



The Town of Arnprior Corporate Policies and Procedures Manual

Policy Name: Accountability and Transparency

Policy Manual Section: Corporate Policies

Revision Date: May 23, 2017

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By-law Number: 6709-17

Effective Date: November 28, 2011

Organizational Coverage: Council, Employees and Public Appointees to Committees and Boards

1.0 Policy Statement

The Council of the Town of Arnprior acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good government with respect to matters within its jurisdiction in an accountable and transparent manner by:

- Encouraging and facilitating public access to information about the Town's services, programs and encouraging public participation to ensure that business is conducted openly and decision-making is responsive to the needs of the stakeholders and receptive to their opinions;
- Delivering high quality services to residents and businesses and actively seeking input for enhancing service delivery and achieving best policies.
- Promoting the efficient and effective use of public resources and permitting stakeholders the opportunity to evaluate the Town's performance in this regard.

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 Town will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision making process which will be open, visible, and transparent to the public.

Arnprior Town Council also acknowledges that there will be matters that due to their very nature must be considered at meetings that are not open to the public, and when these occur, the Corporation of the Town of Arnprior commits to compliance with the statutory requirements regarding closed meetings under S. 239 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

2.0 Purpose

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 to comply with the following legislation:

1. Section 270 (1) 5 of the Municipal Act, 2001 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.
2. Section 224 (d.1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, states it is the role of Council to ensure the accountability and transparency to the public.
3. The Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act promotes public sector accountability and transparency.

3.0 Scope

This Statement of Policy and Procedure applies to Town Council, Committees of Council, local boards and Town Staff.

4.0 Responsibility

Town Council, Committees of Council and Town Staff shall be responsible for adhering to the parameters of this policy and for ensuring accountability for their actions and transparency of municipal operations.

5.0 Definitions

- 5.1 **“Accountability”** The principle that the Town will be answerable to its stakeholders for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions or inactions.

- 5.2 **“Transparency”** The principle that the municipality actively encourages and fosters stakeholder participation and openness in its decision making processes. Additionally, transparency means that the Town’s decision making process is open and clear to the public.

6.0 Procedures

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally to the political process and decision making and to the administrative management of the municipality. Town Council has endorsed policies that contribute to creating an accountable and transparent municipal organization. The specific policies are identified below. Town Council will continue to support the principles set out in this policy in its future initiatives.

6.1 Financial Matters

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

- external audit
- bi-annual financial reporting
- annual financial statements
- long term financial planning
- annual asset management plan updates
- open budget process with public meetings
- annual operating and capital budget review and adoption
- procurement policy
- development charges background study and by-law
- user fees & charges by-law
- Council remuneration by-law

6.2 Internal Governance

The Town will be accountable and transparent to its stakeholders in its administrative practices as required under the Act. Some examples of how the Town provides such accountability and transparency are as follows:

- code of conduct for employees
- harassment and violence in the workplace policy and program
- health and safety policies under the Occupational Health & Safety Act
- hiring of relatives policy
- human resources policies

- regular performance management / evaluations
- continuing education programs

6.3 Public Participation and Information Sharing

The Town will be open, accountable and transparent to its stakeholders through implementing processes outlining how, when and under what rules meeting will take place. The Town'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 Town has adopted policies which ensure that the participation by the public can be meaningful and effective, through timely disclosure of information by various means including print media, websites, etc. Some specific examples include:

- procedure by-law
- annual reporting on the strategic plan
- sale and other disposition of land policy
- accountability and transparency policy
- delegation of authority by-law
- code of conduct for council and committee members
- Planning Act applications in accordance with provincial legislation
- records management / records retention policy
- routine disclosure policy
- public notice policy
- publication of council agendas and minutes on the municipal website
- public meetings and open houses on municipal initiatives
- Weekly Municipal Matters Publication in local media and on Town website

7.0 Contravention

Upon receipt of a complaint and/or concern related to this policy, notification will be as follows:

1. In the case of an employee, to the employee's Manager, the Human Resources Officer or the CAO. In all cases the Human Resources Officer shall document the complaint and/or concern.
2. In the case of the CAO, to the Clerk, and if necessary, investigated by the Integrity Commissioner
3. In the case of a Member of Council, to the Clerk, and if necessary, investigated by the Integrity Commissioner.
4. In the case of Committee and Board Members, the Clerk and decided on by Council
5. In the case of a closed meeting, the Closed Meeting Investigator.

8.0 Review

The Town Clerk and/or his or her designate shall review this policy at least once in every term of Council.

9.0 Attachments

None