

Roles & Responsibilities

LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS

DISCUSSION

GUIDELINES



GORDON A. McINTOSH





DEFINITIONS:

ORGANIZATION -
a local, regional or First Nation
government or municipal
corporation

COUNCIL -
elected decision-making body

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICIAL (CEO)** -
elected official that presides
over the governing body - Mayor,
Chairperson or Reeve

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICER (CAO)** -
principal appointed officer
- Manager, Administrator,
Executive Director of a local,
regional or First Nation
government

PURPOSE

To clarify responsibilities of elected officials and staff members and to understand success factors and tools that enhance the political/administrative roles.

Council

- Give direction
- Make policy decisions
- Represent the public interest

Administration

- Implement directions
- Develop decision making advice
- Provide technical knowledge

CEO

- Represent the organization
- Facilitate council/ staff interface
- Chair council meetings

CAO

- Coordinate services and systems
- Manage human and fiscal resources
- Facilitate staff/ council interface

CORE GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS

The *political or governance* realm for council and CAO primarily involves:

- **STRATEGY** – to provide the overall direction of the organization through mission, vision, goals and value statements
- **CHOICES** – to make decisions that guide organizational activities in terms of the budget, legislation and organizational rules

The *administrative or operational* realm for the CAO and staff primarily involve:

- **SERVICES** – to allocate resources for efficient delivery of internal and external services
- **SYSTEMS** – to coordinate resources for the delivery of efficient and effective services

Political Realm



Administrative Realm

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responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES

To present specific responsibilities for council, CEO, CAO and staff and tools to strengthen compliance and maximize organizational effectiveness.

To discuss success indicators as a means of regularly assessing organizational and individual efforts maximizing role clarity and organizational effectiveness.

Key functions associated with both the political and administrative roles include:

- Making informed decisions
- Making and implementing policy
- Liaising with other organizations
- Allocating resources
- Setting a direction
- Utilizing staff effectively
- Ensuring good systems
- Dealing with media
- Establishing the council structure

decisions

MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS

To make informed choices in the public interest using all available information:

Council

- All items are to be submitted via the CEO and CAO or designate
- Consider organizational goals, public interest, available resources, existing legislation, current policies and jurisdiction when making decisions
- Provide effective referrals to staff by clarifying the problem, desired outcomes, scope of required analysis and a response timeframe
- Provide effective resolutions with clear direction and expectations
- Ensure all information is available to make an informed decision
- A councillor is expected to review material provided and ask questions of administration both before and during the meeting

Chief Executive Official (CEO)

- Facilitate decision-making processes to seek informed agreement by ensuring good debate and adequate information is available
- Ensure member regard for organizational values and behaviour
- Monitor meeting effectiveness and encourage member input

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Coordinate the agenda preparation process
- Provide recommendations on all council items
- Review agenda with the CEO

Staff

- Proactive in providing a full range of information and implications
- Ensure compliance with statutory requirements
- All staff items submitted through the CAO
- Provide a comprehensive review of related information

Tools

- **FOLLOW-UP ACTION LIST** – to ensure decisions are actioned and monitored
- **REQUEST FOR DECISION** – consistent format for reports and recommendations from staff and committees to council
- **AGENDA PREPARATION SCHEDULE** – timelines for submission and distribution of the agenda package
- **CAO/STAFF MEETINGS** – to review council advice before the meeting and discuss implementation of decisions after the meeting
- **STANDARD AGENDA FORMAT** – an established order to conduct business
- **ANNUAL MEETINGS CALENDAR** – for all council-related meeting

Success Indicators

- *Timely preparation of agenda information for review by members*
- *Few repeated or reversal of decisions*
- *Follow-up to meeting decisions*
- *Focus on issues rather than personalities*
- *Balanced meeting agendas and schedule*
- *Implications for all decisions are known*
- *Fair and equitable opportunities for everyone to be heard*
- *Focuses the flow of the meeting*

LIAISING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

To maintain contact with other organizations to effectively share resources and information:

Council

- Promote cooperation with other agencies – government, not for profit and private sector
- Approve agreements with other agencies that involve sharing the authority and resources of the organization
- Council may be requested to act as a council liaison with another agency at the request of the CEO or council (see *councillor portfolio below*)

Chief Executive Official

- Provide timely reports on agency liaison activities
- Represent council based on existing policies, budget and strategic plan
- Obtain council direction on significant issues not covered by existing policies, budget or strategic plan before representing council's position
- Act as primary spokesperson for council with other agencies and media
- Keep council informed on meeting with other organizations

Chief Executive Official (CEO)

- Provide timely reports on council liaison activities
- Represent the interests of council based on existing policies, budget and matters
- Obtain council direction on significant issues not covered by existing policies, budget and the strategic plan before representing council's position
- Liaise with the CAO or assigned staff person on councillor matters

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Coordinate an ongoing and targeted agency liaison program
- Act as primary liaison with senior staff of other organization

Staff

- Interact with staff of other agencies as delegated by the CAO

Tools

- **AGENCY LIAISON CHART** – manage and monitor agency liaison
- **COUNCILLOR UPDATE ON AGENDA** – regularly report on agency activities
- **COUNCILLOR PORTFOLIO LIST** – regularly report on portfolio matters
- **UPDATE REPORT FORM** – outline for providing information on agency liaison or matters arising between or at meetings of council

Success Indicators

- *Up to date information on other agencies*
- *Timely reporting on relevant initiatives and issues*
- *Staff or elected official represent the organization – not their own views*
- *Maintain high potential for cooperation with other organizations*
- *Improved external organization perspective by council and the organization*
- *Respected as a partner or stakeholder in interagency relationships*

ALLOCATING RESOURCES

To effectively allocate resources in an efficient and accountable manner:

Council

- Establish a budget and allocate resources that align with expectations of the organization's work program
- Ensure a linkage between the budget process and the strategic plan

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- Ensure discussion takes place regarding human and fiscal resource implications prior to a council decision
- Refer emergency expenditures to council by way of a special meeting or consent by telephone/electronic poll (for approval at next meeting) in consultation with the CAO

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Advise council on the implications of all recommendations to council
- Control financial resources as per council direction

Staff

- Provide complete assessment of implications for recommendations

Tools

- **SERVICE LEVELS** – criteria to ensure resources are consistent with service delivery expectations
- **BUDGET PROCESS GUIDELINES** – milestones for establishing annual operating and capital budgets
- **LONG TERM FISCAL PLAN** – long term requirements of the organization
- **FINANCIAL AUTHORITY POLICY** – designating limits of spending authority

Success Indicators

- *Defined budget preparation timeline*
- *Adequate information to make choices among competing demands*
- *Clear budget linkage to priorities and work programs*
- *Balance year end financial status*
- *Regular financial reports*
- *Begin with clear council expectations*
- *Consideration of alternate resource options*
- *Attention to cost containment initiatives*

allocating

direction

SETTING DIRECTION

To articulate a community vision and establish a strategic organizational direction:

Council

- Consider the organization's capacity and public interest to develop short term priorities and longer term directions
- Continually review the implementation of priorities and directions

Chief Executive Official (CEO)

- Ensure a process is in place to establish and monitor strategic directions
- Ensure Committee/Administration issues are brought forward to council
- Manage council priorities through discussion of an item's urgency, public sensitivity, legislative imperative, monetary and liability consequence

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Keep council informed on progress, recommend changes and new initiatives for the strategic plan and work programs
- Coordinate an ongoing process to monitor organizational priorities

Staff

- Advise council of the relevance of their decisions to the strategic plan

Tools

- **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CHART** - short term strategic actions for monitoring progress
- **CORE SERVICES LIST** – differentiates between core and discretionary services
- **STRATEGIC PLAN** – mission, vision, longer term directions and values
- **COUNCIL WORK PROGRAM** – monitor the implementation of council priorities
- **OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES WORK PROGRAM** – to monitor significant administrative matters
- **STRATEGIC SESSIONS** – scheduled regularly to discuss emerging topics and strategic updates

Success Indicators

- *Linkage to annual budget process*
- *Opportunities for public involvement*
- *Determine needs versus wants*
- *Clarify 'what business are we in?'*
- *Regular monitoring of strategy implementation*
- *Set realistic priorities*
- *Sense of big picture / vision for the future*
- *Staff effort aligned to corporate plan*

EFFECTIVELY UTILIZING STAFF

To ensure a healthy and productive work environment:

Council

- Directs information requests to the CAO on the basis that it will not impact staff work programs and that the information provided will be made available to all members of council
- A councillor information request that does not impact staff time can be referred to the CAO and/or council
- The CEO, or member of council is not permitted to direct a staff member at any time
- Concerns regarding a staff member are directed to the CAO
- Concerns regarding the CAO are referred to the CEO and/or council

Chief Executive Official (CEO)

- Receives concerns regarding staff performance and refers them to the CAO
- Facilitates council discussion with the CAO on unresolved personnel matters

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Coordinates the ongoing review of the organization's effectiveness
- Coordinates the regular appraisal of staff performance
- Addresses personnel issues in a timely fashion

Staff

- Regularly report on operational activities
- Provide regular updates on council priorities and operational strategies

Tools

- **SUCCESS INDICATORS** – to assess CAO/staff performance
- **OPERATIONAL WORK PROGRAM** – operational items for council appreciation of staff capacity
- **COUNCIL PRIORITIES WORK PROGRAM** – clarifies political items for administrative attention

Success Indicators

- *Safe and productive work environment*
- *Attention to performance accountability*
- *Interdepartmental collaboration*
- *Fair and equitable personnel practices*
- *Regular CAO performance feedback*

utilizing

ENSURING GOOD SYSTEMS

To ensure consistent and transparent organization processes and systems:

Council

- Regular review of organizational efficiency and effectiveness

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- Receive organizational concerns from council and refer them to the CAO
- Facilitate council discussion with the CAO on unresolved organizational matters

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Coordinate review of the organization's effectiveness with council and staff

Staff

- Regularly report on operational activities

Tools

- **SUCCESS INDICATORS** – clear criteria to assess the organization's effectiveness
- **CAO SESSIONS** – regular sessions for council and the CAO to discuss what is working well and what could be improved

Success Indicators

- *Periodic overall and targeted system reviews*
- *Systems serve organizational needs and priorities*
- *Organization-wide awareness of systems and how they work*
- *Regular CAO/council discussion on organizational performance*
- *Regular CAO/staff discussion on organizational performance*

DEALING WITH MEDIA

To effectively communicate council decisions, strategic directions and organizational accomplishments:

Councillor

- Communicate council decisions first before expressing personal concerns

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- Represent the views of council to the media
- Review media releases based on council's decision or consent as provided through the CAO

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Provide administrative details on council decisions and refer political matters to the CEO

Staff

- Refer requests for non-routine information to the CAO
- Provide readily available public information

Tools

- **MEDIA RELATIONS TRAINING** – how to deal with 'hot seat' situations
- **MEDIA RELEASE** – standard format and process for consistent application

Success Indicators

- *Consistent message to the public*
- *Timely response to the media*
- *Ability to freely express opinions while being respectful of council decisions*

structure

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

To establish governance systems to meet the strategic and political needs of council:

Council Committees

- Make recommendations on policy matters referred by council
- Make recommendations concerning strategic issues referred by council
- Suggest topics for council consideration

Council Portfolios

- Present 'requests for decisions' to council
- Liaise with external interests at the request of council or CEO
- Liaise with community stakeholders at the request of council or CEO
- To be well informed on activities and issues within the assigned portfolio
- Suggest topics for the consideration council

Committee Chairperson

- Chair the committee meeting
- Review agenda with staff liaison
- Present committee recommendations to council
- To be well informed on activities and issues within the assigned area

Tools

- **COMMITTEE AGENDA** – standardized format
- **MEETING SCHEDULE** – provide certainty

Success Indicators

- *Committees add value to council decision making*
- *Effective meetings that result in clear recommendations*
- *Committee/staff roles are clear*
- *Defined mandate and council expectations*
- *Clear expectations for council referrals*