



## Council Policy Manual

<b>Subject:</b> <b>Council – Staff Relations Policy</b>	<b>Approval Date:</b> July 22, 2019	<b>By-Law No.</b> 51-2019
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### 1.22 INTENT

The Municipality of Red Lake will value, respect and trust all in a fair and compassionate manner (Principles of Operation)). We promote a respectful, tolerant and harassment-free relationship and workplace between members of Council and all Municipal Staff.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the roles and working relationship that exist between Council and Staff.

This policy is in accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001. Section 270 of the Municipal Act, 2001 as revised by Bill 68, requires Council adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the relationship between members of Council and the CAO and all employees of the Municipality.

### 1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 **Mayor** means the Mayor or the absence of the Mayor or where deemed appropriate within this policy, the Council Member appointed as the Acting Mayor or Deputy Mayor
- 1.2 **Clerk** means the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk, or any individual who has been delegated with the authority of the Clerk by the Municipal Clerk.
- 1.3 **Senior Management Team (SMT)** means the Clerk and Treasurer whom report to the CAO.
- 1.4 **Department Heads** includes all direct reports to the CAO.

### 2. PROTOCOLS

#### 2.1 **Council Role as the Decision-Making Body**

The Mayor and Council members constitute the political component of the Municipality while the Administration constitutes the administrative and operational arm of the Municipality.

Council is led by the Mayor who is the “Head of Council”.

The primary decision-making body is Council. All of the direction by way of policy comes from Council. Individual members of Council do not have



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decision making authority. Rather, decisions by Council are made by the whole of Council, during a public meeting.

Council is to govern and provide political direction; determine desired outcomes and corporate policy; do not have an administrative or managerial role in the day-to-day business of the organization. The key responsibilities are to support the municipality and its operations while ensuring that the public and municipality's well-being and interests are maintained.

### 2.2 Role of Administration

The role of the administration is to implement the decisions of Council and provide timely information that ensures Council is making informed decisions; provides Council with advice on matters that is clear, comprehensive and devoid of any political consideration.

Staff do not have a political role.

### 2.3 Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

The CAO reports directly to Council and is the sole employee of Council. All other employees report to the CAO. A chain of command exists within the Municipal Staff organizational structure to deal with matters of significance. This ensures that all members of staff and Council are treated fairly, equitably, and without favouritism. Individual members of Council do not have the authority to direct the work of Staff.

### 2.4 Access to Information

Information requests can be made by any Member of Council through the following approach (s):

- Directly to the CAO
- Directly to a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) and copied to the CAO
- For matters pertaining to a specific department, the request shall go through the office of the CAO



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### 2.5 Staff Communication with Council

In cases of when a member of the SMT and/or a Department Head are required to respond to a Member of Council or Council in its entirety, the CAO shall be consulted and copied on the communication.

### 2.6 Council Concerns

Any concerns by individual Members of Council should be discussed with the CAO, or the whole of Council, as deemed appropriate based on the nature of the concern. Any Staff related concerns should be directed strictly to the CAO, unless they relate specifically to the CAO. All Council Members shall be advised of any individual Council Member concerns brought to the attention of the CAO.

### 2.7 Requests to Council from Staff

When approached by an employee with an operational issue or concern, Council members shall encourage the employee to use the appropriate channels within the organization. Depending on the nature of the request, these channels may include the employee's supervisor or CAO.

### 2.8 Staff as Council Support

Recognizing Council requires direct administrative support at times, a Member of Council may request support from the Clerk, Executive Assistant, and Community Development and Communications Manager. This support includes administrative assistance in the following areas:

- Guidance on Municipal By-Laws, including the Municipal Procedural By-Law. This includes matters such as how to declare pecuniary interest, how to introduce a notice of motion and general Council and/or committee related procedural, process and decorum related questions.
- Assistance with letter writing and media communications.
- Printing of information or access to studies and reports.
- Registering for training and conferences, including booking travel arrangements.



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The IT Manager is also intended to provide direct support to all system users. Council Members are to contact the IT Manager directly for support pertaining to smartphones, iPads, computers, and other related devices.

### 2.9 Public Requests to Council

As elected officials, it is an expectation of the public for Council to respond to their questions, requests, and concerns of Municipal service levels. In cases where the information is not readily available to the public, Council is encouraged to direct the questions/requests and concerns to the CAO. The CAO will respond accordingly with the public and inform the Member of Council of the outcome. Should a matter be of importance to all of Council, the CAO will provide the necessary background information and outcome(s) to the entire Council.

Public appearances when representing the Municipality should be approved by the Mayor, and with notification provided to the CAO.

### 2.10 Process to be followed for Non-Compliance by Council Members

In the event a Member of Council fails to follow one of the protocols as set out within this policy, the CAO will contact the Member of Council, explain the specifics related to being in contravention of this policy and reorient them on the protocols within this policy. The intent of this contact is to ensure Council Members are both familiar with and operate in compliance of this policy.

Should the Member of Council fail to follow one of the protocols as set out within this policy on a second occasion, the Mayor will be informed as to the Council Member's failure to adhere to this policy. The Mayor will meet one-on-one with that Council Member to address the details as set out within this policy, ensure that the Member of Council is fully aware of the protocols as set out, and that they commit to operating in compliance with those protocols on a forward basis. Should the Member of Council who is not in compliance of this policy is the Mayor, then the Acting (Deputy) Mayor shall act in the role of the Mayor for the purposes of this policy.



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Should the Member of Council continue to not follow any of the protocols as set out within this policy, the Mayor shall bring the ongoing violation of this policy forward to the next regular Committee of the Whole (COW) or Council for a discussion during a closed meeting. In this situation, the Mayor shall provide notice to both the Municipal Clerk and the CAO requesting that a closed meeting item be added to the related agenda to discuss the ongoing violation.

Council shall be the body that reviews any ongoing violations under this policy. Council shall meet as a whole, including the individual Council Member who has continued to not follow these protocols to outline the specifics of their situation. This Member shall be given the opportunity to provide an explanation with regards to the specifics of the situation(s) as well as to why they feel it was appropriate to continue to operate outside of these protocols.

Council may determine that the actions of the Member of Council were appropriate. In this situation, it may be determined that it is a unique situation that has now concluded and no further action is required. Alternatively, Council may feel that a change in this policy and the related protocols should be considered. If a change of policy and protocols should be considered, Council shall direct the CAO to bring forward a report detailing the concern with the existing protocol(s) and provide a recommendation to a subsequent COW to allow discussion on the policy and protocols in an open, public meeting.

Conversely, Council may determine that the actions of the Member of Council were inappropriate. In this situation, Council may choose to take appropriate action designed to ensure that the Member of Council follows these protocols on a forward basis. In this situation, Council shall restrict their requests for advice from staff strictly to understanding the intent of the protocols within this policy as well as whether or not Council's direction is in violation of any authorities under existing legislation.



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### 2.11 Effective Working Relationships

The working relationship between Council and Staff is a formal one, and is founded on trust and respect. Every effort shall be made to ensure that there are no surprises, either for Council or Administration.

The Department Heads and SMT, through the CAO, will endeavour to keep Council informed on all key issues facing the community. The CAO shall provide a regular briefing to Council on current issues and related progress. This shall occur no less than monthly. Additional information will be shared via email with Council when it is important that Council receive that information in advance of the next CAO briefing.

It is the CAO's responsibility to ensure that following each municipal election, Council Members are provided adequate training on these Council-Staff Protocols to ensure Council-Staff relationships and interactions are maintained in accordance with this policy.