

	<b>TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH STORMONT</b>	<b>Schedule "B"</b> <b>By-law No. 2017-072</b>
	<b>Section : Corporate Services</b>	
	<b>Subject: Accountability and Transparency</b>	<b>Date of Origin:</b> <b>January 9, 2008</b>  <b>Revision Date:</b> <b>September 6, 2017</b>

**Purpose:**

The *Municipal Act, 2001* (the Act) requires that all municipalities adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the manner that the municipality will ensure that it is accountable to the public for its actions, and the manner in which the municipality will ensure that its actions are transparent to the public. 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.

**Definitions:**

Accountability: The principle that the municipality will be responsible to its stakeholders for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions and inactions.

Transparency: The principle that the municipality actively encourages and fosters stakeholder participation and openness in its decision making processes. Additionally, transparency means that the municipality’s decision making process is open to the public.

**Policy Statement:**

Council of the Corporation of the Township of South Stormont acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good government for its stakeholders in an accountable and transparent manner by:

- Encouraging public access and participation to ensure that decision making is responsive to the needs of its constituents and receptive to their opinions;
- Delivering high quality service to it’s citizens;
- Promoting the efficient use of public resources;
- Ethical and accountable conduct of municipal operations;
- Timely response to inquiries, concerns and complaints; and

- Accessible and easy access to municipal information aligned with legislative requirements.

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

### **Policy Guidance:**

This policy is guided by the following categories:

1. Legislative Requirements;
2. Financial Accountability, Oversight and Reporting;
3. Internal Governance;
4. Public Participation and Information Sharing; and
5. Council's Accountability Framework.

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally to the political process, decision making and to the administrative management of the municipality.

#### Legislative Requirements

The Township is accountable and transparent to fulfilling various legislative responsibilities and disclosure of information. The following legislation governs how the Township conducts business in a public, accountable and transparent manner:

- Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act;
- Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- Municipal Act;
- Municipal Conflict of Interest Act;
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act;
- Provincial Offences Act; and
- Public Salary Disclosure Act.

#### Financial Accountability, Oversight and Reporting

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

- Internal/External Audit
- Reporting/Statements
- Long Term Financial Planning
- Asset Management
- Procurement Policy
- Sale of Land Policy
- Budget Process
- Municipal Performance Measures Program (MPMP)

#### Internal Governance

The Township's administrative practices ensure specific accountability on the part of its employees and Council members through the following initiatives:

- Code of Conduct for Council Members
- Human Resource Policy and related procedures
- Workplace Violence and Harassment
- Performance Management and Evaluation
- Orientation/Continuing Education
- Health and Safety
- Compensation/Benefits
- Responsibility for ensuring that administrative practices and procedures recognize Council's commitment to accountability and transparency

#### Public Participation and Information Sharing

The municipality ensures that it is open and accountable to its stakeholders through implementing processes outlining how, when and under what rules meetings will take place.

The municipality's meetings will be open to the public as required under the Act, and members of the public will have an opportunity to make delegations or comments in writing, as provided for, on specific items at these meetings. In addition, the municipality has adopted policies that ensure that participation by the public can be meaningful and effective, through timely disclosure of information by various means including print media, website, social media; etc. Some examples include:

- Request for Information
- Procedural By-law
- Strategic Plan(s)
- Delegation Rules
- Records Management Program
- Planning Processes
- Public Notice Policy
- Publication of Agendas and Minutes

Council's Accountability and Framework

Council is accountable and transparent through the appointment of an Integrity Commissioner and the implementation of additional policies and practices:

- Council Code of Conduct
- Council Reimbursement Policy
- Delegation of Authority
- Integrity Commissioner Annual Report, if appointed