



TOWN OF
VICTORIA PARK



POLICY EVALUATION FRAMEWORK



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What is a policy?

A policy is a concise statement of strategic objectives and principles adopted by Council, which are used as a basis for making decisions.

What is policy evaluation and why do we evaluate?

Policy evaluation is the examination of the content, implementation or impact of a policy, with the intent of determining its success against reaching its objectives and intended impact. This is further defined below.

Evaluating policy content: Does the content clearly articulate the objectives of the policy, how it will be implemented and its intended impact.

Evaluating policy implementation: Was the policy implemented as intended? Were there any barriers to implementing the policy?

Evaluating policy impact: Did the policy produce the intended outcomes and impact?

We evaluate policies to ensure the policy remains current, is meeting its objectives and is sustainable.

When should a policy be evaluated?

In accordance with Policy 001 – Policy management and development, a policy should be evaluated no more than every four years.

Who is responsible for policy evaluation?

Policy evaluation should be undertaken by the Policy Manager with support from the Responsible Officers as listed in the policy.

How is a policy evaluated?

There are a number of steps in the policy evaluation process.

1. Clarify what is to be evaluated.
2. Identify your key stakeholders.
3. Determine your evaluation questions.
4. Develop an evaluation plan.
5. Engage key stakeholders.
6. Collect data and analyse results.
7. Report the results and recommended action to Council.
8. Implement evaluation findings.

1. Clarify what is to be evaluated

Will the content, implementation and/or impact of the policy be evaluated?

2. Identify your key stakeholders

When evaluating a policy, it is important to identify who is affected by the policy. This may include:

- Responsible officers (as listed in the policy)
- Internal service areas
- Elected members
- Community
- External organisations.

It is important to factor in the time it will take to engage with your key stakeholders when preparing your evaluation plan.

3. Determine your evaluation questions

Policies are evaluated by asking a series of questions and responding to them.

Every policy is different therefore evaluation questions may differ depending on the objective of the policy. A standard set of questions and the reasons for asking them are detailed below.

Is the policy still required?

Policies are often created where there is either complexity or lack of clarity in one or a combination of any of the following circumstances:

- legislative requirement
- new or changing industry and organisational standards
- to meet the Town's strategic objectives
- community need or expectation
- advocacy on issues that Council considers to be significant
- as a result of a Council resolution.

It is important to determine whether the reasons for the policy existing are still relevant.

If there is a legislative requirement for the Town to have a policy on the particular subject matter, the answer will be yes.

If no, you will need to answer the following questions to be able to form a position on whether it is still required:

- Why was the policy created?
- How often it is used/referred to?
- Is the information contained in the policy already included in legislation or other Town documents?

Is the policy achieving its objective?

Firstly, you will need to determine what the policy is trying to achieve. This is usually set out in the policy's objective statement.

Next, you will need to assess the policy objectives against the evaluative criteria and detail how well or to what extent the policy meets those criteria.

Efficiency – assessment of achieving the policy objective without wasting resources (time, materials, budget, energy). Consider the following:

- Have activities been conducted in an uncomplicated manner?
- Have decisions been made at the right level and has red tape been avoided as far as possible?
- Have costs been kept to a minimum?
- Has duplication been avoided?
- Have outputs been achieved within the planned period and budget?
- Is the policy sustainable?

You may wish to compare the overall costs and benefits of the existing policy to any alternative programs (if applicable).

Effectiveness – assessment of the likelihood of the policy achieving its goal or objective. Consider the following:

- Has the policy positively or negatively impacted this process ie. compare the baseline (prior to the policy/amended policy) to the current situation?
- What is working well vs what isn't working well?
- Is the policy attributed to the changes or are there external factors affecting this?
- Is the policy achieving its objective to the desired level?
- Are there any unintended consequences from the implementation of the policy?

Equity – assessment of fairness or justice in the distribution of policy costs, benefits and risks. Consider the following:

- Process equity (procedural justice) – assessment of the decision-making procedures and processes provided for in the policy, the extent to which they are, open and fair to all participants.
- Outcome equity (social justice) – assessment of the outcome of the policy being fair in its application.

Does this policy help to achieve the community's priorities in the Strategic Community Plan?

Most policies will have a direct link to one or more community priorities as set out in the Strategic Community Plan. Policies should be assessed against how well they are contributing to achieve the community's priorities.

Does this policy assist to achieve the Town's objectives in the Corporate Business Plan?

Not all policies will have a direct link to the community's priorities as set out in the Strategic Community Plan. Those policies that have no link, should be assessed against how well they are contributing to achieve the relevant Town objectives.

4. Develop an evaluation plan

It is important to set out a plan for your evaluation including deadlines for presentation to Council.

5. Engage key stakeholders

It is important to seek feedback from those affected by the policy however, it may not always be appropriate to seek feedback from all stakeholders.



For example, it would not be appropriate to seek feedback from the whole community regarding a business grant policy however, it may be appropriate to seek feedback from past applicants or local businesses.

For more information see Policy 103 – Communication and engagement.

6. Collect data and analyse results

Use the evaluation questions determined in step 3 to collect data. Analyse the responses to determine what action is required:

Retain – no amendments required, the policy is meeting its objective and no issues were identified.

Amend – the policy is meeting its objective however, minor amendments are required to improve clarity for decision making.

Replace – the policy is not meeting its objective however, a need for the policy is still identified.

Revoke – the policy is no longer required.

7. Report the results and recommended action to Council.

After conducting a policy evaluation, a report to Policy Committee needs to be prepared. The report must detail the results of the evaluation and attach a copy of the policy.

If the recommendation is for the policy to be amended or replaced, the amended or new draft policy must be prepared and also attached to the report.

If there are significant changes proposed to the policy an extra step of consultation with elected members prior to submitting a report to Policy Committee may be undertaken via the Councillor Portal. The consultation period should be no less than two weeks.

8. Implement evaluation findings.

Following consideration of the policy evaluation report, it is the responsibility of the Policy Manager and Responsible Officers to implement Council's resolution.

Further information

For further information on policy evaluation contact:

Jasmine Bray, Coordinator Governance and Strategy

Relevant documents

[Policy 001 – Policy management and development](#)

Practice 001.1 – Policy development practice

[Policy 103 - Communication and engagement](#)

Strategic Community Plan 2022-2034 – community priorities

Corporate Business Plan 2022-2027 – Town objectives