

Report to Council



Date: September 11, 2023
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Code of Conduct Policy
Department: Office of the City Clerk

Recommendation:

THAT Council adopts Council Policy No. 388, being Code of Conduct, as outlined in the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated September 11, 2023;

AND THAT Council Policy No. 313, being Conflict of Interest, be revised as outlined in the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated September 11, 2023;

AND THAT Council adopts Council Policy No. 389, being Council Disclosure of Gifts and Personal Benefits, as outlined in the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated September 11, 2023.

Purpose:

To adopt a Code of Conduct Policy that sets expectations for Council members to follow in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities as elected officials and to revise and adopt supporting policies.

Background:

Staff presented Code of Conduct considerations to Council on March 13, 2023. This met the new legislative requirement to consider establishing a Code of Conduct within six months of the first regular meeting in this Council term. Following Council's direction, staff presented more detailed options and content on June 5, 2023. Staff have since amended the draft Code of Conduct based on Council's input during that meeting. This report summarizes the attached Code of Conduct Council Policy, which is recommended for adoption along with supporting policies regarding conflict of interest and disclosure of gifts and personal benefits.

Previous Council Resolution

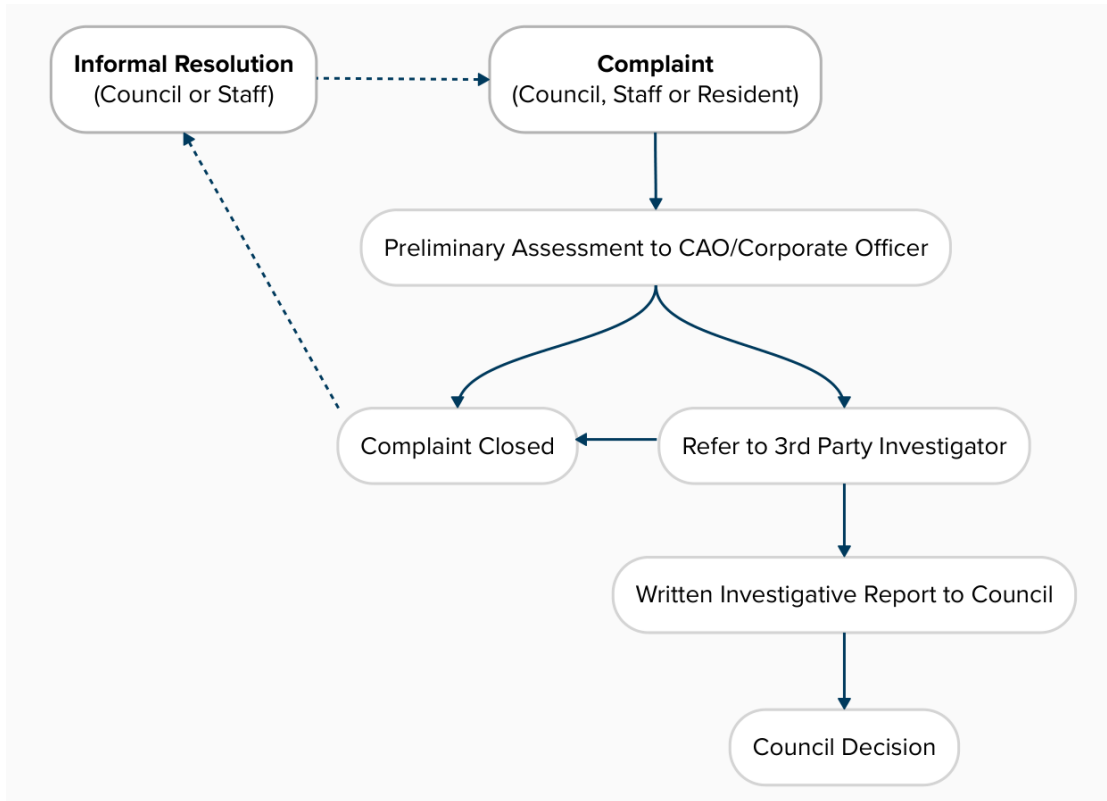
Resolution	Date
THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated June 5, 2023 with respect to Council Code of Conduct options; AND THAT Council directs staff to bring back amendments to the Code of Conduct based on Council input.	June 5, 2023

Discussion:

The Code of Conduct Policy sets shared expectations for how Council members conduct themselves while carrying out their duties and responsibilities. The Code reflects core values of honesty, integrity, respect, transparency, collaboration, and accountability that residents expect Council members to uphold. Similar to workplace policies that apply to staff, responsible Council conduct supports good governance and promotes behaviour that is ethical, respectful, effective, and efficient.

The Code outlines principles covering general conduct, interactions with staff, interactions with the public, meeting conduct, use of public resources, and leave of absence. Supporting policies for conflict of interest and gifts were revised and developed, respectively, to provide additional clarity to provisions in the legislation and the Code of Conduct. The Code also establishes procedures for complaints and investigations.

The Code of Conduct is intended to be self-enforcing. Informal resolution is the primary means of resolving concerns between Council members as it is more effective, faster, more collaborative, and more efficient than a formal complaint and investigation process. When a formal complaint is submitted and an investigation warranted, a third-party investigator will lead that process and provide a report and recommendations to Council. The Code provides several options for remedies to be commensurate with the breach, to be determined by Council following rules of procedural fairness. The diagram below shows the steps in the complaint and resolution processes.



Conclusion:

Staff recommend Council adopt the Code of Conduct Policy and the accompanying revisions to the Conflict of Interest Policy and Council Disclosure of Gifts and Personal Benefits Policy. As a whole, these policies set common guidance and expectations for Council and promote respectful, effective, accountable, and transparent governance.

Considerations applicable to this report:

Existing Policy:

[Council Policy No. 313 Conflict of Interest](#)

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Budget will be provided for preliminary assessments conducted by the City Solicitor and investigations conducted by a third party investigator.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Communications Comments:

Submitted by:

L. Bentley, Deputy City Clerk

Approved for inclusion:

S. Fleming, City Clerk