

The Corporation of The Township of Billings

TOPIC: Accountability and Transparency	POLICY No. 2017-41
SECTION: Administration – Council	
DATE: December 5, 2017	Revision Date: Pages: 3

1.0 Purpose/Application

This policy applies to all operations within the Corporation of the Township of Billings and is prepared in accordance with the Municipal Act. The Act requires that all municipalities adopt and maintain a policy in respect to the manner in which the municipality will try to ensure that it is accountable to the public for its actions, and the manner in which the municipality will try to ensure that its actions are transparent to the public.

This policy is to provide guidance on how the Township of Billings ensures municipal matters are approached in an accountable and transparent manner.

2.0 Definitions

In this policy, the terms “accountability” and “transparency” have the following meaning:

- i) Accountability: The principle that the township is obligated to demonstrate and take responsibility for its actions, decisions and policies and that it is answerable to the public at large.
- ii) Transparency: The principle that the township will conduct its business in an accessible, clear and visible manner and that its activities are open to examination by its stakeholders.

3.0 Policy Statement

Council of the Township of Billings acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good government for its stakeholders in an accountable and transparent manner, guided by the following principles:

- 1. Encouraging public access and participation to ensure that decision making is responsive to the needs of its constituents and receptive to their opinions.
- 2. Delivering high quality services to our citizens; and
- 3. Managing the resources in our trust as efficiently, responsibly and effectively as possible
- 4. Maintaining honest and open communication

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the Township of Billings 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, whenever

possible, the Township of Billings will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision-making process which will be open, visible and transparent to the public.

4.0 Policy Requirements

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

Legislated Requirements

The Township is accountable and transparent to its stakeholders by fulfilling various legislative responsibilities and disclosure of information, and shall conduct its business within its jurisdiction in accordance with the Provincial Statutes, Ontario Regulations and any other applicable laws including but not limited to the Municipal Act, 2001, Municipal Conflict of Interest Act; Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; and Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act.

The Township is accountable to taxpayers by using various results-orientated tools to measure progress on performance and the achievement of corporate service standards and goals. The performance measurement and reporting framework is informed by a number of different initiatives, which need to be adhered to and maintained even through changes in administration and political leadership.

Open Government

The Township of Billings shall provide governance in an open manner through communications, consultation and collaboration. All policies, procedures and practices shall ensure that its operations are transparent and that mechanisms are in place to make residents aware of how decisions are made and carried out and are able to participate in the decision-making process.

All meetings of Council and its local boards, agency and committees shall be open to the public when and as required under the Act, and members of the public will have an opportunity to make delegations or comments in writing on specific items at those meetings as outlined in the Township's Procedural By-Law. Meetings are publicly advertised in advance, with the rationale for discussion matters in camera being disclosed.

Internal Accountability and Ethical Standards

The municipality's administrative practices ensure specific accountability on the part of its employees through

- Human Resources Policies and Procedures
- Discrimination and Harassment-Free workplace
- Violence-Free Workplace
- Recruitment and Selection

5.0 Monitoring/Contravention

This policy shall be reviewed within the first year of a new Council term or at such other time as may be deemed appropriate to ensure its effectiveness.

The Town Clerk shall be responsible for receiving formal complaints and shall follow the Township of Billings Complaint Policy for formal complaints with the exception of closed meeting complaints.

In the case of closed meeting complaints, the Township's Closed Meeting Investigator shall be notified.