



Service Level Planning Policy



Yarriambiack
SHIRE COUNCIL

Service Level Planning Policy

Yarriambiack Shire Council encourages a working environment which promotes gender equality and models non-violent and respectful relationships.

Contents

1	Objective	3
2	Responsibility.....	3
3	Policy Statement and Scope	3
3.1	Mandated Council Services and Relevant Legislation	3
4	Collaboration.....	5
5	References.....	5
6	Definitions	5
7	Consistency with Governance Principles Local Government Act 2020.....	6
8	Policy Review	8
9	Legislative Context	8
10	Council Approved Policy.....	8

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1 Objective

This policy sets out Council's commitment to ongoing Service Level Planning and strategic review. This ensures that each Service will meet community expectations and standards in a cost-effective manner, and that Service outcomes are aligned to Council's long-term strategic objectives, as outlined in the Council plan, and that they comply with relevant legislation and policy.

2 Responsibility

The designated Manager or Chief holds overarching accountability for ensuring that Service Level Plans are developed to a high standard of quality and are completed within the required timeframes. This responsibility includes overseeing the coordination, preparation, and refinement of the plans to align with organisational priorities and service delivery expectations.

Once the Service Level Plans have been finalised, they are submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for review and formal endorsement. Following this endorsement, the relevant Manager or Chief is responsible for presenting their Service Level Plans to Council as part of the annual budget development and approval process. This presentation forms a critical component of Council's strategic planning and resource allocation framework.

3 Policy Statement and Scope

Council is strongly committed to the ongoing planning, evaluation, and enhancement of its services to ensure they remain responsive, effective, and aligned with community needs. Guided by the Service Performance Principles outlined below, Council will strive to meet community expectations and service standards in a financially responsible manner. Furthermore, Council will ensure that service outcomes are strategically aligned with its long-term objectives and are delivered in accordance with all relevant legislative and policy requirements.

The Service Performance Principles:

- Services are provided in an **equitable** manner and that Council is responsive to the diverse needs of our community;
- Services are **accessible** to the members of the community for whom the Services are intended;
- **Quality** and cost standards for Services set by the Council provide good **value** to the community;
- Council seeks to **continuously improve** Service delivery to the community in response to performance monitoring; and
- Service delivery includes a **fair** and **effective** process for considering and responding to complaints about Service provision.

These principles underpin Council's strategic planning processes and guide desired outcomes of each Service.

Effective community engagement, transparent decision-making, and sound financial management are foundational to Council's approach to Service planning and development. Council is committed to ensuring that the community is meaningfully involved in shaping services, that decisions are made openly and accountably, and that all outcomes are underpinned by responsible and sustainable financial practices.

The Council's Service Level Planning Framework provides a structured approach for implementing this Policy, outlining the processes, responsibilities, and governance mechanisms required to ensure its effective application across all service areas.

3.1 Mandated Council Services and Relevant Legislation

Council is legislatively required to deliver a range of essential services under various Acts and regulations. While these obligations form the foundation of Council's responsibilities,

there is flexibility in how some services are delivered. For example, services such as Maternal and Child Health, Youth and Family Services, and Aged and Disability Services may be transferred to alternative providers, provided that the continuity and accessibility of these services for the community are maintained. This discretion allows Council to explore service delivery models that best meet local needs while still fulfilling its statutory obligations.

The table below identifies the mandated Council services and related legislation.

Mandated Service	Relevant Legislation / Regulation
Planning and Building Permits	<i>Planning and Environment Act 1987, Building Act 1993</i>
Environmental Health Inspections	<i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008</i>
Animal Management and Registration	<i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i>
Waste Collection and Management	<i>Environment Protection Act 2017</i>
Local Law Enforcement and Compliance	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Emergency Management Coordination	<i>Emergency Management Act 2013</i>
Maternal and Child Health Services	<i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005</i>
Immunisation Programs	<i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008</i>
Food Safety Inspections	<i>Food Act 1984</i>
Public Health and Wellbeing Planning	<i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008</i>
Roads, Footpaths, and Drainage Maintenance	<i>Road Management Act 2004</i>
Street Lighting	<i>Road Management Act 2004</i>
Public Amenities and Open Space Maintenance	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Council Meetings and Decision-Making	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Council Plan, Budget, and Annual Report	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Community Engagement and Transparency	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Libraries	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Aged and Disability Services	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Youth and Family Services	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Recreation and Leisure Facilities	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>

4 Collaboration

Council will collaborate, where practical, with other Councils, Governments and statutory bodies when implementing this policy and associated Service provisions.

5 References

- *Local Government Act (2020)* – Section 106 Service Performance Principles
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- *Emergency Management Act 2013*
- *Environment Protection Act 2017*
- *Domestic Animals Act 1994*
- *Building Act 1993*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- Council Plan 2021-25
- Yarriambiack Shire Council's Community Vision
- Service Level Planning Framework, and associated plans and references.
- Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure
- Fair Access Policy

6 Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Council	Means Yarriambiack Shire Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .
Service	Means a group of programs and projects primarily focused on external recipients, which collectively provide support or guidance to the community in order to achieve the objectives of Yarriambiack Shire Council's Vision and the Council Plan.
Service Level Plan/Planning	Means a process by which to assess, review and set the strategic direction for a Service. It takes the longer-term strategic direction and converts it into a plan for the short to medium-term.
Service Performance Principles	The set of principles outlined in section 106 of the <i>Local Government Act (2020)</i> . Council must plan and deliver Services to the community in accordance with the Service Performance Principles.

7 Consistency with Governance Principles Local Government Act 2020

Governance Principle	Section of policy where covered
a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;	Section 5 -References
b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;	Section 3 Policy Statement and Scope
c) the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;	Section 3 Policy Statement and Scope
d) the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;	Section 3 Policy Statement and Scope
e) innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;	Section 3 Policy Statement and Scope
f) collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought;	Section 4 Collaboration
g) the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;	Section 3 Policy Statement and Scope
h) regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making;	Section 3 Policy Statement and Scope
i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.	Section 3 Policy Statement and Scope

In giving effect to the overarching governance principles, a Council must take into account the following supporting principles—

Community Engagement Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A community engagement process must have a clearly defined objective and scope. Participants in community engagement must have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation. Participants in community engagement must be representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of the community engagement. Participants in community engagement are entitled to reasonable support to enable meaningful and informed engagement.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will influence Council decision making.
Comment:	Council is committed to effective community engagement in shaping services. The policy emphasises meaningful involvement, transparency in decision-making, and alignment with community expectations.
Public Transparency Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act. Council information must be publicly available unless— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the information is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act; or (ii) public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest. Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community. Public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated.
Comment:	The policy supports transparent decision-making and public accountability. Service outcomes are aligned with the Council Plan's strategic objectives and comply with legislative requirements.
Strategic Planning Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted. Strategic planning must address the Community Vision. Strategic planning must take into account the resources needed for effective implementation. Strategic planning must identify and address the risks to effective implementation. Strategic planning must provide for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances.
Comment:	Service planning is guided by long-term strategic objectives in the Council Plan. The policy ensures services are reviewed and improved to meet evolving community needs.
Financial Management Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions must be managed in accordance with a Council's financial policies and strategic plans. Financial risks must be monitored and managed prudently having regard to economic circumstances. Financial policies and strategic plans, including the Revenue and Rating Plan, must seek to provide stability and predictability in the financial impact on the municipal community. Accounts and records that explain the financial operations and financial position of the Council must be kept.

Comment:	Council ensures services are delivered in a cost-effective manner and underpinned by responsible financial practices. Service outcomes must align with financial sustainability.
Service Performance Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community. Services should be accessible to the members of the municipal community for whom the services are intended. Quality and costs standards for services set by the Council should provide good value to the municipal community. A Council should seek to continuously improve service delivery to the municipal community in response to performance monitoring. Service delivery must include a fair and effective process for considering and responding to complaints about service provision.
Comment:	The policy meets these principles by ensuring equitable, accessible, responsive services with good value and effective complaint handling.

8 Policy Review

This policy will be subject to a comprehensive review every three years to ensure its continued relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with Council's strategic direction and legislative requirements.

The review process will be undertaken in conjunction with the Service Level Planning Framework, allowing for a coordinated evaluation of both the Policy and its implementation mechanisms. This approach ensures that any updates reflect evolving community needs, service delivery standards, and organisational priorities.

From time to time, circumstances may require minor administrative changes to be made to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively and need not be considered and adopted by Council.

Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, or the legal responsibilities of any member of the community, it must be considered and adopted by Council, or by the Chief Executive Officer in reliance on delegated authority.

9 Legislative Context

This Policy is not mandated by the *Local Government Act 2020*; however, it aligns with section 106 by ensuring that the Council adopts and implements the guiding Service Performance Principles through its Service Level Planning process.

10 Council Approved Policy

Policy Adopted:	Ordinary Meeting 22 November 2023	Minute Book Page 47
Policy Reviewed:	Ordinary Meeting 10 December 2025	Minute Book Page [number]