



## Policy & Processes Guidelines - March 2024

### Background

Pigweed Food Co-operative, trading as Thoughtful Foods, recognises the importance of a high standard of organisational governance to support our aims and activities. In accordance with our Constitution, our primary activity is:

*“To provide members with a retail source of environmentally, socially and ethically responsible vegetarian wholefoods (that are organic and minimally packaged wherever possible and practical) in a manner that promotes a participatory, egalitarian, democratic, ethical, environmentally and socially just sustainable society.”*

Our Constitution also further describes our organisational objectives (Schedule 1) and commitment to consensus decision-making processes. In addition to our Constitution, Thoughtful Foods has developed policies and processes to support our members, volunteers and customers in achieving these objectives.

For our purposes, **policies** are formal, published documents that describe Thoughtful Foods’ commitment to a principle or set of activities, and support decision-making on a given issue. An example is our *Safer Spaces Policy*.

**Processes** are informal procedures that support our routine activities. Some of these processes may be documented, which is preferable, to support retention of institutional knowledge. An example is our approach to managing customer complaints.

This document summarises some of the principles and processes involved in policy and process development and review for Thoughtful Foods.

## Policy and Process Development

New policies or changes to existing policies and processes can be suggested by any member of Thoughtful Foods. Suggestions can also be made by customers or the general public. These will be considered by the Coordinator and/or Director Collectives as applicable. A key consideration is ensuring that changes to existing policy and new policies do not contradict our Constitution, legal requirements, or compromise food and workplace safety requirements. Furthermore, the social, cultural, environmental, organisational and financial consequence of any change, both intended and unintended, should be considered and documented in the meeting minutes as part of the formal consideration of policy.

Changes to Coordinator Collective processes may be decided upon at weekly Coordinator meetings. Substantive changes should be described in written format (for example, in meeting minutes) and emailed to Directors as soon as possible after the change is decided. Changes to Coordinator processes may not be undertaken if they contradict our Constitution or legal requirements.

Similarly, changes to Director Collective processes may be decided at monthly Director meetings, and included in their minutes. Changes to Director processes may not be undertaken if they contradict our Constitution or legal requirements.

Development of formal policies requires submission of a draft that is reviewed by both the Coordinator and Director Collectives. Endorsement of new policy, or any changes to existing policies, requires consensus approval by both Collectives.

Members are informed through email bulletins when policies are being reviewed or have been finalised. Members are invited to send comments to the Secretary and are able to view the policies published on our website. If community consultation yields minimal changes, the policy can be endorsed by the Director Collective. If community consultation has yielded recommendations for substantive changes, both the Coordinator and Director collectives must review the revised draft policy prior to endorsement. Following final endorsement, the policy will be signed and dated by the Directors.

## Policy Publication

Electronic copies of our currently endorsed policies are published on our website for public access. This soft copy should be locked for editing and contain timing of endorsement (month, year) in the title and on every page.

## Routine Policy Review

All endorsed policies are reviewed every two years, or more often as required, to ensure they remain appropriate and current. This process is a valuable way of protecting organisational knowledge. Initial review is undertaken by the Director Collective, before resubmission to the Coordinator Collective towards re-endorsement. After every re-endorsement, it will be signed and dated by the Directors.

Endorsed by:

Amy Geddes, Belinda Xie, Monika Baumann, Zenah Bradford-Hartke

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Signature Directors

Reviewed and adopted: 15 March 2024

First adopted: March 2020