



Corporate Policy

Council – Staff Relations

Department:	Corporate Services
Related Documents/Legislation:	Code of Conduct for Council/ Local Boards & Committees, Employee Code of Conduct, Social Media Policy, Media Relations Policy, Harassment in the Workplace Prevention Policy, Violence in the Workplace Prevention Policy, Respectful Workplace Guideline, Procedural By-law, Criminal Code of Canada, Municipal Act 2001, Occupational Health & Safety Act R.S.O 1990 and the Ontario Human Rights Code
Approved	by Council: September 23, 2019 Resolution No.10 By-Law No. 052-2019

1. Policy Statement

This policy sets out guidelines to ensure that Council and Staff share a common understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities and engage in a respectful and productive relationship to deliver quality public services and programs.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is as follows:

- To adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the relationship between Members of Council and Staff of the municipality.
- To set a high standard for relations between Members of Council and Staff in order to provide good governance and maintain a high level of public confidence in the administration of the Town.
- To set out a general standard to ensure that Members of Council and Staff share a common understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities as well as a common basis for their relationship.
- To outline communication guidelines to facilitate appropriate, respectful, timely and effective communication between Members of Council and Staff and with third parties during the course of Town Business.

3. Definitions

The following terms shall have the following meanings in this Policy:

“Town”: the Corporation of the Town of Orangeville

“Council”: the legislative body of the Town of Orangeville

“Member of Council”: any person duly elected or appointed to serve on the Council of the Town of Orangeville. Members of Council are public officials and are not employees.

“Mayor”: the head of Council for the Town

“CAO”: the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town

“General Manager”: the Head of one of the departments

“Leadership Team”: the CAO and General Managers who report to the CAO

“Member of the Public”: a person or entity residing and/or having a business, ceremonial or policy interest in the Town of Orangeville

“Third Parties”: all other parties not members of Council or Staff

“Routine Matter”: a communication by a Member of Council with a Staff member, in person, in writing, by phone, by text or by other electronic means, which

- In the ordinary course of business constitutes a type of communication that would typically occur between a Member of the Public and Staff;
- Constitutes a request for information that is routinely produced by Staff in the course of their duties; or
- Constitutes a request for a service that is routinely done by Staff in the course of their duties;
- And which requires no expenditure of unbudgeted resources.

“Non-Routine Matter”: a communication, request for information or service that is not typically undertaken in the ordinary course of business and/or for which there is no routine process and procedure. A non-routine matter includes frequently occurring requests.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Town’s organization including Members of Council. 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.

5. Policy

General obligations/relationship

In all respects, Members of Council and Staff shall:

- Relate to one another in a courteous, respectful and professional manner;
- Understand their respective roles and responsibilities, and appreciate and respect the roles and responsibilities of the other;
- Work together to produce the best results and outcomes for the Town and always for the collective public interest of the Town;
- Communicate in a professional and effective manner;
- Understand that mutual respect and cooperation are required to achieve the Town's corporate goals and implement the Council's strategic priorities;
- Act in a manner that enhances public confidence in local government.

Roles/Responsibilities of Council

Members of Council acknowledge and agree that:

- Council as a whole is the governing body of the Town and that it comprises a collective decision-making body;
- Members of Council are representatives of the entire Town;
- Staff serve the whole of Council rather than any individual Member of Council;
- Members of Council govern, provide political direction and make decisions as the Town;
- Members of Council shall respect the administrative and managerial chain of leadership by:
 - Directing any questions or concerns in relation to the administration or management of the Town to the CAO or appropriate General Manager;
 - Giving direction to Staff only as Council through a resolution or by-law; and
 - Refraining from becoming involved in the management of Staff.
- Members of Council understand that Staff will undertake non-routine matters or significant projects only if they have been directed to do so by Council through a resolution or by-law;
- Members of Council shall refrain from maliciously or falsely injuring the professional or ethical reputation, or the prospects or practice of staff, and all members shall show respect for the professional capacities of the Staff;
- Individual Members of Council have no greater access to records or information held by the Town than any member of the public and that they cannot access records or information otherwise protected from disclosure by the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or in accordance with the process set out in that statute;

- Members of Council shall not compel staff to engage in partisan political activities or be subjected to threats or discrimination for refusing to engage in such activities;
- Certain members of Staff are statutory officers and have specific statutory authorities, duties, powers and responsibilities that cannot be interfered with or derogated from;
- Members of Council shall, at all times, comply with the Town's Code of Conduct for Council, Local Boards and Committees, and with any corporate, municipal, provincial and federal policies relating to Members of Council.

Roles/Responsibilities of Staff

Staff acknowledge and agree that:

- Council is the collective decision-making and governing body of the Town and is ultimately responsible to the electorate for the good governance of the Town;
- Staff shall implement Council's decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out Council's decisions and any duties specifically assigned to them by Council;
- Staff shall assist Council in their decision-making process with respect to its decision, policies and programs by providing Council with information based on professional expertise, research and good judgment in a professional and timely manner;
- Staff shall serve the whole of Council rather than any individual Member;
- All Members of Council shall be treated equally and with courtesy, respect and professionalism;
- Staff shall respond to inquiries from Council and provide appropriate and timely follow-up to such inquiries as necessary in accordance with this policy;
- Staff shall assist Council in the decision-making process by providing the necessary information, making recommendations and identifying any impacts or issues to Council,
- Staff shall diligently and impartially implement Council's decisions;

Guidelines for Respectful Communications

Forms of Address

At public functions and formal business interactions including Council and Committee meetings, Staff and Council will address one another using the appropriate titles (e.g., Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillor, Chair, CAO, GM, Mr., Ms., etc.).

Respect will underlie all communications between all parties. Discussions, questioning, or criticism shall be undertaken with courtesy, respect and professionalism and in no

event shall there be any attempt to humiliate, berate, or disparage Members of Council or Staff.

Meetings

Appointments will be made for meetings between Staff and a Member/Members of Council to ensure all parties are available and well prepared for the discussion.

Requests for Staff attendance at meetings organized by a Member of Council shall be made to the respective member of the Leadership Team. Notice of at least 24 hours should be provided except in urgent circumstances.

General Communication Practices:

Members of Council, the Mayor and the CAO are to be informed of significant events, unusual situations, incidents, activities and/or issues pertaining to their constituents.

It is expected that Members of Council will:

- Discuss issues with Staff and advise Staff of questions prior to Council, Committee and/or public meetings, whenever possible.
- Consult with Staff prior to making commitments to constituents.
- Be respectful of staff in discussions with third parties in accordance with this policy.
- Consider the following preferred courses of action when they wish to bring a matter to the attention of staff on behalf of a Member of the Public:
 - Refer the Member of the Public to the appropriate department or Staff member by providing contact information or reference to established corporate/departmental procedures.

It is expected that Staff will:

- Ensure that Council is apprised of any issues that may impact their decision-making process;
- Notify Council of changes to legislation and any unintended or unexpected impacts of policy decisions through written reports and/or presentations in a timely fashion;
- Notify Council of news releases and media inquiries, as appropriate;
- Through senior staff at the CAO, and General Manager level, convey feedback to Council members who may not be aware of exiting policy or other workload demands and related issues.

Non-routine matters brought forward by a Member of Council should be referred to the CAO or General Managers.

Any discrepancy with regard to routine or non-routine matters will be referred to the CAO or General Managers.

Responses to Routine or Non-Routine matters received by Staff from a Member of Council may be shared with all Members of Council by the CAO or General Managers.

All inquiries will be responded to using Town approved channels. Additional materials or confirmation of discussions via email when helpful or necessary.

Response and Timing guidelines

Where possible, an initial inquiry by a Member of Council is to be responded to and/or acknowledged within 24 hours of receipt of the request, during the business week. Staff will provide an estimated timeframe for the full response, taking into consideration operational requirements, workload and deadlines, being mindful that Members of Council may be making requests based on upcoming meetings and/or consultations.

Staff are not expected to respond, provide information or take action on a Member of Council request outside of regular administrative business hours, except in extenuating circumstances such as emergency situations.

Issue and Complaint Resolution

In the interest of strengthening Council-Staff relationships, both Council and Staff are encouraged to consider informal and/or facilitated discussion prior to submitting a formal complaint. Handling of complaints shall be done in the manner set out in the applicable Code of Conduct or policy such as:

- Code of Conduct for Council, Local Boards and Committees
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Harassment in the Workplace Prevention Policy
- Violence in the Workplace Prevention Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Media Relations Policy
- Municipal Act

Submission of a formal complaint shall be aligned to the appropriate procedure related to the relevant policy or legislation.