should undergo appropriate community and/or stakeholder engagement before implementation, in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and Enterprise Agreement.

Following approval or adoption of a Service Review, service managers will be responsible for the ongoing implementation, review and progress reporting. Service Reviews may cover responsibilities across several departments and functions and will specify responsibility against each action.

Implementation of Service Reviews will form part of directors' and managers' annual performance objectives.



3.4 Review of Service Planning Framework

3.4.1 Service Planning Framework program of work

Council will undertake a full Service Planning exercise from a strategic perspective every three years with an annual review of the Service Planning Framework every 12 months prior to Budget consideration.

Council will support the Service Planning Framework with a series of rolling service reviews and update the framework post completion and resolution of each service review.

3.4.2 Prioritisation and scheduling of Service Reviews

Council's Service Reviews will be progressively applied across all Council services, on a rolling four-year planning schedule.

The criteria used for prioritising services for the implementation of the Service Reviews include:

- priorities derived from the Service Planning Framework
- Council or CEO directive
- financial pressures and considerations, including withdrawal or changes to external funding arrangements
- legislative or regulatory changes
- evidence of changing demands or priorities for services, including customer and community feedback
- opportunities for improved (or new) service provision
- organisational capacity, workloads and complementary activities.

The annual program of Service Reviews will be developed with input from Councillors and the Management Executive Group.

Service Reviews will be developed in accordance with this policy and the prescribed templates and guidelines issued by the Director Corporate Services.

4 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS OR ABBREVIATIONS USED

Term	Definition
Best Value Principles	<p>The principles outlined in Section 208B of the Local Government Act 1989 which councils are required to comply with when reviewing and planning Council's services and activities. Under the Act, these principles state that:</p> <p>a) all services provided by a Council must meet the quality and cost standards required by section 208D;</p> <p>b) subject to sections 3C(2)(b) and 3C(2)(e), all services provided by a Council must be responsive to the needs of its community;</p> <p>c) each service provided by a Council must be accessible to those members of the community for whom the service is intended;</p> <p>d) a Council must achieve continuous improvement in the provision of services for its community;</p> <p>e) a Council must develop a program of regular consultation with its community in relation to the services it provides;</p> <p>f) a Council must report regularly to its community on its achievements in relation to the principles set out in paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e).</p>
Community expectations	<p>The community's long-term aspirations and goals, as outlined in the Council Plan. Council's strategic objectives are aligned with community expectations and are progressively implemented via the Council Plan and Service Planning Framework and Service Reviews.</p>
Comparative choice analysis	<p>The comparison of two or more alternative options or approaches on how a service could be delivered into the future, with consideration to future demand and requirements and Council policy objectives. One of these options may be to maintain the status of the service in its current form. This analysis would consider the pros and cons of each approach moving forward before making a recommendation.</p>
Council's role	<p>The role Council has in delivering services and achieving community expectations. These can be defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Authority — Council has a legislated responsibility under Victorian Law to ensure compliance and delivery the service. • Service Provider — Council is a leading provider of the service which supports community expectations. Responsibility for providing these services is often shared between Council and other organisations. • Facilitator — Council facilitates, partners and plans with other service providers to achieve community expectations. • Advocate — Council's primary role is to advocate on behalf of (and represent) the community to other levels of government, service providers and business organisations to achieve community expectations.

Term	Definition
Service	A group of programs, activities and projects (irrespective of organisational structure and lines of reporting) which collectively aim to achieve similar overarching outcomes or objectives and are primarily focused towards a shared customer group. Services have been defined in the Service Planning Framework via the 'Service Profile and Service Cost Evaluation Model.
Service Planning Framework	A strategic framework that describes where, when and how the activities and programs of a service are delivered. Documentation of services is recorded in the Service Profile with 10 year financials, service priorities recorded in the Service Cost Evaluation Model (SCEM).
Service Level	The amount of activity (or standards) provided by a service. In some cases, this may include quantitative descriptors of quality standards and qualitative statements outlining minimum expectations.
Strategic Objectives	The outcomes Council is seeking to achieve as outlined in the Council Plan.
Service Demand	The demand for services generally projected out over a 10 year timeframe as part of the Service Planning Framework. Services can be neutral, in decline or growing. Their demand level is not a measure of efficiency or effectiveness.
Annual Performance Objectives	The objectives that form part of the performance management process that measures CEO, directors and managers progress towards the achievement of Council's organisational and community objectives.
Sustainability	Financial resources required to deliver the services into the long term. Council's commitment to sustainability will ensure we are living within the limits of the systems on which we depend and that future generations can also enjoy good quality of life and fulfil their potential.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENT

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights Act. Loddon Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees. The Council will formally involve elected employee Health and Safety Representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health and safety of any of its employees.

6 REVIEW

The Director Corporate Services will review this policy for any necessary amendments no later than 3 years after adoption of this current version.

7 ATTACHMENTS

Nil