

THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM

BY-LAW NUMBER 1648-2011

Being a By-law to establish a Accountability and Transparency Policy for the Township of Blandford-Blenheim.

WHEREAS Section 270.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended requires a municipality to adopt and maintain a policy with 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;

AND WHEREAS, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim deems it advisable to adopt a Accountability and Transparency Policy.

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim enacts as follows:

1. That the following attached policy is hereby adopted:

Schedule "A" – Accountability and Transparency Policy

2. That this By-law shall come into force and take effect on the date of final passing thereof.

READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME THIS 5th day of JANUARY, 2011.

READ A THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED THIS 5th day of JANUARY, 2011.

(SEAL)

Marion Wearn, Mayor

Donald W. MacLeod, Clerk/CAO

SCHEDULE "A"
TO BY-LAW NO. 1648-2011

TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM
ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPERENCY POLICY

Subject: ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY POLICY
SECTION 270(1) MUNICIPAL ACT 2001

Authority: Approved by Council:

Statement of Principle

To establish a policy relating to Accountability and Transparency to confirm that the Township 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.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the delivery of the municipality's activities and services in accordance with the principles outlined herein. This policy has been developed to comply with the provisions of Section 270 (1) of the Act.

Definition (s): Accountability; Transparency

- i) Accountability-The principle that the municipality will be responsible to its stakeholders for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions or inactions.
- ii) Transparency-The principle that the municipality actively encourages and fosters stakeholder participation and openness in its decision making process is open and clear to the public.

Policy Statement

The Council of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim 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 services to our citizens; and
- Promoting the efficient use of public resources.

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 which will be open, visible and transparent to the public.

Open Government and Legislative Requirements

The Township of Blandford-Blenheim is accountable and transparent to taxpayers by fulfilling various legislated responsibilities and disclosure of information. The following are provincial statutes that govern how the Township conducts its business in a public, accountable and transparent manner:

1. Municipal Act, 2001
2. Municipal Conflict of Interest Act
3. Provincial Offences Act
4. Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
5. Health Information Protection Act
6. Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act

Administration

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally, to the political process and decision making and to the administrative management of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim.

1. Financial Matters

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

- a) An external audit is conducted annually by an independent Chartered Accountant;
- b) An annual budget and a minimum five year Capital Forecast is prepared for Council's consideration on an annual basis;
- c) The Township maintains a list of property assets in a property register;
- d) The Township has a Purchasing Policy;
- e) The Township has a Sale of Land Policy;
- f) Council conducts annual budget meetings which are open to the public prior to approval of the budget. Budgets and Financial Statements are available to the public on the Township website, or upon request.

2. Internal Governance

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

- a) The Clerk-Administrator ensures that employees undertake their duties in a responsible cooperative manner;
- b) The Clerk-Administrator ensures that performance evaluation is conducted in accordance with Township's practices.

3. Public Participation and Information Sharing

The Township ensures that it is open and accountable to its stakeholders through implementing processes outlining how, when and under what rules meetings take place. The Township's meetings are open to the public as required under the Municipal Act, and members of the public have an opportunity to make delegations or comments in writing on specific items at these meetings. In addition, the Township has adopted policies which ensure that participation by the public can be meaningful and effective, through timely disclosure of information by various means including print media, websites, etc. Some specific examples include:

- a) The Township has a Procedure By-law which outlines the processes of how, when and under what rules matters are presented to Council;
- b) The Township has a Records Retention By-law which outlines the period of retention for all the Township's records;
- c) The Township has a Notice By-law which prescribes the form, manner and times when public notice will be provided prior to an action of Council;
- d) Township Agendas, Minutes and By-laws are available to the public;
- e) The Township utilizes various methods to provide information to the public about the Township's operations and activities.