



## Community Decision-Making Toolkit



DRAFT V-OCT26

# TOOLKIT GUIDE

## Introduction

**C̣ʰḍʱɔ̄ɬ̣ɕ̣ɔ̄** (Tahkuhamuwakan), which means “rudder”, is a strong symbol for the *Community Decision-Making Toolkit*. A rudder provides direction but has no force of its own to move a boat forward. In the MoCreebec Eeyoud, the force that moves things forward is the Constitutional Framework and the membership. The *Toolkit* is meant to be a living document. It is a living document in the sense that it contributes to building capacity for making decisions about important issues that impact the lives of MoCreebec members.

For example, MoCreebec members may, at some point in time, be encouraged to actively get involved in decision-making related to the purchase or sale of lands for common use within the community.

The *Toolkit* has been written with the objective of helping members of the MoCreebec community better understand the decision-making or governance system that advocates for the political interests of, and provides services to, the community.

The *Toolkit* does not have to be read in any particular order. It can be used as a reference or as a resource for capacity building workshops. Each module in the *Toolkit* can stand alone and be read as a separate text. However, the true value of the *Toolkit* comes from understanding how the individual modules are linked and fit together.

The *Toolkit* is divided into four main sections. Each section contains a number of related modules:

The first section, which includes modules one, two and three, deals with the “**Background and Governance System**” of MoCreebec.

The second section, which includes modules four, five, six and seven, deals with the “**Core Components of Decision Making**”.

The third section, which includes modules eight and nine, deals with “**Managing Information and Understanding Context**”.

Finally, the fourth section, which includes modules ten, eleven and twelve, deals with “**Tools and Knowledge for Participatory Governance**”.

The first section provides an historical perspective and background on the various components of the Constitutional Framework. Section two is closely linked to section one and provides the core components for understanding MoCreebec governance and includes a module that outlines the decision-making protocol. The third and fourth sections provide additional resources for understanding how and why MoCreebec makes decisions for the common good of the community.

## Guidelines for Toolkit Users

The *Toolkit* can be read in parts or as a whole. However, it is most effective when the reader understands how the various modules connect and interact to provide the “big picture” perspective necessary to pro-actively participate in decision-making processes within MoCreebec’s governance structure, i.e. the Constitutional Framework.

In order to understand how the information in the *Toolkit* flows and how the content of the modules interconnects, the reader should first skim through the entire document to obtain a grasp for the overall content and a feel for the purpose of each module. Perhaps a good way to start would be to read the text under the sub-heading “**Purpose**” in each of the modules.

Once the purpose of each module is understood, the reader can then select the modules that are most relevant to them at any given point in time. It is important though that the reader approach the *Toolkit* from the perspective of their own role and responsibilities within the MoCreebec community.

For example, if you are an Honorary Youth or Elder Representative from a Clan Council, then you should read this document with your particular role and responsibilities in mind.

The *Toolkit* is meant to provide a guide for members of MoCreebec in reference to their particular role within the community. Reading the *Toolkit* without this orientation will result in a less than effective use of this resource. The first step in using the *Toolkit* is therefore to identify your particular role within the MoCreebec community.

The following roles and corresponding responsibilities will guide you in determining your own particular perspective or orientation. A good way to engage the *Toolkit* is to—as you are reading—mentally picture yourself in the role you actually (or potentially) occupy within MoCreebec.

You may also try role-playing, which involves putting yourself in the “moccasins” of someone else, to see things from their perspective. Engaging in role-playing will allow you to use this *Toolkit* more effectively:

#### *Chief and Deputy Chief*

The Chief and Deputy Chief provide overall leadership to the community by directing strategic conversations related to the political economy and governance of MoCreebec. The Chief and Deputy Chief are representatives of the community in the political, social, legal, and economic spheres of community life and in discussions with other government

institutions and First Nations. Chief and Deputy Chief are stewards of the Constitutional Framework and builders of consensus. Chief and Deputy Chief are also concerned with the long-term sustainability and overall integrity of the MoCreebec Council and Constitutional Framework.

#### *Clan MoCreebec Council Representative*

Clan Council Reps act as a bridge between the formal and informal systems of governance within the Constitutional Framework. They are the backbone of MoCreebec’s governance system and the main drivers of engagement and participation for community members. As representatives for the broader membership, Clan Council Reps act as the eyes, ears, and voice of the individual members and Clan families. Clan Council Reps play an active role in assuring their Clan family members are adequately represented and information is communicated in a timely manner.

#### *Honorary Clan MoCreebec Council Representative*

Honorary Clan Reps are observers to the formal deliberations that take place within the MoCreebec Council. They also assist the Clan Council Reps in disseminating information to Clan families and the general membership. Although the Honorary Clan Reps do not have a voting role, they do play an important advisory function within the MoCreebec Council. When Council is unable to reach consensus the Honorary Clan Reps can be called upon to provide their perspective and views on the issues being considered. Their input, as advisors, can potentially guide Council to forming a consensus position.

#### *MoCreebec Committee Member*

Committee Members play an important role in the governance system and add value to the information, advice, and perspective given to MoCreebec Council, Chief, and Deputy Chief.

Committees are an important space for weighing options, determining risks, and finding new approaches to addressing issues of concern to the MoCreebec community. Committee Members are “expert advisors” that can help shape the strategic direction of the community by providing the MoCreebec Council with thoughtful recommendations.

#### *Individual Member of MoCreebec*

Individual Members are direct beneficiaries of MoCreebec services. All Members are called to be actively involved in the political, economic, and social aspects of the local and broader community. An important part of being active in political, economic, and social spheres of life involves being informed of the Constitutional Framework. It is only through active, informed, respectful, and thoughtful participation that the right balance between demanding and supplying good governance can be achieved. Individual Members are therefore called upon to be effective and conscientious “followers”.

#### *Employee of MoCreebec*

Employees of MoCreebec are the “face” of MoCreebec to the community and individual members. Employees are tasked with providing quality service to members of MoCreebec. Their roles and activities are determined, to a large extent, by the decisions taken by the MoCreebec Council and the issues raised by individual members and Clan families. Employees commit themselves to continuously improve their service delivery skills and knowledge. Employees need to be informed of the Constitutional Framework because it has a direct bearing on the accountability system that they are a part of.

#### *Board Member of Subordinate Corporation*

Board Members of subordinate corporations are ultimately accountable to the MoCreebec

Council and broader membership. Board Members may serve on either not-for-profit or for-profit Boards. These Boards, in turn, may represent corporations that have a principally business focus or may represent corporations with a combined business and social mandate. In both cases, Board Members should have the sustainability of the corporations they oversee as their priority. These corporations are a key component of MoCreebec’s overall political economy; i.e. they play a role in acquiring and distributing resources that are necessary for self-governance and ultimately self-determination.

#### *Suggested Uses for the Toolkit*

The *Toolkit* can be used in a number of ways and for various purposes. Individuals or groups with differing roles and responsibilities within MoCreebec may use the *Toolkit* for different purposes. The *Toolkit* has been developed with these various purposes in mind. Flexibility in its application is a key component of what makes this *Toolkit* a valuable resource.

The primary purpose of the *Toolkit* is to provide individual members of MoCreebec with a “set of tools” that provide perspective and focus when trying to understand the Constitutional Framework. The four “core” modules (i.e. four, five, six and seven) of the *Toolkit* provide individuals with a new approach to reviewing and understanding the Constitution & Bylaws, which are the primary documents included in the Constitutional Framework.

When viewed in terms of *decision makers*, *decision spaces*, and *decision points*, the Constitutional Framework begins to take on new meaning for those who might be unfamiliar with the structure of legal and governance documents.

The *Toolkit* can also be used as a resource for capacity building workshops and seminars. Each module can be used separately as a foundation for developing targeted capacity building materials and presentations. For example, newly selected Clan Council Reps might be given a workshop using modules two, three and four. Moreover, a seminar could be organized to introduce Honorary Youth Reps to their roles, using some of the most relevant modules in the *Toolkit*.

In addition to the uses outlined above, the *Toolkit* can also be used as a resource for preparing to attend *Annual General Assembly* meetings (these are also referred to as *General Membership Meetings*) or Board meetings of one or another subordinate corporation.

The *Toolkit* may also find a potential use in high-school and college level training courses or as a text to be referred to by Honorary Clan Reps while they are attending or preparing for MoCreebec Council meetings. In particular, the *Toolkit* could be used to build the capacity of MoCreebec youth and the Youth Council. The *Toolkit* can also be used by Clan families to assist with their own Clan Council meetings and discussions.

However, the *Toolkit* should not be seen as replacing or overriding the Constitution & Bylaws. The *Toolkit* is complementary to these legal documents. Its primary purpose is to help MoCreebec members understand the structures that are in place to serve their interests and those of the entire community, a “**Community within Communities**”.

# *Background and Governance System*

## MODULE ONE: COMMUNITY WITHIN COMMUNITIES

### *Purpose*

Module one provides a background of MoCreebec as a community striving to turn its potential into reality. The module will identify key events and points in the history of the MoCreebec people that can be characterized as turning points. Turning points are where something that was only a “potential” became “actualized”. The actualization of potential is something that concerns each member of the MoCreebec community at the individual, family, and community levels.

Each member has a potential to be actualized. MoCreebec, as an organization, has a mandate to find a voice and lend a hand to members with unrealized potential. This module will identify how the MoCreebec community is part of a broader community and what this means for achieving that potential. Module one will also point out how the potential of individual members is strongest when the potential of the entire MoCreebec community is developed and supported. Recognizing the potential is the first step towards actualizing it.

### *A Time before the MoCreebec Council*

*“The Crees of James Bay had no distinctions among themselves as they do today, other than family clans and their recognized territorial areas where they trapped. There weren’t any status or non-status Indians, metis or west and east coast Crees, but rather the Crees were one and together they respected each other as having rights to use the land.”*

The above quote is taken from an anonymous source and was written sometime in the 1980s by a member of MoCreebec. The quote depicts an historical context in which there were no artificial borders or distinctions separating one group of James Bay Cree from

another. The only distinction that existed was at the Clan family level, which is a natural and clear line of distinction in any community.

The following quote from a Federal Agency report dating back to the 1980s points to the context that led to the interactions between what are now referred to as West Coast and East Coast Crees. The report clearly points to the factors that drew the ancestors of the MoCreebec people to the area surrounding Moose Factory:

*“In the James Bay area, there are two groups of Cree people; the West Coast or “k” dialect speakers, and the East Coast or “y” dialect speakers. Moose Factory was the meeting place of these groups, when they came to trade at that post. After the cession of Rupert’s Land to Canada, the Ontario-Quebec border was drawn through the hunting lands.*

*The Crees claim that this border transects through their traditional lands. The group of “y” dialect, the beneficiaries of the [James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement] JBNQA, who have traditionally traded at Moose Factory, claim traditional hunting lands both in Quebec and in Ontario. They traded at Moose Factory, because this was the most convenient trading post to their lands upon which they trapped and hunted.”*

The MoCreebec people were from the very beginning one community or Nation with other James Bay Cree residing in the area. The coming into force of Federal Agency policies and the *Indian Act*, as well as the subsequent *Treaty 9* and the JBNQA, created conditions for turned the people of MoCreebec into a “community within communities”. The next quote from the same report immediately above provides additional information on the settlement of MoCreebec peoples in the Moose River Basin:

*“There have been a variety of other historical factors which have caused some “y” dialect speakers to come*



*and reside in Moosonee and Moose Factory. Briefly, these are as follows. In the 1920s the Hudson's Bay Company reduced activities in the east coast of James Bay. This was accompanied by a severe depression in their industries in the late 1920s to early 1930s.*

*Also during this period the construction of the railway to Moosonee attracted East Coast Crees who were looking for work. In the late 1940s, certain education and health services under Federal jurisdiction, were concentrated at Moose Factory which were not available on the East Coast.*

*East Coast Crees who took advantage of these services, came to Moose Factory to be near relatives who were patients or students, and to find work in these institutions. In the 1950s and 1960s, a joint DLAND-Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources program further encouraged "this group" to come to Ontario to trap in untrapped and remote areas."*

These events bring the history of the East Coast Crees, who were residing in the Moose River Basin area, to the point at which the community begins to take on a structure of formal organization. The purpose of creating a formal structure had in mind both the immediate socioeconomic needs and a strong desire for self-determination. It was in this context that members of the MoCreebec community, who were residing in substandard living conditions on Moose Factory Island, initiated a process towards self-government.

### ***The Birth of a Community: 1980***

In 1980, the MoCreebec Association was created as the first form of self-determination and community organization to appear. The Association would later, in 1993, become the MoCreebec Council of the Cree Nation, today also referred to as the MoCreebec Eeyoud. The community had been born in 1980 but it was not until 1993 that MoCreebec had its very own "Walking-out Ceremony".

A child represents great potential and growth. In the 1980s the MoCreebec Association was in its infancy. It had huge potential and had realized much of that initial potential. As with many things, including the life of an individual, as potential is actualized, more potential is created. The organizing of the MoCreebec community in the form of an association gave birth to the potential for a stronger and more united community representation and governance system. That potential would be actualized in 1993 with the signing of the MoCreebec Constitution.

The first member of MoCreebec to sign the Constitution was the late John D. Visitor, an elder of profound wisdom and special virtues. John D. Visitor represented another potential, the potential of elders to give back to the community, through their collective wisdom, the knowledge required to build character and survive in a world of challenges and obstacles but also a world of blessings and fellowship.

The circle of life offers unique insight into how potential is created and actualized at all stages in one's life. The Clan family is at the root of supporting the realization of that potential. It is no mistake that the MoCreebec Constitution refers to the family as the "core" of the MoCreebec community.

### ***The Needs of a Community: 1993***

The needs of the MoCreebec community, at the time leading up to the landmark signing of the Constitution in 1993, were expressed—though somewhat inaccurately—in a report by the government, dated April 1986:

*"Neglected and unorganized, without their own community or land base, they suffer problems through the spectrum of housing, health, education, economic opportunity and the pursuit of traditional activities."*

This quote is partly accurate and partly inaccurate. The MoCreebec people had been



neglected but they were on their way to becoming organized in 1986, at the time of the report. The MoCreebec Association had only recently been created in 1980 and efforts to organize the MoCreebec people were underway. In terms of the needs, the report was quite accurate in depicting the situation.

Housing was by far the biggest concern and issue of the MoCreebec people at the time of signing the monumental and foundational MoCreebec Constitutional Framework. The community did not previously have a formal mechanism in place to advocate for housing needs. The MoCreebec Association became that mechanism and succeeded in securing funding through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for social housing units to be built on tracts of undeveloped land that the Association was able to purchase.

Similarly, the creation of an economic development corporation for the purpose of sustaining the political and social mandate of the MoCreebec Council was a significant step forward. Economic development is a key piece in securing the roots of MoCreebec's "**Political Economy**". The creation of the MoCreebec Development Corporation, also named the *Office of Political Economy*, was a critical step in addressing, not only the needs, but also the potential of the community.

### **Seven Generations**

The heritage of the MoCreebec community can be seen in terms of generations. The tradition of looking at things in terms of seven generations is a virtue of First Nations culture that should be encouraged and fostered. It is possible to look back at the seven generations that have preceded the current generation. It is also possible to look forward at the seven generations that will come after the current generation. Furthermore, one can also see their current generation as a shifting centre

with three generations going back and three generations going forward.

All these viewpoints have their advantages and value. The viewpoint that meets the most immediate needs is the third view, where the current generation is seen as bridging the past and the future. The third perspective is also the most conducive to "**Scenario Planning**" and "**Policy Development**" activities.

### ***New Needs and an Evolving Community***

In the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Report, Elaine Innis is quoted as stating:

*"There is more bad stuff to get into now. For example, drugs are becoming easier to obtain. Young people aren't as motivated to help around the house, or even further their education. I notice a lot end up dropping out. Children have too much dependence on their parents nowadays."*

Elaine is a role model, having pursued her education despite the challenges she faced. Elaine became a doctor, a medical physician. There are other role models and leaders in the MoCreebec community as well. Leaders who have at one time been effective followers. Having learnt from the leaders of their time, the leaders of today have transitioned from being the followers of yesterday. The leaders of tomorrow are the followers to today.

An indicator for how healthy a community is at any given time is the level of support and care given to the most vulnerable individuals in that community. Elders and youth are among the most vulnerable populations of any community. The most vulnerable are the sick, the handicapped and those with mental health issues or addictions. How a community treats these individuals is a test of how healthy that community is, and how resilient it will be when faced with challenges and crises.

Health, housing, education and employment are always issues that need to be contended with in any community. New generations bring with them new dynamics to the same issues that confront any community. It is important for MoCreebec, as a community, to be able to address the issues it faces. Better understanding the challenges is critical for new followers to continue transitioning into leadership roles within the community.

The needs will always exist, so too will the potential. Each member of the MoCreebec community has a unique potential to fulfill. They are not only members of a community, they are contributors to the future of that community. They are also descendants and have an obligation to pass on the collective wisdom they received from their elders. Each member of the community has a role to play.

### *Individual Potential and the Community*

An individual's potential is a unique thing. It cannot be transferred to someone else. In this way it is similar to MoCreebec membership. Membership is non-transferable. A member can however decide to transfer from one Clan family to another. So too can an individual decide to develop their potential within the community and governance structures developed by the Constitutional Framework.

The other option is to pursue one's potential outside of the communities of Moose Factory and Moosonee. Hopefully, members of the community will decide to return to their home to help advance the potential of a community that has chosen to reside in the Moose River Basin and traces its route in this region back multiple generations.

A community is only as strong as its weakest member. By lifting up the weak the strong are made stronger and the community can thrive. When the potential of individual members is

recognized, supported and developed, the entire community benefits from an increased and higher realization of community-level potential. The Eeyoud becomes stronger.

Individual potential is at the heart of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework. It is reflected in the “**Guiding Principles**” that speak to the need for self-reliance and strength. Strength comes from actualizing the potential that is waiting to be discovered in each individual and, through each individual, in every Clan family. When each individual invests in their capacity they contribute to the community's development. When the entire community invests in the capacity of individuals those individuals become stronger and, in turn, increase the strength of others.

### *Community within Communities*

The MoCreebec Council (Eeyoud) has long recognized its role in building relationships with other entities and levels of government as a primary concern and of utmost import. It also recognizes that, as was the case with the ancestors of the MoCreebec people, it is part of a wider community of Clan families and First Nations. Today's world is founded on new boundaries and different distinctions that have not always existed. The MoCreebec community must strive and thrive in this new environment and build for tomorrow.

The MoCreebec Constitutional Framework lays out the system for self-determination and self-government of a community that has arisen through many challenges and changing lines of policy and geography. However, united and strong, the MoCreebec community can be an example of good governance and stewardship to others. By being a partner with other First Nations and governments, MoCreebec can realize its own potential and be a catalyst for helping others realize theirs.

*“MoCreebec Council of the Cree Nation believes in rebuilding the Cree Nation and considers itself as one example and a reflection of our collective struggle and journey to make our Nation strong again.”*

## MODULE TWO: CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

### *Purpose*

Module two provides an overview of the Constitutional Framework documents. The aim is to highlight and draw attention to the different sections and hopefully make them more understandable. The module will lead naturally into a discussion about perspectives covered in the modules for the next section of the *Toolkit*: “**Decision Makers**”, “**Decision Spaces**”, & “**Decision Points**”.

Understanding the Constitutional Framework is not only the job of MoCreebec leadership. The general membership of the MoCreebec community must have knowledge about the governance system they are part of building. The Constitution is a visionary document and the Bylaw addresses procedural issues. The Bylaw provides a bridge between the vision (i.e. the Constitution) and the approach (i.e. policies). Policies will be the third level of governance that arises from implementation of the Constitutional Framework.

### *Constitutions & Constitutionality*

What is a constitution and why does it matter?

There is no simple response but it is an important, indeed vital, question to ask. The three basic elements of constitutional theory are contract, convention and coordination. Constitutions can also be understood as two sides of the same coin. Constitutions aim both to “grant power” and “limit power”. Constitutions are also closely linked to “**Political Economy**”, which is key to self-governance and self-determination. But first, more on the three basic elements of theory.

Figure 1: Comparing Concepts

Legal Concept	Alternative Concept
<i>Contract</i> : Accountability structure between parties to a formal agreement: i.e. principal and agent	<i>Consensus</i> : Agreement based on broad support and the fostering of a common vision and objectives
<i>Convention</i> : Credibility of common structures and processes, as determined by values and norms	<i>Tradition</i> : Practices that have survived the test of time and serve the interests of building common identity
<i>Coordination</i> : Functionality of roles and responsibilities as they pertain to achieving goals and objectives	<i>Stewardship</i> : A disposition to care for things that are deemed to be of common use, value and interest

A constitution can be understood in terms of “contracts”. In fact, this was expressly stated in the MoCreebec Constitution:

*“In keeping with its Guiding Principles and Purpose, MoCreebec is committed to the fulfillment of the following Objectives on behalf of its members... (f) a social contract based on a shared spiritual foundation and a respect for traditional customs and practices”.*

A constitution can be understood in terms of “conventions”. In fact, this is also expressly stated in the MoCreebec Constitution:

*“Membership in MoCreebec is founded on the traditions of freedom and sharing; responsibility to oneself, to one’s family and to the community as a whole... Accordingly, the authority of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework is based on the interdependence of its members. To reflect this interdependence MoCreebec members have chosen to empower the natural core of their community, the family.”*

A constitution can be understood in terms of “coordination”. This too was expressly stated in the MoCreebec Constitution:

*“The MoCreebec Council may adopt any rule or procedure necessary to the effective management of MoCreebec members’ interests and consistent with the principles, purpose and objectives of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework.”*

The MoCreebec Constitution integrates all three basic elements of contract, convention and coordination. Contract can be understood in terms of “consensus” towards the purpose of sustaining a leadership structure to enable the self-determination of the common good. Convention can be seen as the “traditions” of the community. Coordination can be seen as equating to “stewardship”.

In terms of granting and limiting power, the MoCreebec Constitution is the mechanism by which the “common good” is preserved by establishing a process of determining the political process for making decisions and arriving at consensus. Without the MoCreebec Constitution there would not have been the initial consensus to “grant powers” to a structure of community leadership. Without a constitution there is no formal way of distinguishing between the leadership and the followership of the MoCreebec community.

At the same time as the MoCreebec establishes the foundations for granting power and authority to leaders, it also sets out the parameters for limiting that power. Power with authority is leadership. Power without authority is oppressive. Power with limits is stewardship. Power without limits is destructive.

The MoCreebec Constitution therefore puts forward a framework for balancing the need for strong representation with an equal need for broad participation. In other words, there is a need both for “effective leadership” and “effective followership”.

Constitutionality refers to acting in a way that conforms to, or acting in accordance with, a constitution. In order to strengthen the MoCreebec Council, as an institution of governance, both leaders and followers must act “constitutionally” and protect the integrity of the Constitutional Framework.

The following three subtitles provide an outline of the content of the Constitution.

### *Constitution: Guiding Principles*

The first section of the Constitution establishes the “standard” so to speak—it clears and levels the ground before putting in the poles for the tent frame. This section is short in length but deep in meaning. If the foundation is not leveled properly, then the structure being built over it will not support the needs of those who will be dwelling there. A community, like a tent frame or a house, must be built on level ground.

One can ask a simple question. What would be the purpose or objective in building something when no one has answered... why?

The circle of life is a testimony to the fact that we are constantly re-perceiving things depending on our state in life, our needs and our knowledge and experience. If we were to re-interpret the purpose and objectives of the Constitution every time we looked at it from a new perspective, then there would be no solid foundation, no deposit of collective wisdom.

The guiding principles provide the level ground on which to look at the Constitution through different eyes and to appreciate it with a common understanding.

The *Toolkit* has an entire module dedicated to the “**Guiding Principles**” so there is no need to go into depth on each of them here. It should be mentioned, however, that in addition to the guiding principles included in



the first part of the Constitution, the *Toolkit* also makes reference to a few other principles that were mentioned in other parts of the Constitution, including interdependence and the common good.

### *Constitution: Purpose & Objectives*

*“Ask not what MoCreebec can do for you, ask what you can do for MoCreebec.”*

The statement above is a slight variation on the famous quote by John F. Kennedy, former President of the United States. Kennedy was a leader. He was a formal leader who called upon his followers to become leaders in their own right, in their own families, and in their own communities. He wanted people to become active and engaged followers.

Looking to the MoCreebec Constitution one sees in the first part of the purpose and objectives section reference to eight points that essentially ask the question posed earlier: *“What can you do for MoCreebec?”*

Even in the MoCreebec Constitution, the question of what can be done and achieved for the community by individual members themselves is asked before the question: *“What can MoCreebec do for you?”*

The second question, which is important but secondary to the first question, is referenced in eleven points. Together, these two sections make up the contents of the purpose and objectives section of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework.

It is important to understand that both formal leaders and followers, some of whom are informal leaders, play an important role in attaching meaning to and building upon these statements of purpose and objectives. It is in this section of the Constitution that members find the roots for current and future planning and strategic discussions. In particular, these

statements of purpose and objectives provide a basis on which to make decisions relating to lands and resource issues.

### *Constitution: Membership, Ratification & Organization*

The MoCreebec Constitution is built on four key pillars: tradition, family, consensus, and leadership. Each of these pillars helps support the community and is a sustaining force. When one of these pillars is weak, the entire structure of the MoCreebec community is weakened. When all of these pillars are strong, the potential of members can be actualized.

These four pillars also act as a bridge between past, present and future and allow for the transfer of knowledge and collective wisdom between generations and among individuals. These pillars are essential for building opportunities. The Constitution specifically mentions this organizational role for MoCreebec: *“The MoCreebec Constitutional Framework is about opening up opportunities for the community, not cutting them off.”*

This is important to keep in mind because some may have historically interpreted the following phrase as limiting opportunities: *“...a willingness to relinquish beneficiary status, if necessary, under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement...”* That is not necessarily the case.

Reference to relinquishing beneficiary status was intended as a “last resort” in the face of one or more better options being presented to MoCreebec members. Only in the case of better options would membership be called upon to consider this condition. At the time of writing this *Toolkit* all options are still on the table and moving forward all options will depend on strong pillars being in place.

Tradition can be understood as “teachings of our elders”. Tradition is therefore based on wisdom, individual and collective, that is



passed between individuals and generations. Tradition is also tied to culture. Like culture tradition evolves but remains a source of strength and identity. Other things that are passing and temporary do not provide the same degree of strength and common identity as can be found in traditions and customs.

Family is the repository of tradition. It is in the family that an individual's first exposure to values, virtues and traditions is usually or most readily established. It is because of this that Clan families are such an important component of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework. Families are where the transfer of inter-generational knowledge occurs and where the strength of identity is fostered.

Consensus is a pillar of community life. It is what builds, strengthens, and sustains tradition. Consensus is not always easy to build but no one should expect things of great and lasting value to be easy and simple to create. Consensus and all that it sustains is worth the effort. Sometimes consensus will involve a "right of majority" to move ahead on an issue that is pressing and needing urgent action. Arriving at a majority consensus is often the best way to create the conditions for community cohesion. Unanimous consensus is the upper limit of legitimacy. Majority consensus is the lower limit of legitimacy.

Leadership is the fourth pillar of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework. A good leader is someone who has practiced being a follower. It is someone with a good understanding of the needs of those who follow their direction. A good way to view leadership is to see it in terms of "servant leadership" or the disposition to serve and provide good example to others. Sometimes the most effective leaders are those who do not "aim to be leaders" yet have developed the discipline and character of a leader.

It should also be noted that the essence of a good leader comes from their ability to make decisions based on good judgement. Good judgment is therefore an indicator of good leadership capabilities. Virtue forms one's ability to judge things appropriately. Justice is a virtue. Therefore, good leadership, like good judgement, depends on capacity for virtue.

Leaders are developed and supported by their families and the community. There is a critical interaction, therefore, between Clan Councils and the MoCreebec Council. Clan Councils provide the life blood of leadership to the MoCreebec Council. In turn, leaders know how to give direction to the members and find ways of building consensus and fostering participation. Leaders should realize they are indebted to the community for their support and placing them into their position.

The Constitution lays out specifically what the main responsibilities of the Chief will be. The main responsibilities include representing the interests of MoCreebec members in discussions with other organizations; protecting the principles, purpose and objectives of the Constitutional Framework; development of policies, procedures and programs to enhance the rights and benefits of members; and, the coordination of efforts to amend the Constitutional Framework.

The Deputy Chief assists the Chief in the undertaking of the Chiefs responsibilities and is available and should be capable of assuming those responsibilities if the need arises. The role of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson relate to the proper functioning of the MoCreebec Council and the Council's ongoing communications with the general membership of the MoCreebec community.

These roles, along with Council members, make up the primary leadership roles within the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework.

In addition to the leadership roles within the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework, there are also “advisory” roles that have been created. Advisory roles can be either honorary or consultative.

Each Clan Counsel is permitted to select a Youth and Elder rep to attend MoCreebec Council meetings as an observer and when called upon to provide their perspectives. These representatives function as advisors to the Council in specific circumstance, i.e. when regular members of the MoCreebec Council are unable to create consensus regarding any particular issue.

Furthermore, the MoCreebec Council can create committees as needed on any particular issue. The Constitution also proposes the creation of two particular committees:

- 1) Standing Public Complaints Committee (SPCC)

The SPCC is tasked with *“investigating whether [any] decision by the MoCreebec Council upholds the principles, purpose and objectives of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework”*. The SPCC conducts investigations and tables recommendations. The Committee does not have any power to reverse decisions made by the MoCreebec Council, though it may recommend doing so.

- 2) Constitutional Development and Amendment Committee (CDAC)

The CDAC does not necessarily need to be a standing committee but its activities should be triggered by any event calling upon a review of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework or the further development of policies and procedures that could affect the Constitution. The CDAC is concerned primarily with the constitutionality of amendments made to the overall Constitutional Framework. It may, however, in effect be desirable to have the CDAC constitute a Standing Committee.

In other instances, it may be desirable to have committees created on an *ad hoc* or as needed basis. An example of a committee that could be created on an *ad hoc* basis could be a committee to examine the long-term impacts of investments in small-scale, run-of-river, hydro projects on the MoCreebec community. Such a committee could provide advice and recommendations to the Council as long as there was a particular small-scale project being considered by MoCreebec.

It would be advisable for the MoCreebec Council to draw from the general membership for participation in both *Standing* and *ad hoc* committees. In this way the participation of members can be encouraged and their views shared with the MoCreebec Council.

Encouraging participation of the general members, in the affairs of the MoCreebec community, is one of the primary purposes of the MoCreebec Council.

### ***Bylaws & Corporate Governance***

The MoCreebec Eeyoud has been created to serve as the legal structure of the MoCreebec Council. The relationship between the Eeyoud and the Council can be likened to an orange. An orange has a thin layer of peeling that surrounds the fruit inside. The peel and the fruit both make up the substance of the orange. The two are inseparable.

The legal structure of the MoCreebec Eeyoud protects the Council but also provides it with the capacity to interact with and sign legal agreements with external parties, e.g. Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec, other levels of government (Federal or Provincial), and private sector entities.

The Bylaws are therefore an extension of the Constitution in the sense that they put into place an accountability structure that was not formally in place before the MoCreebec

Eeyoud was established. The Bylaws add clarity to the Constitutional Framework. It is, moreover, important for the Bylaws and their amendments to be consistent with the Constitution, i.e. to have constitutionality.

In order to make sure this is the case, the CDAC should be called upon to review the ongoing constitutionality of amendments to the Bylaws. Constitutionality is therefore important for the sake of continuity between the Eeyoud and the Council.

The MoCreebec Eeyoud remains accountable to the MoCreebec membership and draws its purpose and objectives from the Constitution. The following is a break-down of the sections within the Bylaws; their purpose and function. As you can see, the sections deal with many of the same issues as the Constitution, but are further developed and clarified in the Bylaws.

#### *Bylaws: Membership*

##### *Eligibility for Membership*

The Bylaws clearly layout the groundwork for who is eligible to be a member of MoCreebec. MoCreebec's identity as a community rests with identification as "Y" dialect Cree living in the communities of Moosonee and Moose Factory, but also more broadly off-reserve in the territory of Canada. The key to common identity rests with status as descendants or dependents of First Nations people.

The original Constitution left open eligibility for non-First Nations individuals. However, given the unique character and identity of the MoCreebec community, it makes sense to close this "loophole" through the Bylaws so that the benefits of MoCreebec membership become a function of descent from or dependency on an individual of First Nation ancestry and heritage.

The Constitution states that "*any person fulfilling two of the membership criteria below, namely section 8(1)(b) and (c), may be accepted as a member of MoCreebec.*" Criteria 8(1)(a) states the following: "*Descent from a "Y" dialect Cree speaking person (on mother's or father's side).*"

The Constitution therefore left the door open for non-First Nation individuals to become members of the MoCreebec community. This has been further clarified in the Bylaws so that membership in MoCreebec is tied to First Nations descent or dependency (e.g. in the case of adoption or through marriage).

Ancestry and descent are important for consideration as an Aboriginal community. Although MoCreebec is not land-based *per se*, it does trace its traditional aboriginal rights and responsibilities to the stewardship and harvesting practices in the James Bay region, both on the Quebec and Ontario sides of the present-day interprovincial border.

It is not MoCreebec's intention to create an exclusionary policy for membership. Rather, the clarification of eligibility for membership should be seen as a necessary step in fostering the process of building an identity, an identity that when strengthened will foster a renewed relationship with other communities and non-Aboriginal peoples and governments. A clear identity supports a framework for governance that will strengthen not weaken relationships.

The MoCreebec Council (Eeyoud) is after all a council of a Cree Nation. Its mandate is to support the unique rights and responsibilities of First Nations people of "Y" Cree dialect ancestry and heritage who reside outside of their traditional territory.

##### *Rights of Members*

The rights of MoCreebec membership are clearly linked to a freedom to make decisions. Members are members because they have

decided to become such. They retain the right to cease being members but that right cannot be taken from them without their consent. MoCreebec membership is not transferable, which means it is tied to individual freedoms, rights and responsibilities. Those freedoms, rights and responsibilities are, in turn, shared and therefore create a common cause and identity; thereby fostering common-interests.

Rights of members are also closely linked to Clan family ties and a shared identity within the larger MoCreebec community. Clan family representation is a basis for member's rights. Members have the right to participate in the activities of their Clan family, including voting for their Clan Rep and voting for a member to become Chief or Deputy Chief. The Bylaws also clarify how members without a Clan family can be adopted into an existing Clan family or transfer from one Clan family into another. The Bylaws also point out the requirements for forming a new family or kinship group under the governance structure.

The minimum requirement of ten (10) adult members to form a Clan Council is a clarification included in the Bylaws. This minimum encourages effective representation and a functioning MoCreebec Council. In order for a representative of a Clan family to sit on Council, that Clan Rep must actually represent a proportion of the family base that they have identified with. The minimum is also in place to motivate Clan families to come together and mobilize as a unified group or family and as MoCreebec members.

The Bylaws provide important clarifications on who, and by what means, can General Membership Meetings be called. In order to respect all members' desire to keep up to date on decisions and issues, MoCreebec has set out clear rules or procedures governing how such meetings can be called and how notice

must be given in advance so that members of the community can make plans to attend and participate. The rules apply to both the leadership and the general membership.

It would be unfair to the overall membership to make it too easy to call or organize General Membership Meetings. These meetings should be reserved for critical issues that affect the entire community. Moreover, advanced notice of a min. of twenty-one (21) days, or three (3) weeks, is required so that as many members as possible can attend meetings. The rules seek to establish a fair balance between a desire to call and an ability to attend general meetings.

Quorum is an important factor when dealing with General Membership Meetings. Quorum is clearly set out in the Bylaws, something that was not touched on in the Constitution itself. Quorum is reached when two criteria are met. The first is a minimum participation of the membership, which is set at 25 members. The minimum is set at 25 to balance the goals of fairness and effectiveness in governance.

The second is a minimum presence of Clan Council Reps. The 75% of Clan Council Reps, as stated in the second criteria, is consistent with the 75% identified in the section of the Constitution titled "Agreement without Consensus". The Bylaws seek to strike a balance between fairness and effectiveness in the governance of MoCreebec's affairs.

General Membership Meetings may from time to time involve a vote. Members have the right to one vote on any question arising at a Special or General Membership Meeting. If a member is unable to attend in person, they can designate another adult member as a "proxy". The Bylaws clearly state what the rules surrounding voting by proxy include.

It should be noted though that consensus decision making remains a priority and votes

are taken only when consensus among adult members present at the meeting cannot be achieved. Furthermore, the Chief has the ability to determine when adequate effort has been given to arrive at consensus.

#### *Bylaws: Directors*

Director is the legal title bestowed on the Clan Council Reps under the new MoCreebec Eeyoud Bylaws. Directors continue to serve, simultaneously, as Clan Council Reps but take on the title of Directors, in reference to the MoCreebec Council's legal (sister) entity. The Directors, being Clan Council Reps, are selected by their families to represent their family's interests on the Council (Eeyoud).

The Bylaws specify the means by which Directors can be removed and the terms of their office on the Eeyoud (Council). The Bylaws also specify that Directors will have three-year terms. Honorary Directors are also contemplated in the Bylaws, as was the case with Honorary Clan Reps in the Constitution.

Quorum at MoCreebec Eeyoud (Council) Board Meetings is specified at 50% plus one of the Directors. Moreover, Board Meetings can be called either by the Chief or by 50% plus one of the Directors. The Bylaws also point out that consensus is the primary vehicle for decision making of the Board of Directors. This is consistent with the spirit of the Constitution and previous practices.

#### *Bylaws: Chief & Deputy Chief*

The Bylaws point out that it is responsibility of the MoCreebec Eeyoud (Council) members to determine the process for selection of Chief and Deputy Chief. The guidelines for advance notice of voting are also specified in the Bylaws. The Chief and Deputy Chief also serve three-year terms, as do Directors.

As is consistent with other stipulations 75% of Clan Council Reps, if in agreement, can request the Chief or Deputy Chief to step down and resign from their leadership responsibilities. The conditions for considering such action and for proceeding with such matters is clearly stated in Bylaws.

The Bylaws state that the Chief will function as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the MoCreebec Eeyoud. Other duties and roles are clarified and laid out in the Bylaws. The principle responsibility of the Chief is to protect the integrity of the Constitution, i.e. the principles, purpose and objectives.

The Deputy Chief assists the Chief in carrying out his/her responsibilities. The Deputy Chief may also be called upon to assume the role of Chief under specific circumstances that are highlighted and outlined in the Bylaws.

#### *Bylaws: Other Officers*

The Bylaws also contemplate two additional positions, i.e. Secretary and Treasurer. These positions or roles are equivalent to those of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson that were originally included in the Constitution. The responsibilities of these two positions are stated in the Bylaws. Furthermore, these positions are appointed by the Directors.

#### *Bylaws: Conflicts of Interest*

A conflict of interest arises when a personal-interest interferes with a common-interest. Conflicts of interest should be avoided at all cost due to the tendency for such conflicts to undermine the integrity of governance and institutions of governance. Once a potential conflict of interest has been recognized it should be declared and steps taken to remove (temporarily) a Director, who is in conflict of interest, from their decision making function.



A conflict of interest arises when someone is in a position or situation whereby they could use their political position—a position that is entrusted with the common-interest—for a personal gain or benefit. Conflicts of interest extend to immediate family and those who are closely tied to the decision-maker.

#### *Bylaws: Interpretation & Amendments*

The Bylaws outline the procedures for making amendments to the terms of incorporation of the MoCreebec Eeyoud. The Bylaws clearly state which sections of this legal framework require resolution of members for changes to be approved. General Membership Meetings must be duly convened in these cases.



## MODULE THREE: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### *Purpose*

Module three outlines the guiding principles that will help the MoCreebec community foster the immediate and long-term goals that are important for self-governance and sustainable development. The principles or values included in this module are taken from the 1993 Constitution and are defined in the spirit of that visionary document.

Guiding principles are important for framing the intentions of decision makers and for understanding decision points in their proper context. The principles covered in this module help with perceiving the context and aligning intentions towards the common good of the MoCreebec community. This module will therefore explain how and why intentions and context matter in decision-making.

### *Guiding Principles as Values*

A value is a sustaining force. When we say we value something, we are saying that we believe that thing to be worth sustaining despite challenging and difficult circumstances. When we truly value an object or an idea, we are expressing a willingness to make the effort to pursue its preservation. Therefore, it is values that set our guiding principles and determine our attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.

Decisions are likewise a reflection of, and shaped by, our values. What we value determines how we make decisions. It is therefore necessary for decision makers to be aware of their value systems and to make sure their values reflect the guiding principles set out by the community they represent. It is in this sense that the guiding principles included in the MoCreebec Constitution are important; they shape how decision makers weigh the

options, choices and scenarios that confront the community.

For example, if we value equal opportunity for future generations to benefit from lands and resources, then our guiding principles will transform our approach to making resource development decisions that affect future generations as well as the environment.

Another example can be taken from the knowledge that elders acquire over their lives. If we value the knowledge of elders, and their ability to think in terms of community, then our guiding principles will transform the approach taken to incorporate that collective wisdom into decision-making and how we transfer that knowledge inter-generationally.

### *Guiding Principles as Foundations*

A foundation is a structure that can be built upon. MoCreebec's Constitution makes reference to the "family" as the core of the community. In this sense families are the foundation on which the MoCreebec community is built.

Like a house or a community, a person can also have a foundation. A person's foundation can be found in the "virtues". Virtue forms character. Guiding principles help build an individual's foundations by guiding an individual in acquiring and practicing virtue.

Good decisions are a necessary first step or foundation for implementing any system of governance. Good decisions get implemented well when people of "good will" are guided by their principles. Principles and virtues, in turn, provide guidance and experience for how to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

Acquiring the ability to act and to decide "virtuously" is never an easy task. However, acting and deciding virtuously is the surest way to build strong community foundations.

## *Guiding Principles from the Constitution*

The following guiding principles have been taken directly from the Constitutional Framework of the MoCreebec community. What follows is an overview of the ten primary guiding principles that have been selected for the purposes of the *Toolkit*. Each principle is accompanied by a reference to original quotes from the Constitution and a definition or description of the principle.

### *Equality*

*“MoCreebec members have chosen to give formal recognition of their community so as... to express the [equality or] Common Identity of its members, despite their diverse origins...”*

*“...members chose to empower their own governing system, based on the principles of **equality**... drawing strength from the community’s natural core, the family.”*

*“We reaffirm the aboriginal rights guaranteed by the Canadian Constitution, asserting that these rights also embody a sense of community, **equality**, a need for independence and self-reliance.”*

The first reference to equality in the Constitution addresses the issue of “identity.” MoCreebec members share an identity that unites them together as a community, as equal parties in a social contract. It is through active participation in the affairs of MoCreebec that an individual affirms their equality in the community. Moreover, participation in community affairs contributes to building shared identity.

The second reference to equality in the Constitution points to the equality of families as the core of the MoCreebec governance system. All families are to be treated equally under the Constitutional Framework. It should be noted that this refers to registered Clan families that have designated

representatives to speak on their behalf and make decisions on the MoCreebec Council.

The third reference to equality in the Constitution affirms the status of MoCreebec as a self-governing body that functions on an equal footing with other similar levels of government, i.e. local authorities.

This third reference is particularly important in determining and clarifying the aspirations of the MoCreebec community in relation to external political institutions, including the Federal Government of Canada and the Provincial Government of Ontario. It also affirms MoCreebec’s status in relation to other local and regional First Nation bodies.

Equality can also relate to the status of MoCreebec members in relation to their place of residence. The principle communities in which the members of the MoCreebec community reside are Moose Factory and Moosonee.

However, individual members and their immediate family may also reside outside of these two communities for extended periods of time, e.g. while they are studying at higher education institutions in the south.

Equality of representation and equality of opportunity should extend to all members of the MoCreebec community regardless of their place of residence. However, it is understood that the onus is on members residing outside of Moose Factory or Moosonee to be flexible and to actively find ways to engage remotely.

Equality is also important in understanding the relationship members of the community have to lands and resources. Equal access is an important part of equal representation and good governance. Determining access to and use of lands and resources, as well as their preservation, are important considerations.

## Independence

*“...members chose to empower their own governing system, based on the principles of ...**independence**... drawing strength from the community’s natural core, the family.”*

*“MoCreebec members have chosen to give formal recognition of their community so as... to restore the integrity of their **independence** and relationship with other orders of government...”*

*“...MoCreebec is committed to the fulfillment of the following Objectives on behalf of its members: ...economic **independence** and support for its members’ self-reliance...”*

Both the first and second references to independence in the Constitution point to the desire of the MoCreebec people to build relationships based on self-determination and self-governance. This relates both to self-determination of Clan Councils in relationship with the MoCreebec Council, as it does to self-governance in relationship with other political institutions and governing bodies.

The Constitutional Framework includes provisions whereby the Clan Councils are able to function independently of, yet in union with, the MoCreebec Council. Clan Councils have a great deal of flexibility in determining how their families will derive consensus and communicate amongst themselves. This independence is drawn from the vision of the family as the “core” of the MoCreebec community and governance system.

Independence is also an economic priority. Political independence, in relation to other levels of government, is strengthened when it is built upon the foundations of economic independence. Economic independence is needed to manage the “**Political Economy**” affairs of the MoCreebec community.

Independence is closely tied to the guiding principles of “inter-dependence” and “responsibility”. External independence alone does not build the foundations for effective governance. Internal responsibility towards others and interdependence are equally important in building good governance.

## Interdependence

*“...the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework is based on the **interdependence** of its members.”*

In addition to pointing out the importance of independence, the Constitution also highlights the critical role that inter-dependence has in building the foundations for the MoCreebec community and system of governance. Members of MoCreebec are interdependent.

A community is only as strong as its weakest point. Everyone experiences periods in their lives when they are weak and vulnerable. For example, children and elders may experience physical weakness or vulnerability.

It is only when understood and appreciated within a framework of interdependence that vulnerability becomes a source of shared meaning and purpose. In fact, MoCreebec came into existence as a direct result of an awareness of the need for interdependence and mutual support in addressing issues of living standards and access to resources.

## Participation

*“...to motivate community **participation** in pursuit of the Common Good.”*

*“...individual freedom to choose the level of **participation** in the traditional or cash-based economies...”*

*“...while safeguarding the authority of the MoCreebec Council and encouraging community **participation** generally.”*

The first and third references to participation in the Constitution highlight the importance of getting members of the community (input) involved in defining, building and supporting the common good (output). It is hard to have desired outputs when the necessary inputs are not mobilized or motivated to participate.

The second reference to participation in the Constitution points to the choice of engaging in traditional versus cash-based economies. This distinction is an important one. It relates to the political representation of MoCreebec.

Developments in the areas of lands and resources impact the ability of individual members to continue choosing between these economic systems. Participation in the political affairs of MoCreebec is the surest way to guarantee a voice for stewardship and sustaining the freedom to participate in either traditional or cash-based economies.

### *Self-Reliance*

*“...members chose to empower their own governing system, based on the principles of ...**self-reliance**... drawing strength from the community’s natural core, the family.”*

*“...MoCreebec is committed to the fulfillment of the following Objectives on behalf of its members: ...economic independence and support for its members’ **self-reliance**...”*

Self-reliance is referred to in two ways in the Constitution. The first is at the individual level towards the community; the second at the collective level towards the individual.

Individual members of the community have empowered MoCreebec to govern their political affairs with the interest of the common good in mind. This empowerment is a reflection of the tradition of self-reliance that originates from the knowledge and skills that allowed the ancestors of the MoCreebec

people to survive on the land and manage their use of natural resources. It is also derived from an acknowledgement that this relationship to the land has evolved over time.

In turn, MoCreebec is committed to fostering a living tradition of self-reliance in the present and evolving context of the MoCreebec people. This commitment comes from an awareness that there is a logical connection or cycle between the current generation’s capacity for self-reliance, self-determination, self-governance, and the future generation’s capacity for self-reliance, self-determination, and self-governance.

Once again, participation by members in the affairs of the MoCreebec community is a key factor in strengthening the linkages between the necessary capacities and the aspirations of the Constitutional Framework.

### *Common Good*

*“MoCreebec members have chosen to give formal recognition of their community so as... to motivate community participation in pursuit of the **Common Good**...”*

It is often easier to define the common good by what it *does not* include, rather than by what it *does* include. In this way it is similar to environmental stewardship. We can all recognize when it is not being protected but it is harder to know (i.e. define) what needs to be done to preserve it.

The reason for this dilemma is that the common good is context specific and depends on circumstances, opportunities, constraints, resources, changes and leadership capacities.

It is, however, possible to outline and describe the common good in the context of particular issues and questions that confront the MoCreebec community.

In fact, it can be considered one of the primary responsibilities of the MoCreebec Council, Chief and Deputy Chief to determine what the common good consist of in reference to issues that arise and require due diligence and decisiveness in decision-making.

The capacity of leadership and the resolve of followership are key to a community's ability to make decisions in the face of uncertainty and maintain a proper sense of the common good and shared values. Developing a "sense" for the common good can be likened to a sixth sense in addition to vision, touch, etc.

The interactions between leadership and followership are key to developing this sense of the common good and determining the path towards preserving common interests and a common identity. Mutual support between the leadership and the followership of the MoCreebec Council hinges on the active participation and interdependence of community members.

When it comes to issues of access to and use of lands and resources the common good is served by placing collective values of sustainability and community economic development above individual values of extraction for personal benefit.

Searching for the common good requires members of the MoCreebec community and its leadership to foster a bias for common interests and against conflicts of interest.

### *Accountability*

*"In adopting [the Clan Council] leadership structure, MoCreebec members hope to take advantage of the natural lines of communication and **accountability** that exist within families."*

The entire Constitutional Framework deals with accountability issues. Governance is essentially about being accountable for the

decision-making authority that has been delegated to leaders by followers. However, the Constitution specifically mentions accountability in one instance; that is, as it relates to the natural system of accountability within families.

Clan families, as the core of the MoCreebec governance system, are where accountability begins. If accountability functions at the Clan Council level, then it is naturally transmitted into the sphere of the MoCreebec Council.

Accountability is another circular chain that is only as strong as the weakest link. Personal accountability leads to accountability towards family. Accountability towards family enables an environment supportive of community accountability. Finally, accountability towards community reinforces personal accountability by providing others with a positive example.

Accountability, properly understood, cannot exist without responsibility.

### *Responsibility*

*"...**responsibility** to oneself, to one's family and to the community as a whole."*

*"The Clan Council's representative to the MoCreebec Council will hold primary **responsibility** for the timely communication of MoCreebec Council business and decisions."*

The first reference to responsibility in the Constitution reaffirms the point made earlier about the role that responsibility plays in building the foundations of accountability. Responsibility is also circular and naturally has accumulative effects. It starts at the individual level and builds up to the community level.

It is important to highlight that the foundations for responsibility start at the personal level. This is where virtue comes into play again. Responsibility is a virtue and it is supported by other virtues, e.g. prudence,



courage, perseverance, and honesty, to name just a few. Responsibility builds character.

Essentially, responsibility is exactly what it claims to be—an ability to respond. It likewise entails a “willingness” to respond, to take ownership, and to be accountable. The ability to respond to the needs of others is the ultimate expression of responsibility to family and to community. Moreover, one can also be responsible in relation to the environment. Environmental responsibility is essential for stewardship of lands and resources.

The second reference to responsibility in the Constitution focuses on the role of Clan Council Reps in communicating issues, information and decisions between the Clan Councils (i.e. general membership) and the MoCreebec Council. The responsibility of Clan Council Reps is linked to their ability to respond to the channels of communication within the MoCreebec community.

### *Sharing*

*“Membership in MoCreebec is founded on the traditions of freedom and **sharing**...”*

*“...the social contract of **Sharing**, Kindness, Strength and Honesty which was the basis for the first meeting of Aboriginal and European peoples.”*

*“...the recognition of MoCreebec members’ right to **share** in the traditional territories of the Cree Nation.”*

The Constitution mentions that MoCreebec was founded on a tradition or “culture” of sharing. Traditions may evolve over time in their outward expressions but remain connected to the underlying values and culture. Sharing is one of these cultural traits that define a community and help with clarifying its priorities.

The Constitution refers to freedom and sharing in the same breath. It could be said

that the Constitution aims to support the “freedom of members to share”.

In the context of lands and resources, this goes hand in hand with the responsibility to protect and to act as stewards of the environment. Sharing access to traditional territories of the Cree Nation is also specifically mentioned in the Constitution.

Sharing is also highlighted as a cultural value and tradition in reference to relationships with external parties, e.g. other governments and political institutions. The Constitution sets the principle of sharing as a fundamental or core value for the MoCreebec governance system.

Sharing is also related to the common identity of the MoCreebec people. MoCreebec is a result of a “shared history” and “shared understanding”. The Constitution seeks to transform these shared elements into “shared value” and “shared benefits” for the members of MoCreebec. These considerations are key to understanding the “**Political Economy**” of the MoCreebec Eeyoud.

### *Kindness*

*“...the social contract of Sharing, **Kindness**, Strength and Honesty which was the basis for the first meeting of Aboriginal and European peoples.”*

The Constitution makes reference to kindness as an element of the social contract that exists between MoCreebec and the community and among individual members of MoCreebec. A social contract is a matter of integrity. It requires the parties to the social contract to act in good faith and to fulfill their mutual responsibilities.

A social contract is the basis for a system of governance and it is fitting that kindness be considered one of the guiding principles for the social contract that underwrites the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework.



Kindness is manifested in actions but it also depends upon a proper disposition. One must be disposed to or ready to respond in kind.

MoCreebec members are called upon to respond in kind to the needs of the community. Kindness goes beyond basic participation, which is often in one's own interest. Kindness is a fulfillment of one's duty and commitment to community.

Without kindness it would be difficult to foster the spirit of community and common identity that are needed to support the "infrastructure of governance" that goes beyond purely "political" engagements and "economic" activities. Kindness is also the standard by which a community is judged based on how well it meets the needs of the most vulnerable, e.g. children and elders.

### *Strength*

*"...the social contract of Sharing, Kindness, **Strength** and Honesty which was the basis for the first meeting of Aboriginal and European peoples."*

The Constitution refers to strength not in terms of physical power but in terms of an inner strength that reflects "integrity". Integrity is linked to honesty, which is the next guiding principle to be developed further below. Strength and integrity are moreover closely linked to having a conviction and a vision worth implementing despite the challenges.

In this way, the strength being proposed in the Constitution is not a strength that "forces" its own way forward despite others but a strength that "fosters" leadership to carry proposals forward despite the challenges, not despite the concerns of others.

Strength without integrity does not result in effective leadership, nor does it result in effective followership. Strength with integrity

builds consensus and motivates others to build shared value. Strength with integrity can also heal broken or damaged relationships.

Strength with integrity is both a preventative and a healing force that both leadership and followership should foster in their efforts to strengthen the MoCreebec community.

### *Honesty*

*"...the social contract of Sharing, Kindness, Strength and **Honesty** which was the basis for the first meeting of Aboriginal and European peoples."*

The Constitution refers to honesty in the same breath as it mentions sharing, kindness, and strength. This is fitting and appropriate. Honesty does require a disposition to share, to kindness, and to be strong. A synonym for honesty is "transparency". Transparency is necessary in any governance system but it is not sufficient.

Protection of personal and legal information (in particular during negotiations) sometimes requires there to be confidentiality. However, even when confidentiality is necessary, honesty still applies. It is important to be honest about when, why and for what confidentiality is being applied in a situation.

Honesty is never easy but it becomes easier when it becomes a habit or when a culture of honesty is supported across an organization. Leadership, especially Clan Council Reps, are called upon to lead by example in building a culture of honesty.

Honesty is important at the individual level as well as at the community level. At the individual level honesty requires an ability to admit mistakes and the strength to learn from those mistakes. At the community level honesty is required in representing the interests of those being represented. Honesty is the glue that binds the social contract that is

the foundation of the MoCreebec governance system and Constitutional Framework.

Ethics starts with honesty to self and others.

### *Collective Wisdom*

*“...MoCreebec, as part of the Cree Nation, is empowered with a natural right of governance founded on the values, beliefs, culture, language and **collective wisdom** of the Cree people.”*

Last but not least it is important to outline what the Constitution refers to as collective wisdom. Collective wisdom is something greater than the individual wisdom that any one person may possess. Collective wisdom can and should be accessible to every member of the MoCreebec community. In one sense, the Constitutional Framework embodies or incorporates the collective wisdom of the members of MoCreebec.

Collective wisdom is also at the core of the interaction between the guiding principles mentioned above. It is in building the capacity to think and make decisions in terms of these guiding principles, that collective wisdom is preserved and transmitted from one generation to the next.

There was a great deal of collective wisdom that went into drafting the MoCreebec Constitution. That wisdom is contained in the values and virtues of those who saw a vision for the MoCreebec people and developed a path forward.

Collective wisdom is like a river. All rivers have tributaries and those tributaries are the values that are shared among individuals of a community. Shared values are the starting point for building the consensus required for defining and sustaining the programs and policies of the MoCreebec Eeyoud.

Shared values foster common virtues. The guiding principles outlined in this module

draw from shared values and create the conditions for developing common virtues. Collective wisdom is the source of values and virtue.

### *Principles to Practice*

The guiding principles mentioned in this module are key to the decision-making process and the implementation of the Constitutional Framework. At the beginning of the module it was pointed out how these guiding principles are shaped by values and in turn shape habits and character (i.e. virtue).

A simple approach to applying the guiding principles in the decision-making process would be to ask three basic questions whenever one is confronted with an issue that requires a decision to be made:

- How do the issues being raised affect the shared values that underwrite these guiding principles?
- Do the options, and the process being used to weigh them, conform to these guiding principles?
- Will the decision to be made support these guiding principles and create opportunities for practicing virtue?

If the answer to these questions is YES, then the guiding principles are alive and active in applying the Constitutional Framework.

To conclude, it is important to recall how and why intentions and context matter. Without proper intentions, which are formed by our values and virtue and guided by principles, it would not be possible to recognize the common good. The common good is context specific and elusive. However, decisions that are founded on guiding principles provide solid foundations within changing contexts.

# *Core Components of Decision Making*

## MODULE FOUR: DECISION MAKERS

### *Purpose*

Module four outlines “who” makes decisions within the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework, “when” and “how”. The module also highlights what contributes to effective decision-making and what characteristics make someone particularly good at making decisions. The point of the module is not to mention or focus on any one particular individual. The purpose of the module is to try to lay out a standard for good decision-makers; that is, a standard based on criteria set out in the Constitutional Framework and supported by other research and findings.

The module begins by pointing out that those who wish to become decision-makers for the community should first practice making good decisions and taking responsibility for their decisions on a personal level. Clan Council Reps and MoCreebec Council leadership should be selected, in large part, for their ability to weigh decisions carefully and to accept responsibility for decisions. Module four therefore aims to sharpen the skills of decision-makers by focusing attention on the standard for a good decision-maker.

### *Why Decisions and Ethics Matter*

Things happen because decisions are made. The act of deciding is the purest expression of freedom and independence. When a decision is made it opens the way to action. Decisions, big and small, are the foundation of individual responsibility. It is through decisions, that the ability to respond is created and the direction of our response is formulated. We have all made decisions that have bound us to certain courses of action and commitments.

Those who are strong enough to weigh their decisions carefully (i.e. ethically) and willing to commit themselves, as responsible for the outcomes of their decisions, make the best decision-makers. Responsibility and ethics are closely tied to the “act of decision”.

Those who are unwilling to take responsibility for the outcomes of their decisions are not well suited to make decisions on behalf of others and the community. Decision takes practice. One prepares themselves to make community-level decisions by having first practiced being responsible in personal affairs.

### *Who are the Main Decision-Makers?*

Every member of MoCreebec is a potential decision-maker. All members make decisions that directly or indirectly affect the overall community. The one decision that every member makes in common is the decision to become and remain a member of MoCreebec. This one decision impacts the entire community, reinforces the commitment of others, and adds to the community’s potential.

Members of MoCreebec also make decisions about who they would like to represent them on the MoCreebec Council. Clan families select a Clan Rep who serves as spokesperson and decision-maker for the Clan family on matters that have an impact on the entire community. The choice of Clan Rep is essentially a choice for a decision-making voice on Council. Clan Reps should therefore be selected based on a reputation for making ethical and responsible decisions.

Finally, the next level of decision-making involves the Chief and Deputy Chief. These decision makers are selected by the Council for their experience and knowledge in making decisions for the benefit of the community and the common-interest. The Chief and Deputy Chief are executive decision makers.

The Chief and Deputy Chief decide—basing their decisions on the principles and the spirit of the Constitutional Framework—how to implement Council decisions. Chief, Deputy Chief and Council should be held to a higher standard of ethics and responsibility since it is their decisions that have the widest impact.

### ***A Higher Standard for Decision-Makers***

There are a number of key elements to a high standard for decision-makers. These elements are outlined below:

- Good judgement
- Due diligence and prudence
- Perception and perspective
- Rational decision making
- Adaptive decision making
- Emotional intelligence
- Ethical intelligence
- Cultural awareness

#### *Good Judgement*

What does it mean to have good judgement? It essentially means that someone has the virtue of justice, which implies an ability to act in an equitable manner and to deal with others in a way that shows respect. It also applies to administering or allocating resources in line with the principles of equality and fairness. Good judgement in light of complex issues is perhaps the key trait of good leadership.

#### *Due Diligence and Prudence*

Due diligence and prudence imply an ability to act in a disciplined fashion when it comes to assessing an issue or circumstance. It requires an ability to withhold judgement till the facts are available. Due diligence means carefully considering the pros and cons; not deciding on pure impulse or emotion. Prudence means having an outlook of “cautious optimism”, i.e. viewing the glass half-full, but seeing the gap.

#### *Perception and Perspective*

A major trait of a “representative” is their capacity to perceive the needs and challenges of others, in particular those for whom they provide representation. Being perceptive is a key factor in being representative. When the ability to perceive the needs of others becomes a habit, it frames the perspective of the person who is tasked with representing others and making decisions on their behalf.

#### *Rational Decision Making*

Making decisions is never an easy thing. Often decisions are made under conditions that cannot be changed and a decision is required to identify a way to deal with “less-than-ideal” circumstances. Despite the conditions it is important for decision-makers to do their best to study the available options. They should think about the options they have in a logical manner. Rational is the opposite of impulsive.

#### *Adaptive Decision Making*

Perhaps the most challenging thing about decisions is “holding off” making a decision until a clear path is illuminated. Many people make mistakes by making decisions before having all the facts or weighing the impacts. People often tend to come to a meeting with a preference for one option already firmly in mind. It is difficult to entertain new options, even the best option, with such an approach.

#### *Emotional Intelligence*

Emotions are not a bad thing. They function as indicators but they often need to be kept in check. Decision-makers need self-knowledge about their own emotions and how they might impact their own decisions. They should also be aware of the emotions of others, as they are attached to certain decisions or outcomes. Emotional intelligence is key to developing an adaptive approach to decision making.

## Ethical Intelligence

Intelligence is necessary but not sufficient. To make good decisions, on behalf of others, one must be ethical. Ethical intelligence includes self-knowledge. Ethical intelligence involves knowing when certain “**Decision Points**” cause a potential or actual conflict of interest. It also requires the integrity to declare when a conflict of interest exists and to withdraw oneself from the decision making process.

## Cultural Awareness

Making decisions on behalf of the MoCreebec community requires having an appreciation for the cultural aspects of the community. This is particularly true when it comes to decisions relating to lands and resources. Customs and traditions are closely tied to the land and its ecology. Deciding on issues that will impact multiple generations, into the future, requires a firm awareness of culture.

### A Roadmap for Decision Making

A good way to see the role of decision-maker is to read the now famous poem by Robert Frost (1874 - 1963), *The Road Not Taken*:

*TWO roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;     5*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,     10*

*And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.     15*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.     20*

Frost’s poem can be seen as a roadmap for decisions that require thought, consideration of options, and an appreciation for future impact. In some way, we are all travelers on a journey through life. The poem depicts a lone traveler; however, in reality the MoCreebec Council makes decisions, as a group, based on the practice of building consensus.

Decision-makers should read this poem and be inspired by the outcome it portrays. The lone traveler makes a decision and then reflecting upon it later identifies that decision with having “made all the difference”. Good decision making should generate this kind of sentiment. Good decisions produce a sense of pride and confidence in taking the best road, which is often “the one less traveled by”.

### Decision Making Roadmap

1. Make sure you have a good grasp of the issues or problems that are being presented and require a decision;
2. Weigh all the options being presented carefully and do not pre-judge the opinions or perspective of others;
3. Consider the possible implications of each decision choice and evaluate the outcomes by using guiding principles;
4. Think about the long-term impacts of the decision you are about to take now and avoid any conflicts of interest;
5. Look at the next best option available and determine if there are elements that might not be mutually exclusive;
6. Build the best decision option possible and then build the consensus required to have that option implemented well.



## *Reaching Consensus*

The MoCreebec Council functions primarily through consensus decision making. It is not always easy to reach consensus. However, it is always worth the effort of decision-makers to try and come to a consensus decision. What is and how one reaches consensus are questions to be answered in this part of the module.

The English word “consensus” is actually the same word in Latin, meaning “agreement” or “accord”. To be in agreement means there is no descent or “disagreement”. However, you might ask if there are degrees of agreement? Yes, there probably are degrees to which a group of individuals is in agreement. But, the word consensus does not mean that there is complete agreement on everything. It only means that there is sufficient agreement to move ahead on a particular decision point.

What does it mean to “mostly” agree with a group of other decision-makers? It means that there is a general shared understanding of the issues being raised; that there is a shared belief that a decision point must be resolved; and, there is a shared understanding of the risks involved in taking a certain course of action, i.e. consent to accept the risks of a decision. Notice that “shared understanding” is a key element of consensus building. A consensus decision cannot be made without first having established a shared understanding.

One of the biggest hurdles to consensus decision making is not putting sufficient time and energy into developing a shared understanding of the issues and options being presented to the group. The error made in many cases is to push for particular solutions before the underlying problem has fully been explored. When members of a decision making group do not feel they have had time to consider the entire issue carefully, then they will be more likely to descent or disagree.

What traits are necessary for someone to, on one hand, foster consensus among their peers, and, on the other hand, to be open to accord with their peers? The traits that are required for this to happen are four: sharing, kindness, strength, and honesty. These also happen to be four of the guiding principles from the Constitutional Framework. They are also values that form part of the “social contract” of MoCreebec membership.

Sharing is important for consensus. If one does not share thoughts and concerns openly, then consensus cannot be built. Sharing information and perspective is key to forming a common and shared understanding. Without sharing consensus breaks down.

Kindness is important for consensus. If one does not show kindness, which includes respect, towards others during a consensus building exercise, then the disposition will not be there for peers to share the responsibility that comes from making consensus decisions.

Strength is important for consensus. Strength is needed to persevere in the process of building consensus. Taking the time required to come to a shared understanding is not easy. Strength is also required to maintain focus on the goal of a consensus decision.

Honesty is important for consensus. Honesty builds the trust that is needed for peers to feel comfortable accepting the risks that are part of any decision. Understanding the risk and being comfortable with it is key to consensus. True consent cannot exist without honesty.

To conclude, the character traits necessary to build consensus are the same required by way of MoCreebec’s social contract. If a decision-maker takes their social contract seriously, then they are more likely to have the common interests of the community in the forefront of their minds while making decisions.

## MODULE FIVE: DECISION SPACES

### *Purpose*

Module five covers decision spaces that are contemplated in MoCreebec's Constitutional Framework. The module will identify the main spaces for decision making and define the scope of the decisions that should or can be made in each of those spaces. The module will define what a decision space is and why it is useful to see the Constitutional Framework and decisions in terms of decision spaces. The module also covers aspects of decision spaces that can best be understood as "context".

Module five highlights the importance of viewing decisions both in terms of the spaces that are created for decision making but also in terms of the conditions under which decisions have to be considered and made. Making good decisions in tough conditions, often without complete information, is the stuff of this module. The goal is to help decision-makers understand the importance and challenges of what they are responsible for doing, i.e. directing the course of events through the decisions they make.

### *What is a Decision Space?*

A "decision space" is a product of the mental and social environments within which people discuss issues, weigh their options, and decide on a course of action. Decision spaces are mental spaces in the sense that what is seen as contributing to the external environment is both a function of perspective and perception.

What we perceive forms our opinions and ideas about what actually determines the context in which we find ourselves. Our environment is both a function of reality and perceptions. Our decisions are therefore determined by both of these as well.

Decision spaces are social spaces in the sense that issues are identified and prioritized in a social context. Options are also identified in a social context. Moreover, consensus decisions are made as a group with individuals who have a different perspective or might perceive things differently. Consensus is therefore a coming together of the "mental" and "social" aspects of decision making.

A distinction should be made between formal and informal decision spaces. Formal spaces are those that are recognized and defined in some form of governance document. Informal spaces are not "unimportant", they just do not carry the same weight as formal decision spaces. Only formal decision spaces result in decisions that impact the broader community or a segment of the community.

### *MoCreebec's Formal Decision Spaces*

If a "decision space" can be defined as the mental and social environment within which people make decisions, then formal decision spaces are environments where decision making follows defined rules or norms about individual and social interaction. The purpose of formal decision making spaces is to give predictability and stability to the process and to put everyone involved on equal footing.

There are four key decision spaces when it comes to formal decision making:

- MoCreebec Council
- General Membership Meetings
- Corporate Boards
- Committees

Committees have been added to this list because they too follow defined rules and norms, though decisions made by Committees are not the same as those made in the other three spaces. Committees make decisions that result in recommendations not actions.

### *MoCreebec Council*

The MoCreebec Council is the foundation of MoCreebec's governance. The Council is the principle deliberating and decision making body of the MoCreebec community. It is the focal point of the Constitutional Framework. The space that has been created for Council is one that should be respected, cherished, and held accountable to MoCreebec members.

If for a moment we were to look at this space without seeing the faces of the current Council representatives, we would see a space with a table and a certain number of chairs. That space is a meeting space, a gathering space where representatives come to find a "meeting of minds" on important issues. The Council Reps may change over time but the decision space remains the same and intact.

Seeing the Council as a defined space is useful for understanding why certain rules are necessary. For example, Council meetings are held at predetermined times and locations. It is also a rule that "quorum" must be met in order for the Council to conduct its business. Council meetings are recorded in writing through what are called meeting minutes. These minutes or notes become the basis for drafting resolutions. Sometimes the memory fails us and it is helpful to have minutes of meetings recorded for reference purposes.

Certain issues are highly sensitive, e.g. legal proceedings, and may require sessions to be held *in camera*. *In camera* discussions are not recorded and only final decisions are written down in the minutes of the meeting. The rationale for this is that sensitive issues need to be discussed in a manner that people feel free to state things in Council that they may not wish to be repeated elsewhere. The rules governing *in camera* sessions of Council are key to creating the "spaces" that will generate the highest quality deliberations.

### *General Membership Meetings*

There are some discussions and decisions that are so important that they warrant having a meeting amongst members of the community. These decision spaces, much like Council meetings, have rules about when and where they will take place. In particular, General Membership Meetings also have rules about who can call them and under what conditions.

If an issue is of such import that it requires a decision space that is open to the entire community and not just the MoCreebec Council, then it should also be an issue that has significant support. One way to confirm that broad based support exists for calling a General Membership Meeting is to require a minimum number of individual community members to support the call for a meeting.

It is important that General Membership Meetings be respected as a decision space or a deliberative space where the value of people's time is important and valued. As leaders, the Chief & Council can call General Membership Meetings when they deem necessary. There are also regular meetings called, as per the Constitutional Framework. The purpose of having a minimum number of General Membership Meetings per year is to assure that the community has a common space for holding Chief & Council accountable.

General Membership Meetings are, in many ways, similar to a potlatch. People come prepared for a potlatch. Everyone brings a dish or something to add to the community dinner. Whispers of disapproval can be heard when people show up and have not prepared anything but are expecting a free meal. The purpose of a potlatch is to add variety and social virtues to the normal activity of eating a meal. Members of MoCreebec should come to General Membership Meetings prepared to engage in discussion, sharing and decision.

### *Corporate Boards*

The MoCreebec Council oversees a number of for-profit and non-profit corporations. The Council oversees these entities but there is also a closer more focused space whereby the operations of these corporations are assessed and strategic direction crafted. This takes place within the corporate boards of these entities. Corporate boards are different than any of the other decision spaces because their focus is on operational issues relating to a much narrower sphere of interest.

Corporate boards are only indirectly concerned with broader community issues. They are primarily concerned with the proper management of a specific corporate entity. All of the corporate entities run by MoCreebec serve a social mandate to some degree, whether that is to provide employment and training opportunities or to administer the housing programs that were and continue to be a primary focus of MoCreebec's local governance and social mandate. That social mandate is served by having well managed corporate entities to implement programs and provide services. This is a key component of MoCreebec's "**Political Economy**" goals.

MoCreebec's corporate boards were created through a legal framework and they operate in a structured manner according to laws and rules. These boards are primarily accountable to the entities they oversee. The corporate boards are also accountable to the MoCreebec community but that accountability is expressed in their primary function, which is to make good decisions for the best interests of the corporations that either function to bring resources to the community or serve in providing programs to families and individual members.

Corporate boards function as a decision space where socioeconomic objectives are defined.

### *Committees*

Committees are not a primary decision making body. They do however contribute indirectly to the decisions making of others and they do make decisions regarding what recommendations to put forward after serious review of an issue. The work of Committees and the decisions they make should not be under-appreciated. These are important bodies that serve an important function within MoCreebec's Constitutional Framework.

Committees are formed and provided with a mandate by the MoCreebec Council. Once a Committee is mandated to conduct a review of an issue, it essentially becomes a decision space to the extent that it determines the scope of its deliberations, chooses who to consult and engage with, and ultimately decides what recommendations to present to Council at the conclusion of its work.

Committees are spaces created to increase the capacity of others to make final decisions about important but not necessarily pressing issues. Committee work can take time to accomplish. The space within which Committees operate supports both deductive and inductive thinking. Deductive and inductive thinking are both important to the recommendations made in the decision space within which Committees function.

Deductive thinking refers to assessing events or issues based on established principles, policies and procedures. It comes to a conclusion about whether something done was done in the right way. Inductive thinking refers to coming to a conclusion or establishing a new policy or procedure relating to events, issues, and circumstances that have previously not been addressed. It arrives at conclusions about what needs to be done to address previously undefined issues or to change existing policies and procedures.

### *Informal Decision Spaces*

Decision spaces are not all formal. They can also be informal. One of the decision spaces contemplated in MoCreebec's Constitutional Framework that is "semi-formal" in nature is the Clan Council. Clan Councils are spaces that each family clan can decide to create or not. It is really up to each clan family to determine whether a Clan Council is a good way of conducting their family's affairs, as it relates to overall MoCreebec governance.

There do not have to be any specific "legal" terms or conditions for how to run a Clan Council. In this way, they can be just about as formal as each family determines appropriate. Some clan families may even determine that having a MoCreebec Council Rep is sufficient for their representation and engagement purposes. Although, it would be preferable that each family develop a somewhat regular means of engaging in discussions, there is no mandatory structure for how to go about it.

Family affairs are often best addressed in an informal way. The family is after all a closely tied group of individuals with special relationships among themselves that would only be made unnecessarily awkward by imposing rules and procedures. As is pointed out in the module on the "**Protocol for Decision-Making**", family issues and affairs should first be addressed within family clans. Only if a family issue begins to affect the entire community should it be taken to the MoCreebec Council for further consideration.

The shift from informal to formal decision spaces occurs when an issue spans beyond the scope of individual clan families and enters the space of the entire community. In terms of principles, the shift occurs when the self-sufficiency and independence of a family is weakened and the community is called upon to show kindness and interdependence.

### *Uncertainty and Lack of Information*

It should be understood that decision making is often done under uncertainty and lack of full information. Decision makers do not have the benefit of hindsight. They have to come to decision spaces with the information and knowledge they have access to as decision points arise. This environment creates a need to be comfortable with less than perfect conditions. However, uncertainty and lack of information are not excuses for not doing any due diligence and research.

If a decision point is not time sensitive, then it can often be delegated to a Committee to review and provide further information and recommendations. This is also an opportunity to conduct a "**Scenario Planning**" project. However, if the decision point is time sensitive and a critical point is at danger of being passed, then decision makers will have to decide and build consensus without having all the information they would like.

The module on the "**Protocol for Decision-Making**" provides a useful framework for determining how to address circumstances that are high-impact and time sensitive. Decision points relating to lands and resource issues can often fall into this category.

### *Protecting Integrity of Decision Spaces*

Decision spaces are fragile. They can be damaged by putting personal grudges and petty politics above the common interest. Consensus can break down faster than it can be built back up. A lack of quorum at Council meetings can delay decision making and lead to missed opportunities. Negligence and disinterest can cause things to be missed and ultimately lead to bad decisions and the wrong direction being charted for the community.

Decision spaces should be given the respect needed to continue functioning with integrity.



## MODULE SIX: DECISION POINTS

### *Purpose*

Module six deals with the “act” of deciding and what types of decisions are taken and made by members and representatives of the MoCreebec community. This module will highlight two major categories of decision: high-impact and low-impact. These will be developed in detail and indicators will be provided so that decision-makers can recognize when they are confronted by either high-impact or low-impact decisions.

The module will point out how deciding is an act. As is the case with other actions, the opposite is also a topic of import, i.e. inaction. Module six will look at the impacts of our decisions and our indecision. Part of this discussion will also include a deeper look at the timing of decisions and the larger context of decision making. Decisions are rarely made in isolation of other periphery issues and concerns. How periphery issues relate to decision points will also be covered in depth. Finally, the module focuses on the decision point as a central concern of decision makers.

### *Why Focus on Decision Points?*

Decision points are the essence of leadership. Leaders have followers because they make decisions that others agree with. Others agree to their decisions because they are made with good and right judgement. Decision points are the training ground for virtuous leadership.

The following are examples of hypothetical and real life decision points:

#### *The Hunter*

*A hunter is tracking a moose up a creek in a paddle canoe. He is not sure how far the moose still is but*

*had recently seen fresh signs that it was around. As he moves up current he comes across a number of geese that would be easy prey. They have not seen or heard him and he would have an easy shot. He could probably get two or even three with one shot. But doing so would definitely scare off the moose if it were nearby. The hunter faces a decision point.*

Does he shoot the geese and risk scaring the moose, or does he keep paddling, ignore the easy shot and go after the big game?

#### *The Student*

*A student finds herself in a challenging course that is proving to test her limits and is forcing her out of her comforts zone. She is feeling overwhelmed and is thinking about dropping the course. It is late in the semester and doing so would mean she would lose the money she paid for the course and it would also involve delaying her graduation because it would now take an additional part-time semester to make up the course or take it a second time when the work load was less demanding. Doing so could also jeopardize her ability to get a full-time job in her own community. The job has been on offer to start that summer. She has two options: drop the course and risk losing the job opportunity or continue through the semester and meet the academic challenge face on.*

Does the student meet the challenge or reduce her expectations?

#### *The Teacher*

*A teacher has to address discipline in his class. He has promised his students that they would go on a snowshoeing trip to Sanpit Island but that the trip depended upon their good behavior. He stipulated that even one student causing major disruptions during class would mean the trip could be canceled. Many of the students have been looking forward to the outing, but two students in particular have recently caused major disruptions and got into a fight during math class. The teacher can either cancel the outing, thereby disappointing most of the students, or go ahead with it and send the two students to the principal's office.*

To what extent should the entire class be involved in disciplining the students that acted up during math class?

### *The Nurse*

*A nurse finds herself in a triage situation without any support staff or doctors. She must contend with an emergency involving a number of burn victims. There is little time to act in order to save lives. Unfortunately, she cannot save all the lives she now finds herself responsible for. She must decide between helping those she can save and letting others perish from their injuries. She has two patients in front of her and must choose who to help first. The choice of one will reduce the chances of the other surviving. There is a small child who she knows personally but whose injuries are much more severe than the other, older patient, whom she does not know personally. She is sure she can save the older patient. The chances of saving the child are very slim because of the extent of burning on the body.*

How should the nurse decide who to help?

### *The Firefighter*

*A firefighter is working on putting out a forest fire in the James Bay lowlands. He is in charge of a crew of fifteen individuals. They've been working on burning out an area along the railway tracks, using a controlled burn, in order to save the tracks and keep the route open for evacuating the remaining residents of Moose River Crossing. The wind has picked up though and their fire has gotten out of control. They are now at risk of increasing the danger to the small hamlet at Moose River Crossing. If they stay to bring the controlled fire back under their control, then this will put the crew itself under serious danger.*

Should the firefighter put his crew at risk in order to save the buildings and equipment being stored at Moose River Crossing?

### *The Pilot*

*A pilot of a small airline is faced with a serious dilemma. It is the spring hunting season and a group of hunters, including some children have been caught in*

*a swampy area where the spring flooding is reaching them quickly. The group is at risk of being swamped by the rising water and they do not have a boat. The pilot is the only one who can save them. Time is running out. Unfortunately, the weather has turned for the worse, there is heavy rain that is causing reduced visibility and a strong northwest wind. The combined weather risks make the flight a real and present danger to the safety of the pilot.*

Does the pilot risk her own life to fly into the hunting camp to save the lives at risk due to the rising flood waters?

### *The Chief*

*A Chief of a First Nation community has to decide whether to sign an agreement with a private sector company. The agreement would allow the company to access a location for the purposes of advanced exploration work. If the exploration led to a feasibility study indicating an economically viable mineral deposit, then the area of interest would be impacted by new and accumulative effects on the environment. The Chief must decide to put his name on a document that will impact the future of the local environment.*

Should the Chief permit further work to be done that could result in negative impacts on the local environment if a full-fledged project were to go ahead in the long-term?

### *The Council Member*

*A Council representative is at a meeting to determine the outcome of a selection process for hiring a company to build a fish plant that will bring employment and investment to the community. The Council representative looks at the proposals submitted by the various companies and recognizes one of the companies as being partly owned and operated by her uncle. She immediately recognizes the potential for a conflict of interest but feels strongly about the project and has been active in pushing the broader socioeconomic benefits of the fish plant. She has not spoken with her uncle about his company bidding for the project because he has been away for a few months.*

Should the Council representative declare a potential conflict of interest and remove herself from the selection process?

### *What Decisions do Council Make?*

Council has the challenging and dynamic yet rewarding (that is personally rewarding due to the knowledge of being part of building something great, something beyond the individual) mission of facing decision points head on and meeting that challenge with an equally dynamic resolve to contribute to the common-interest and the common-good.

Council does this by making decisions.

The MoCreebec Council makes decisions of various types. Firstly, Council makes decisions to approve large-scale financial expenditures. Secondly, the Council makes decision about hiring staff and selecting consultants. These decisions can be broadly classified as relating to procurement. Thirdly, Council approves strategic plans, procedures, policies, and legal agreements that affect the entire community.

Fourthly, Council makes decisions about what social and community-level activities to support with donations and in-kind contributions. Council may also choose to pass formal resolutions in support of certain initiatives that, with its formal written support, would be able to seek funding from other agencies and organizations.

Fifthly, Council can also make decisions about changes to the Constitutional Framework and what processes need to be in place or changed relating to the selection of Chief and Deputy Chief. Moreover, Council can decide to create or dissolve Committees of various types and tenures. With this responsibility comes the task of setting mandates of and appointing capable individuals to oversee the business of these Committees.

Finally, Council can make decisions that relate to the resolution of high-level political issues or community-level concerns, e.g. land related disputes or when health and safety issues arise that require political resolution by Council.

### *High-Impact and Low-Impact Decisions*

A decision point can relate to what are known as either low-impact or high-impact issues. A low-impact issue is something that affects few people, does not require many resources to achieve, does not have any significant negative risks, and does not involve a compromise of priorities or a shift in strategy. In contrast, a high-impact decision is something that affects many people, does require many resources to accomplish, potentially could result in wide negative consequences, and will require a re-negotiation of priorities and current strategy.

Decision points should be viewed as being of high-impact the moment one of the criteria of a high-impact issue is met.

### *Decision versus Indecision*

Decision is like action, both have opposites. Indecision is like inaction, both have severe consequences when high-impact issues are at stake. First of all, a clarification should be made: indecision is not the same thing as deciding not to act. Indecision is holding off making a decision beyond a certain point, after which certain options no longer exist.

There is no place for indecision in emergency situations where lives are on the line. Nor is indecision a good thing when dealing with matters of governance. Decisiveness, when faced with decision points, is a good trait to have in a leader. This does not mean that one does not take the time to weigh the decision carefully, nor does it mean that mistakes will not be made. What it does mean is having the ability to understand “critical points”.

A critical point is an inflection point where the circumstances and conditions change. A critical point for decision making is the point where options are no longer exercisable, i.e. they cease to be options and become missed opportunities. Decisiveness comes when the decision-maker does not allow critical points to pass without resolving decision points.

### *Decision Points in Context: the Periphery*

Making decisions is like aiming at a target. The target has a smaller inner dot or circle that is surrounded by circles that are gradually larger and larger as you move away from the centre. The centre is the decision point or focus issue. However, decisions are rarely or never made in a complete vacuum. There are always wider considerations and issues that are vying for attention and exerting influence on both the decision point and the decision-makers.

Contextual issues are part of the periphery of decision making. Decision-makers should be aware of them but should not allow them to unduly influence the focus of the principle decision making process. Distractions can lead to bad decisions, or worse, to indecisiveness in the face of high-impact issues. Avoiding these pitfalls is important, in particular for MoCreebec's Chief & Council.

### *The Timing of Decisions*

Timing was mentioned earlier in relation to critical points. It is also important in other ways. Some decisions have definite deadlines. For example, some funding sources have firm deadlines for applications. If an application is not finalized before a certain date, then the funding source will not entertain it. The opportunity is missed.

Decisions also involve timing from a different perspective. Some decisions relate to things in the short-term, other decisions relate to long-term outcomes. Often a decision is narrowed

down to a choice between a long-term and a short-term benefit.

The timing of decisions can also affect the way in which members of the community perceive their leadership. A community can grow impatient with process. It is important to make sure the timing of decisions is communicated well and to inform people when and why decisions are delayed. Not doing so can lead some to think leaders are being indecisive when they are actually practicing due diligence.

### *Mistakes will be made, but only by those who have tried...*

Sometimes mistakes happen and the wrong decisions are made. However, as long as one is not "intentionally" trying to make a bad or wrong decision, then there is nothing to be ashamed of. Admitting mistakes is the first step in allowing for them to be corrected. We do not always have the benefit of hindsight. Decision-makers do their best to develop a sense of foresight but that has its limits. The best way to develop foresight is to foster a desire for learning and gaining perspective.

### *Decisive in Deciding and in Acting*

Ultimately, deciding opens doors for action. There is little point in making decisions if there is no intention to act with the resolve to address the issues that have been discussed. Decision points are a target but unless someone is willing to pull the trigger, the hunt is pointless and—at the end of the day—there will not be any more food on the table than if the hunt had never happened.

Action is a very necessary and "close cousin" of decision. Knowing this, decisions should be made with follow-up actions in mind. The next steps should be part of the discussion about what courses of action to take and what decisions to adopt.



## MODULE SEVEN: PROTOCOL FOR DECISION-MAKING

### *Purpose*

Module seven provides a visual means of understanding the decision-making process, as it was intended in the Constitutional Framework. This module takes from the Constitution and Bylaws the major points that describe and outline the “process” for making decisions that have a large impact on the future of the MoCreebec community. The module therefore provides a means of keeping track of the decision-making process by using a “decision tree” diagram to depict the stages of formal deliberation and decision-making.

This module is of particular importance when considering issues that relate to lands and resources. Lands and resource issues are, for the most part, high-impact issues. The future uses of, access to, and opportunities from lands and resources will determine the cultural, economic, political, and social aspects of membership and life in the MoCreebec community. Lands and resources issues, in particular, require significant consideration before formal decisions can be made.

### *Protocol as Process*

A process can be valued for the outcomes it generates. A process can also be valued based on the intrinsic benefits that are derived from following a particular process. However, the greatest value is generated when both the intrinsic and outcome-specific benefits are fostered and appreciated by MoCreebec leaders and the general membership.

One of the most important intrinsic values to be derived from a process is the opportunities created for participation. Creating spaces for participation is one of the principle objectives of the Constitutional Framework.

### *Protocol as Participation*

The importance of participation in the process of decision-making cannot be overstated. The degree of participation logically depends on the degree of impact that an issue will have on the MoCreebec community. There is often an inverse relationship between the impact of issues and the time available to determine the best path or direction forward.

Therefore, it is key that opportunities for participation be created due to the tendency for high-impact issues to translate into equally high-level demands on the community when it comes to implementing solutions.

The decision-making protocol is a means by which the “degree” and “scope” of impact can be factored into the approach whereby the community is directly brought into the process of building consensus.

### *Protocol as Governance*

A protocol is a process that sets out the manner in which a formal decision will be arrived at. It does not determine the end result, i.e. the decision, but it does provide guidance on the way to get to decisions that fits a number of governance criteria.

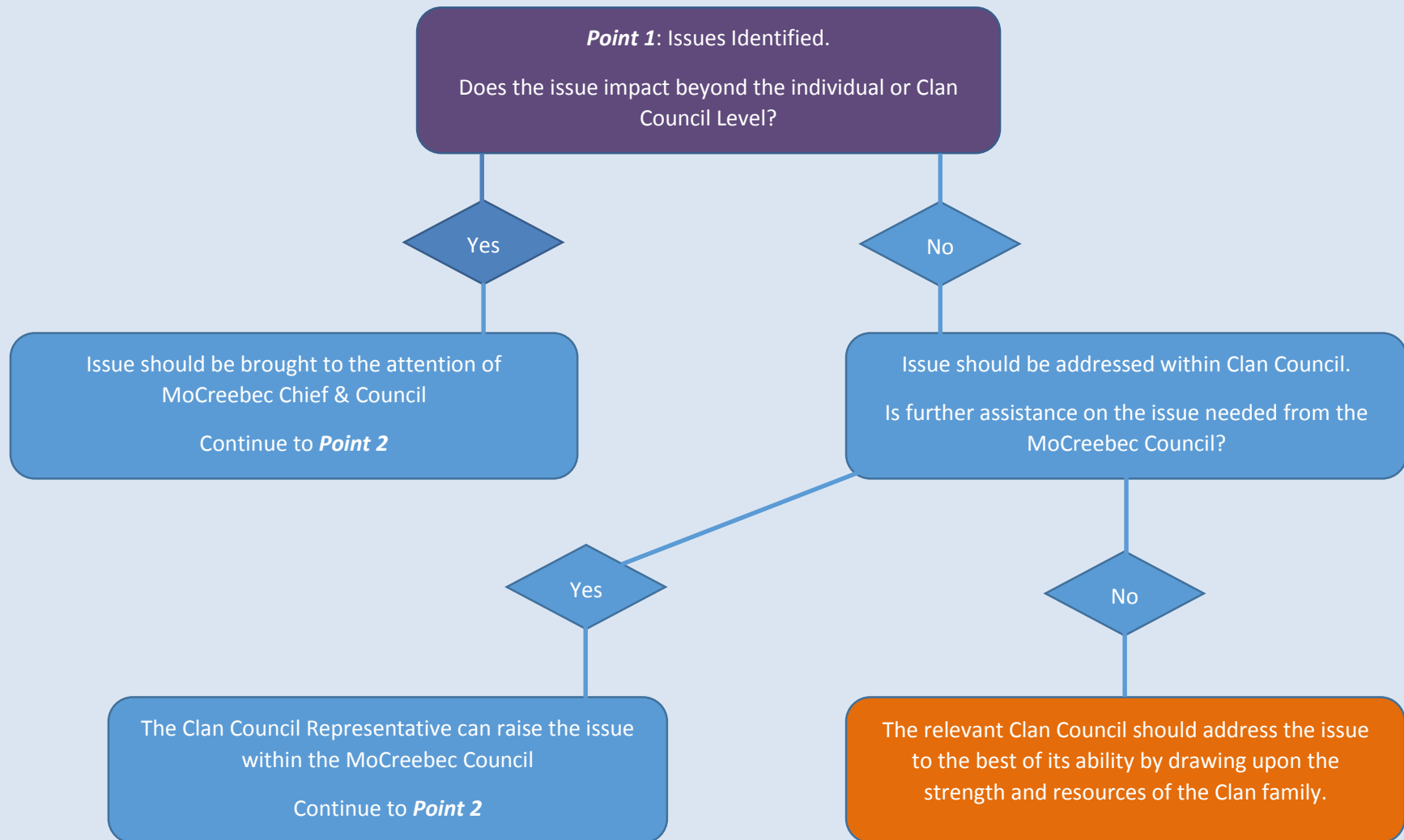
The primary governance criteria for lands and resources issues is that there be a transparent, consistent, and predictable way to reach consensus on matters that impact the entire community. The protocol lays out the points at which the direction and scope of consensus building is either widened or narrowed in order to arrive at a timely and fair outcome.

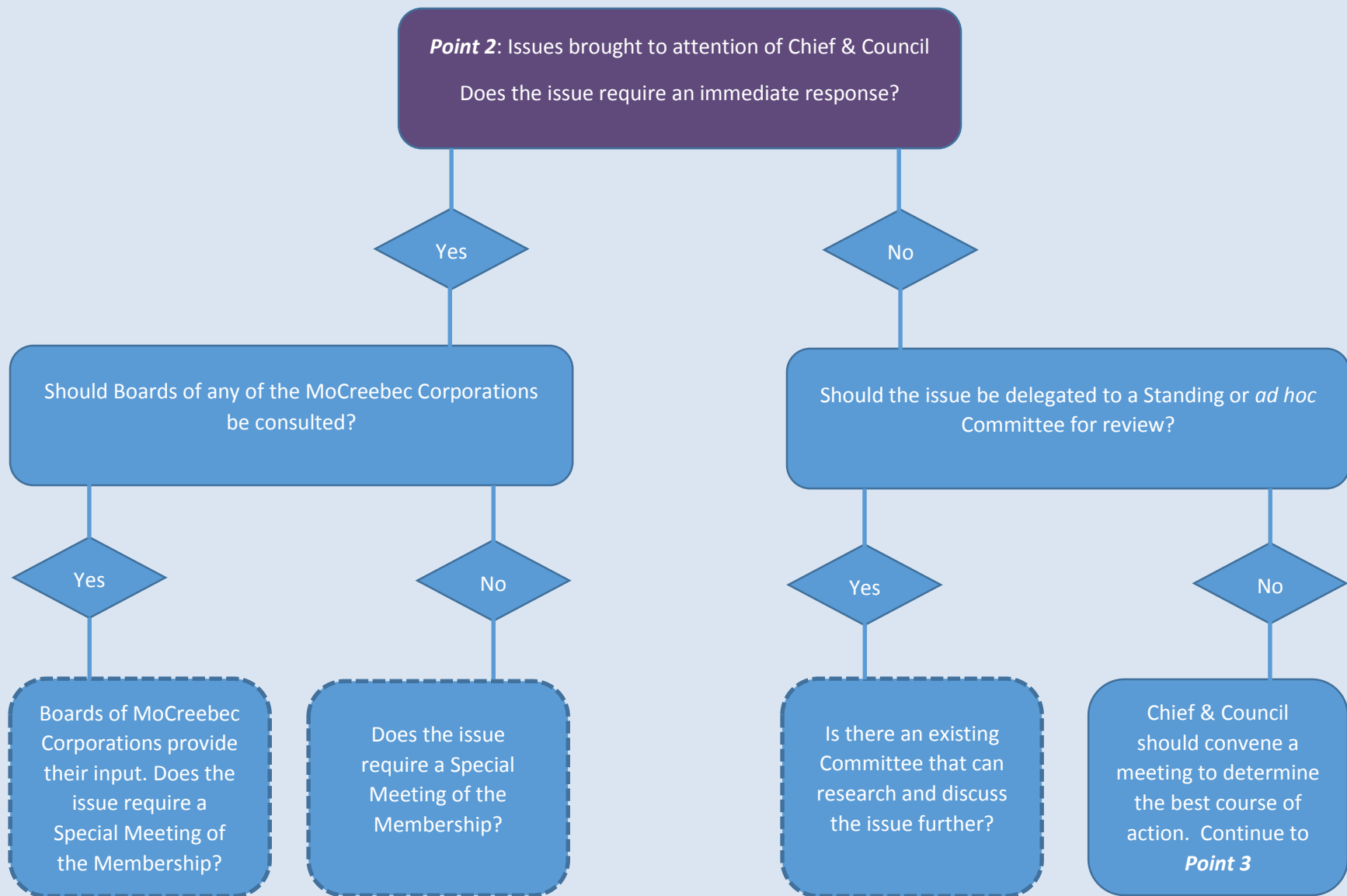
Governance deals with the manner in which trade-offs are framed, priorities are set, and a balance is achieved within competing options.

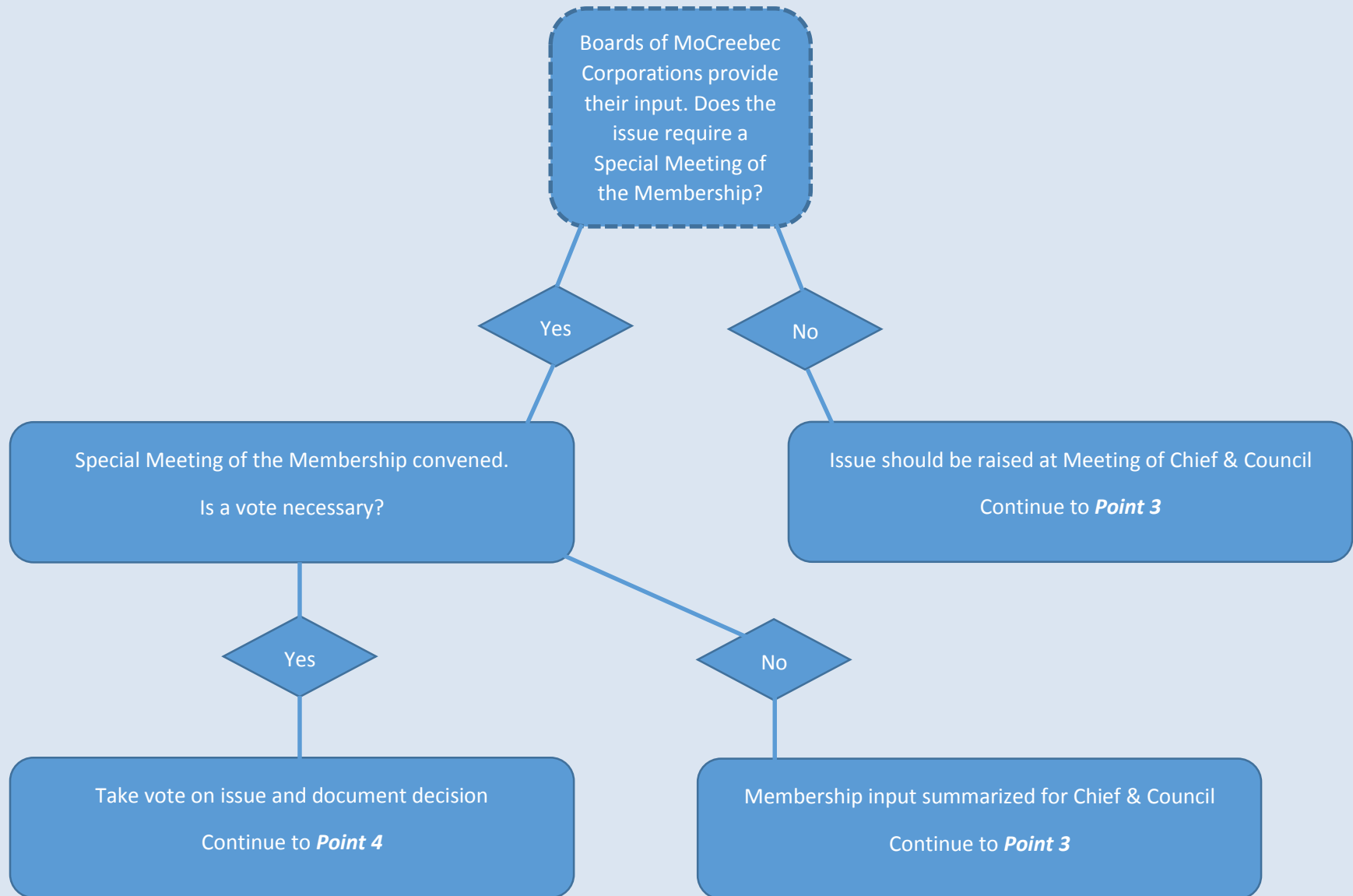
The following diagram provides a visual outline of the process MoCreebec has set out for making high-impact decisions.

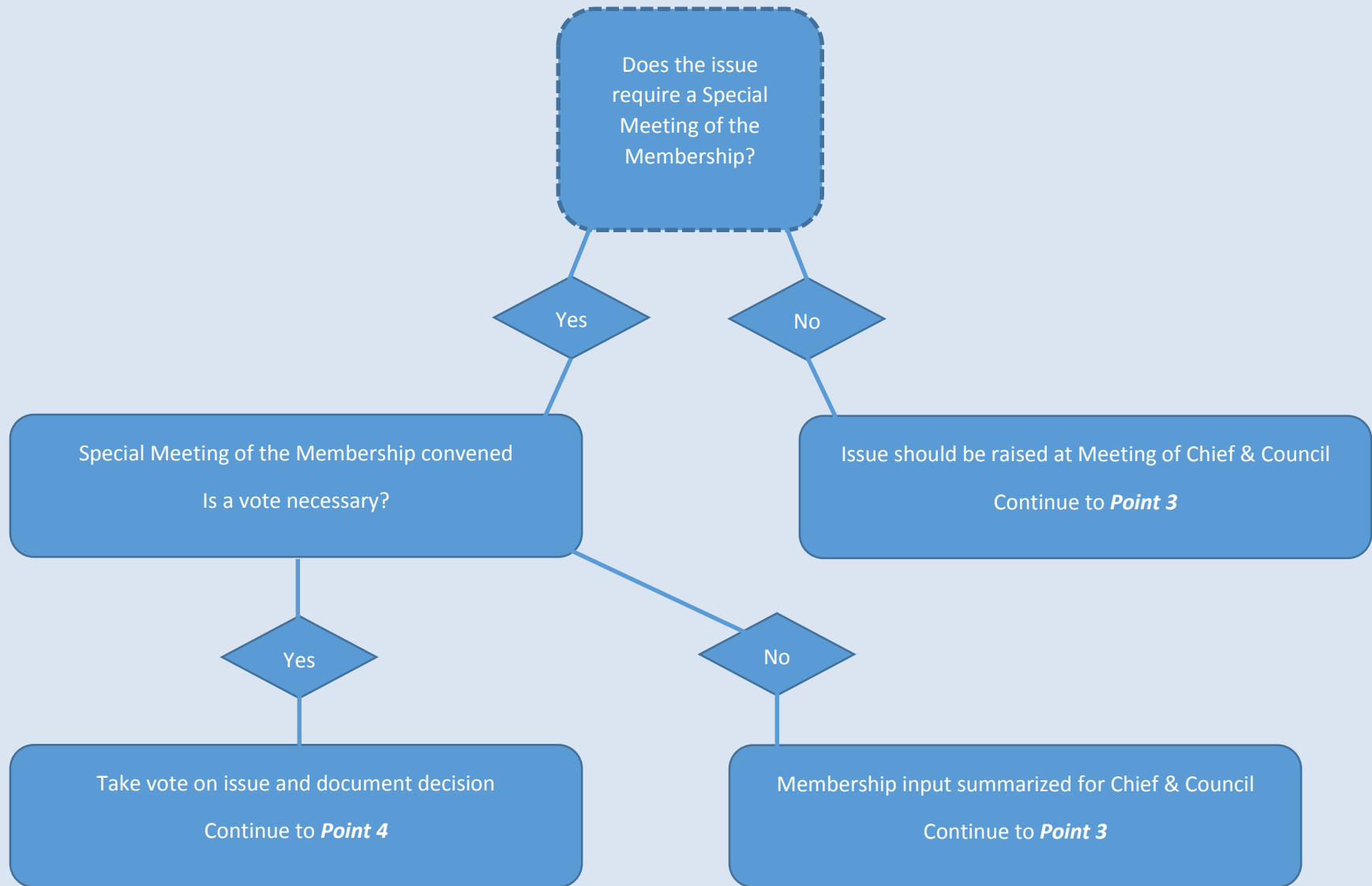


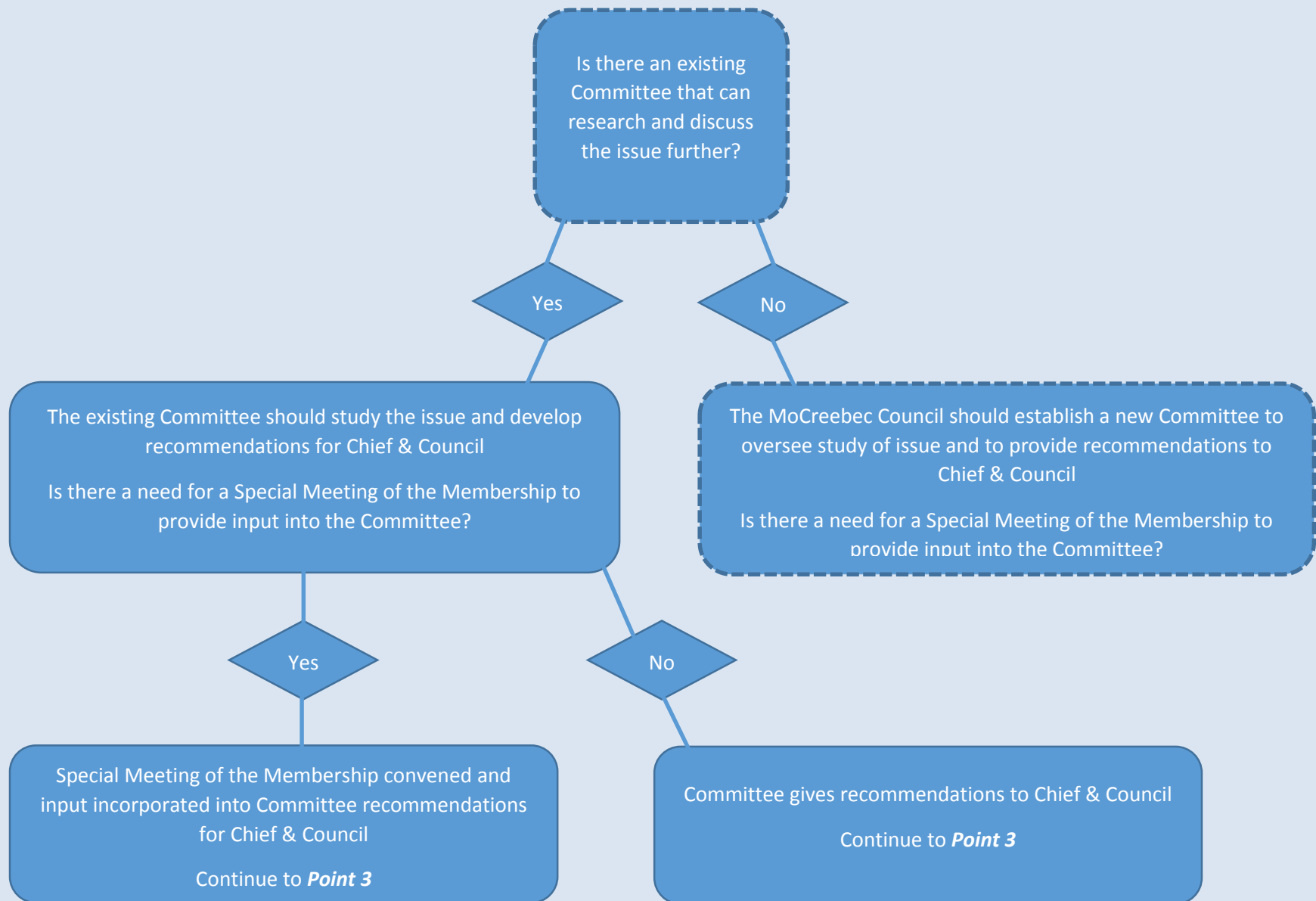
Figure 2: Decision-Making Protocol: Decision Tree



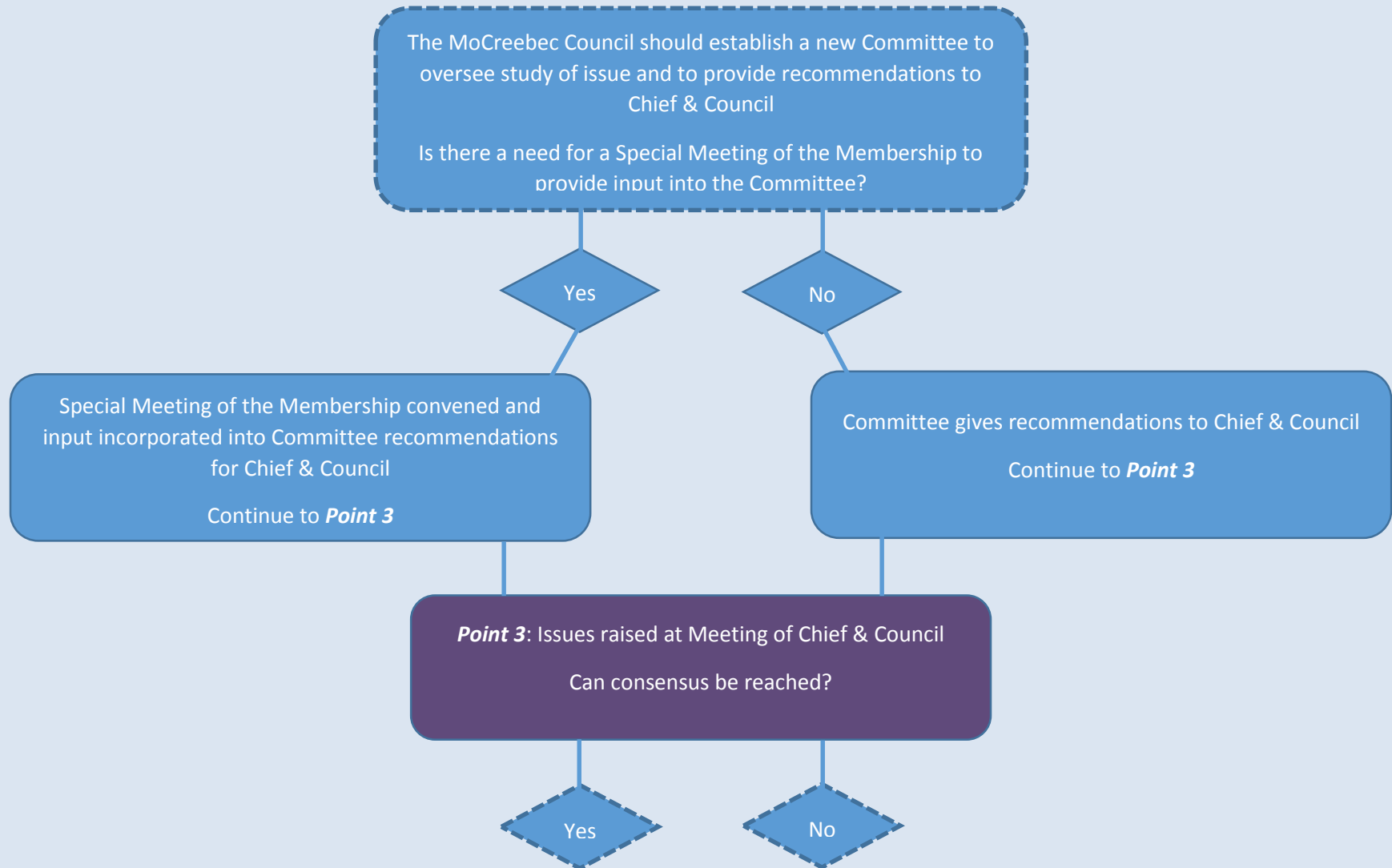


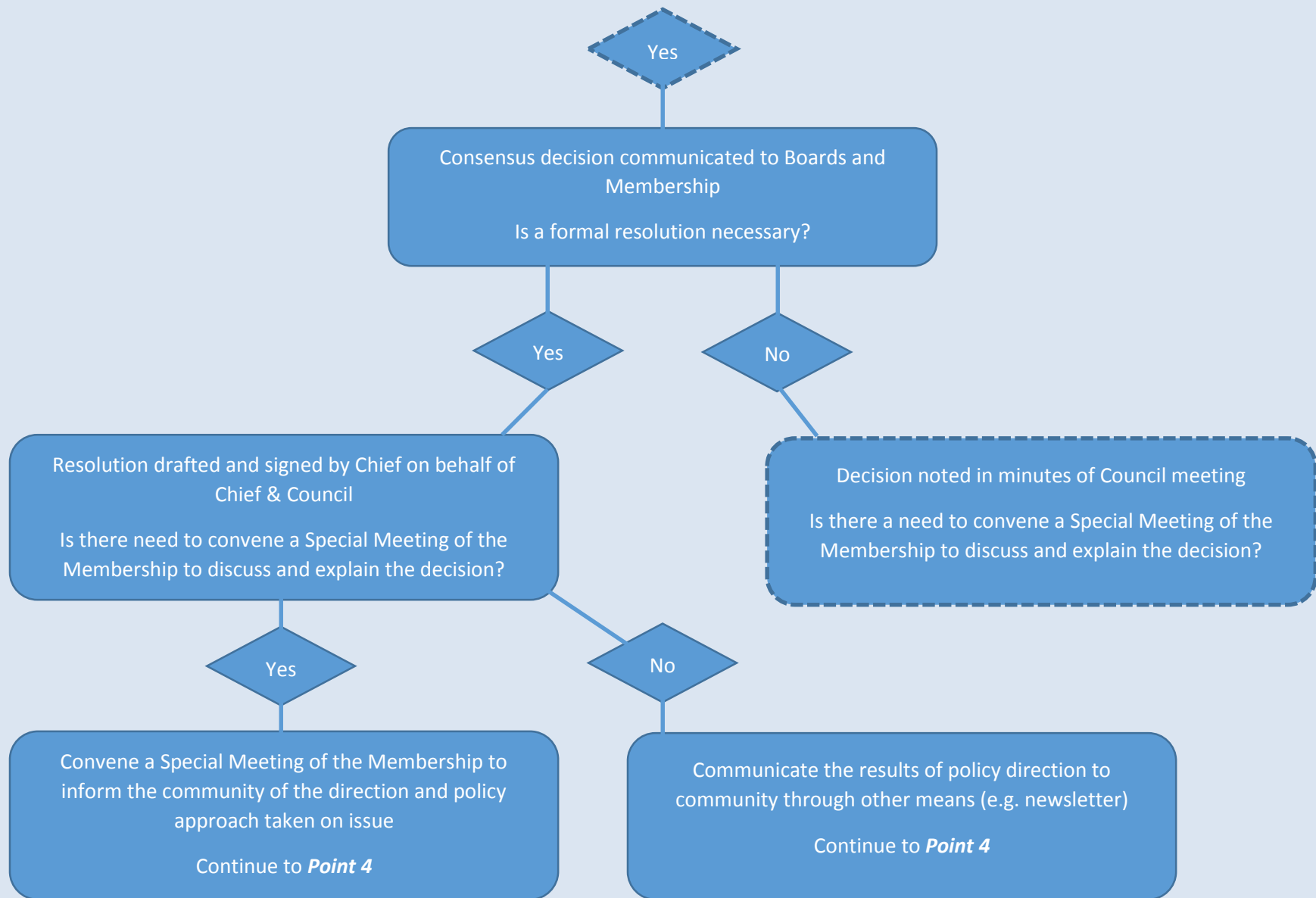




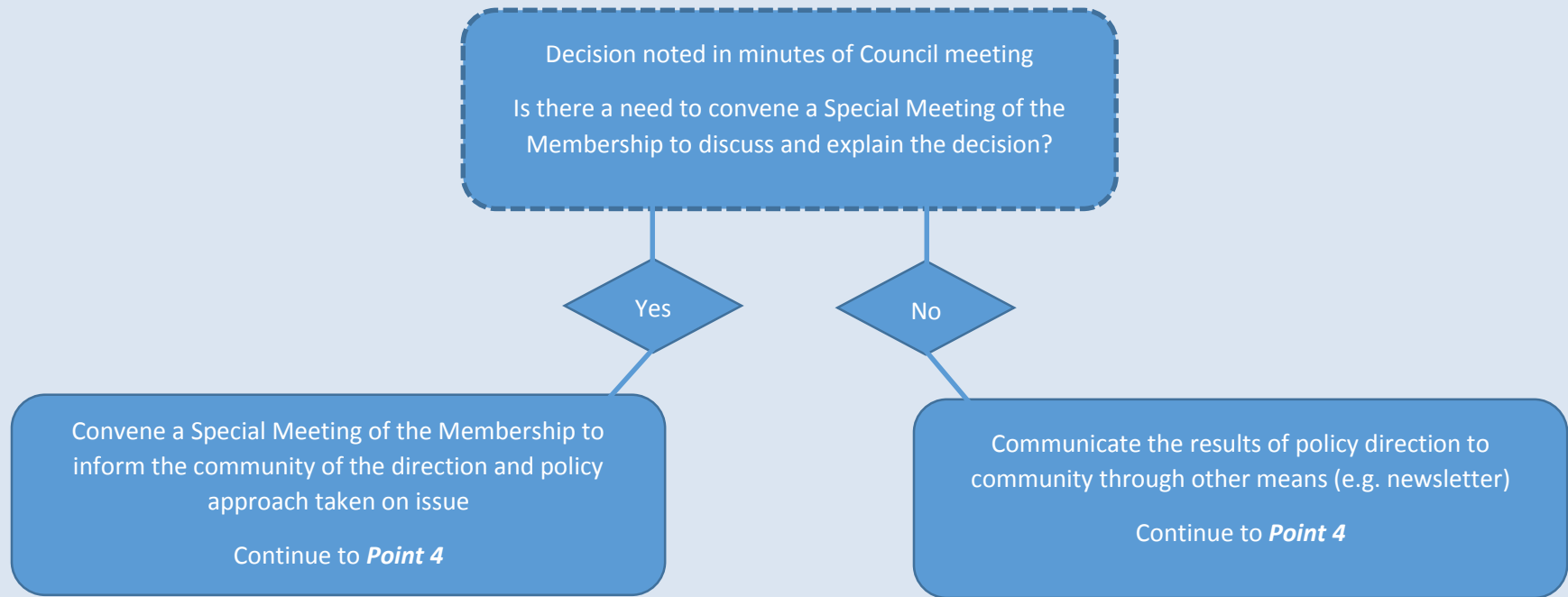




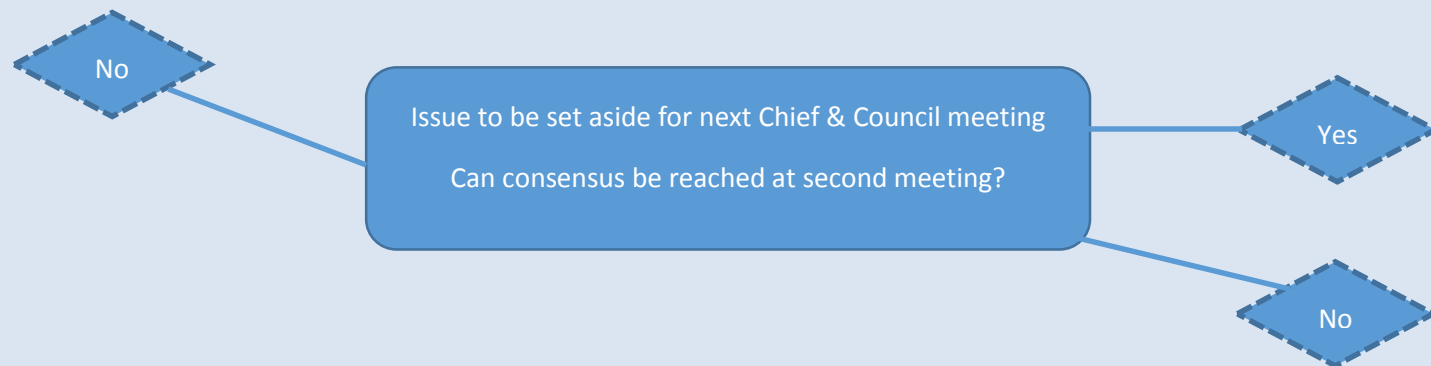


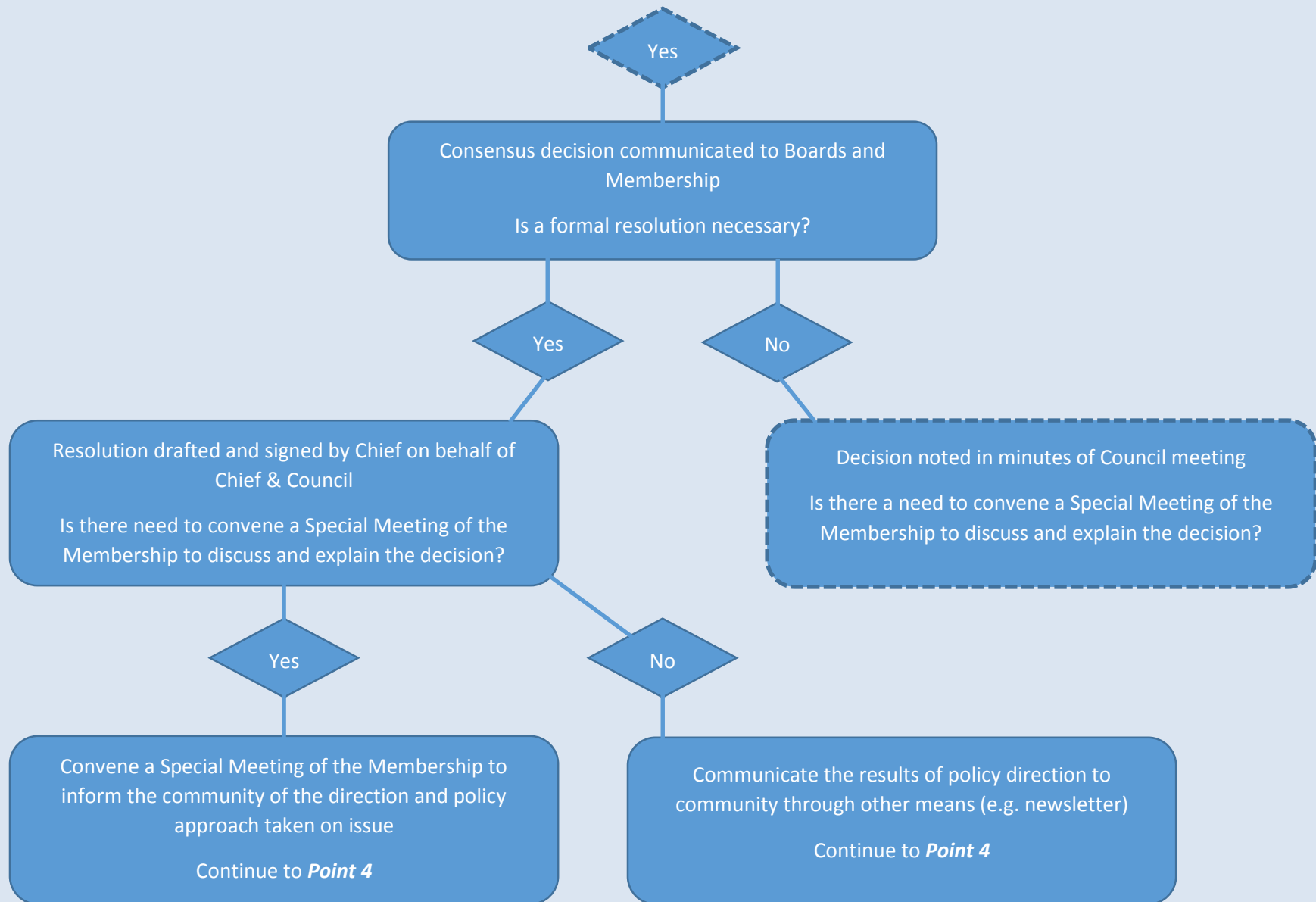


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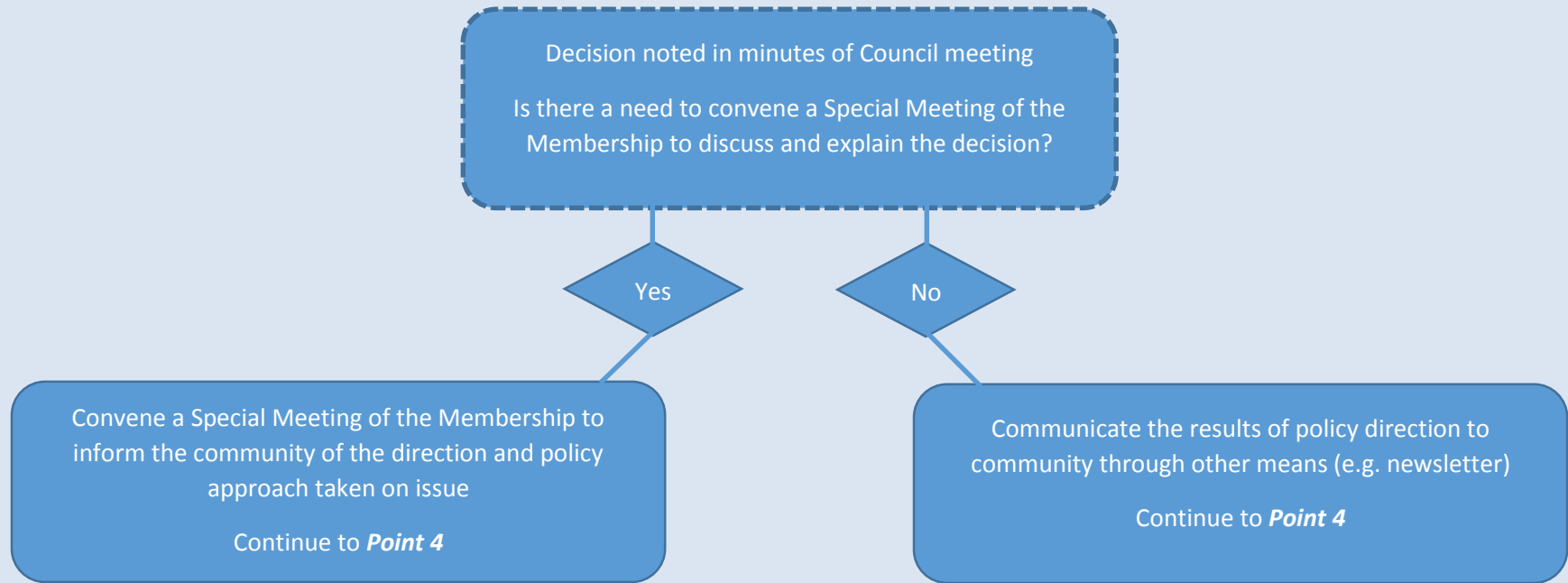


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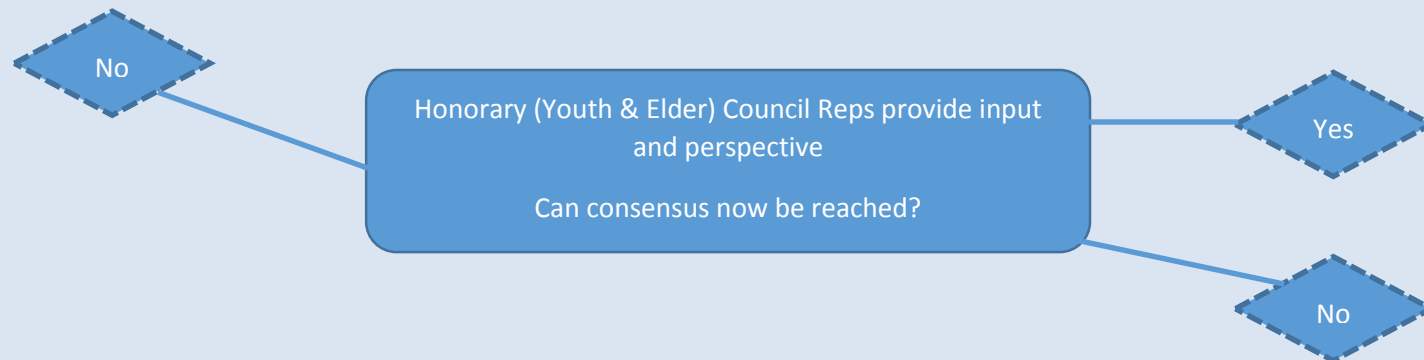




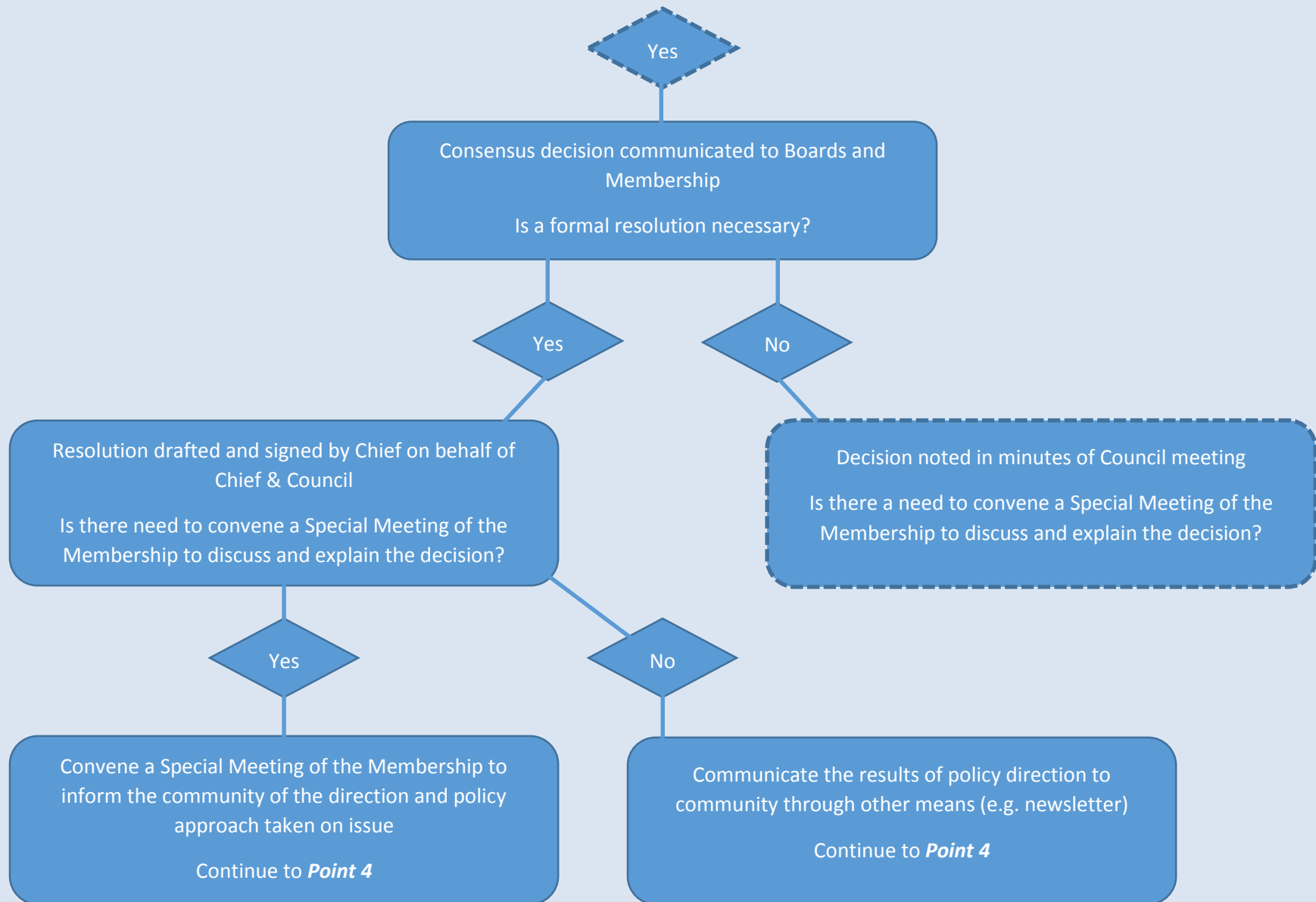
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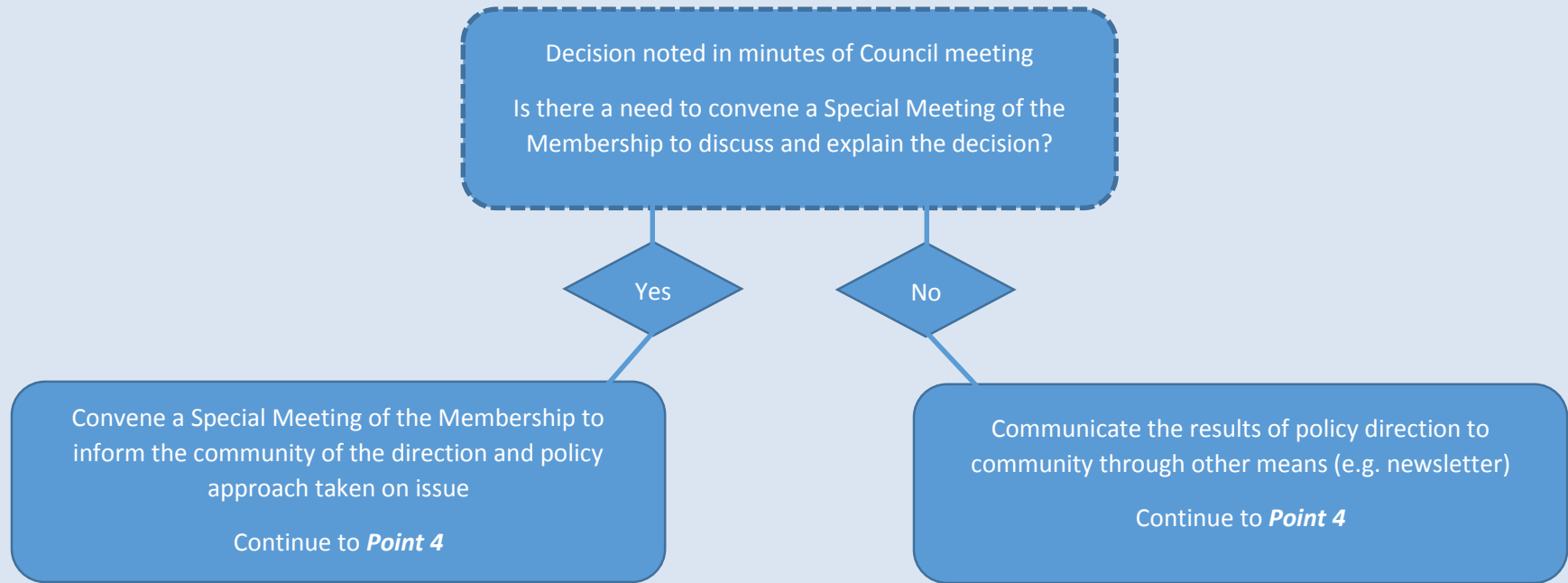
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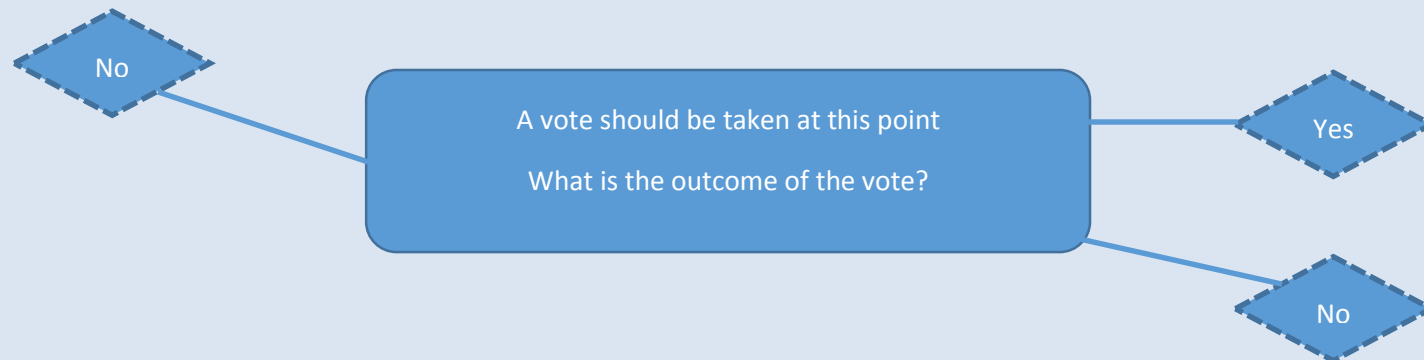


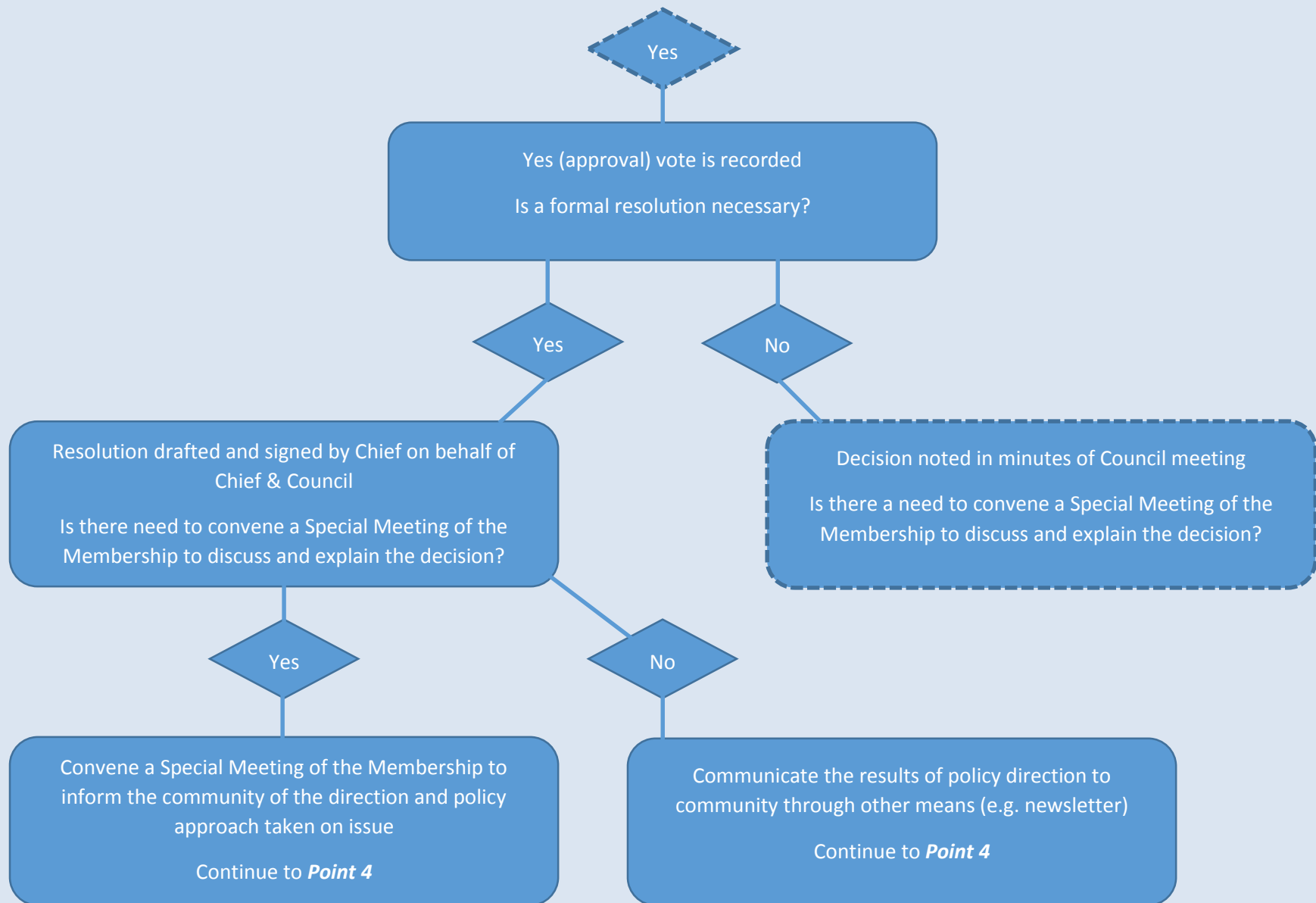


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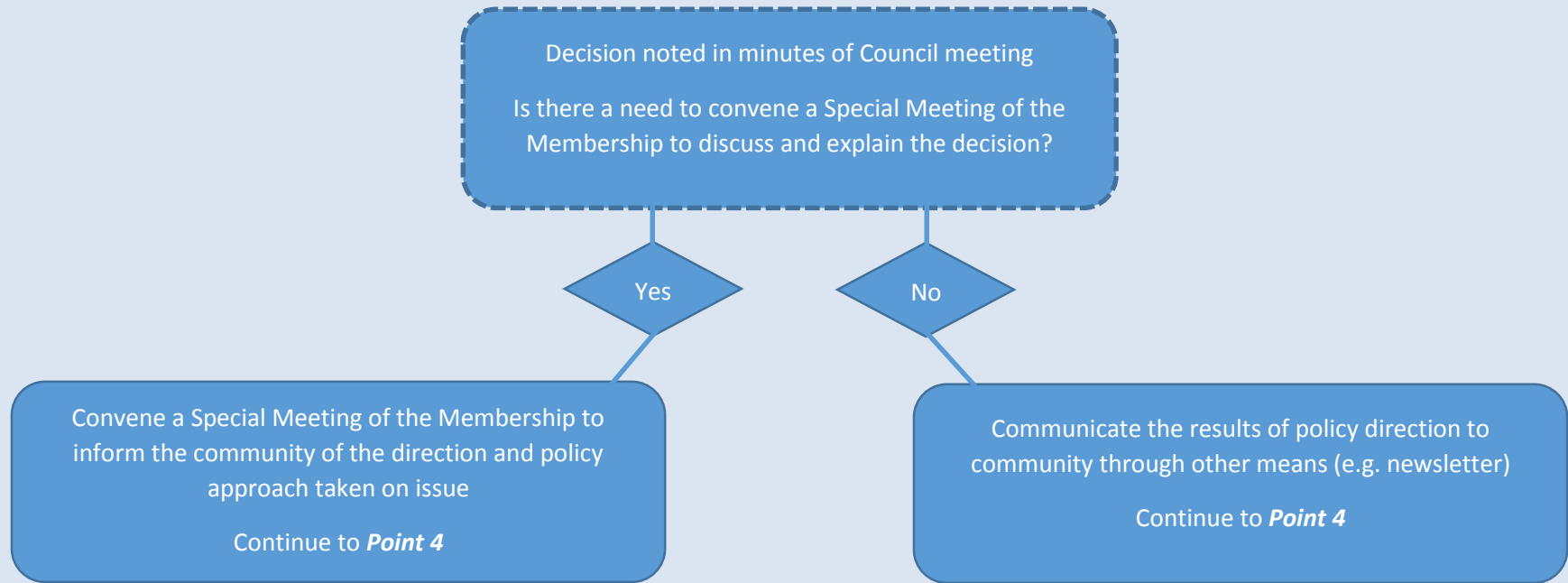


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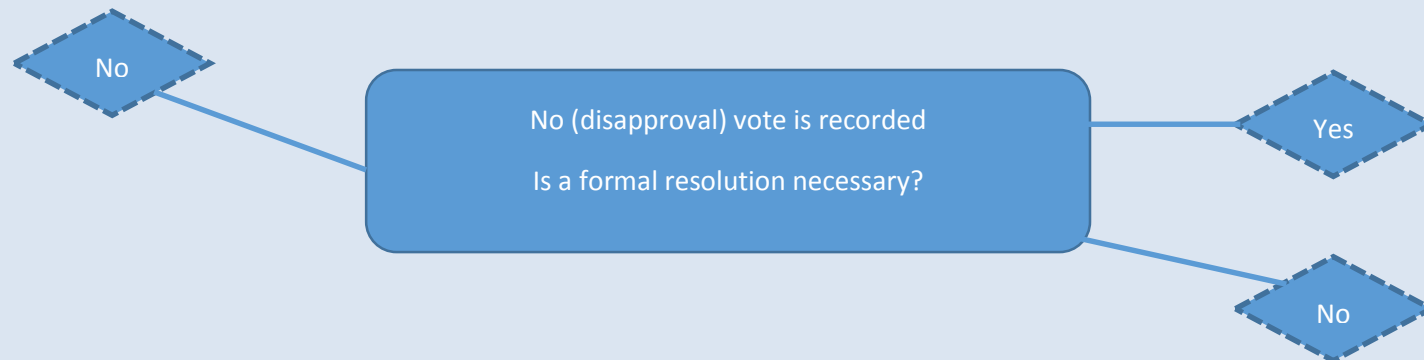


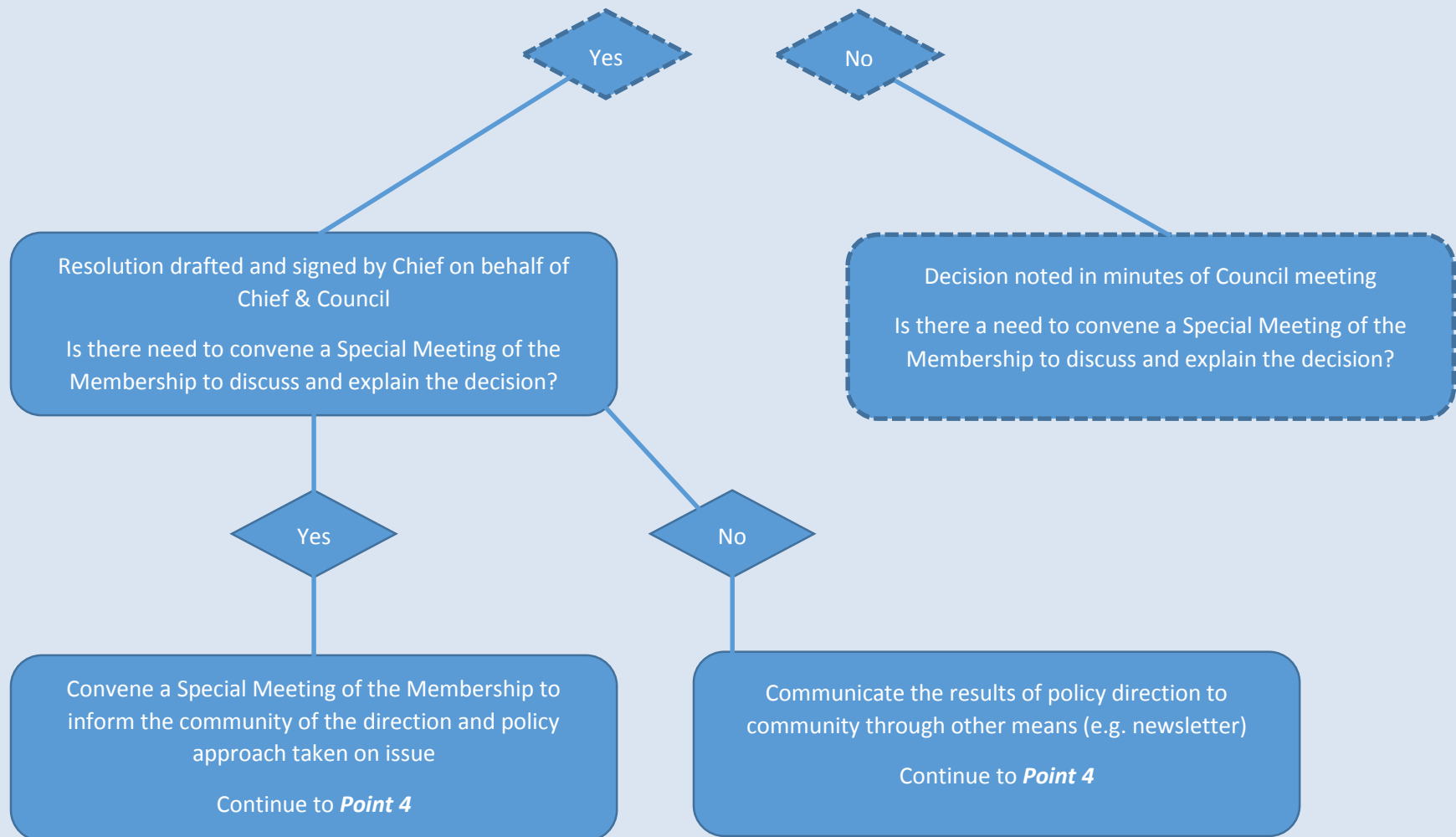


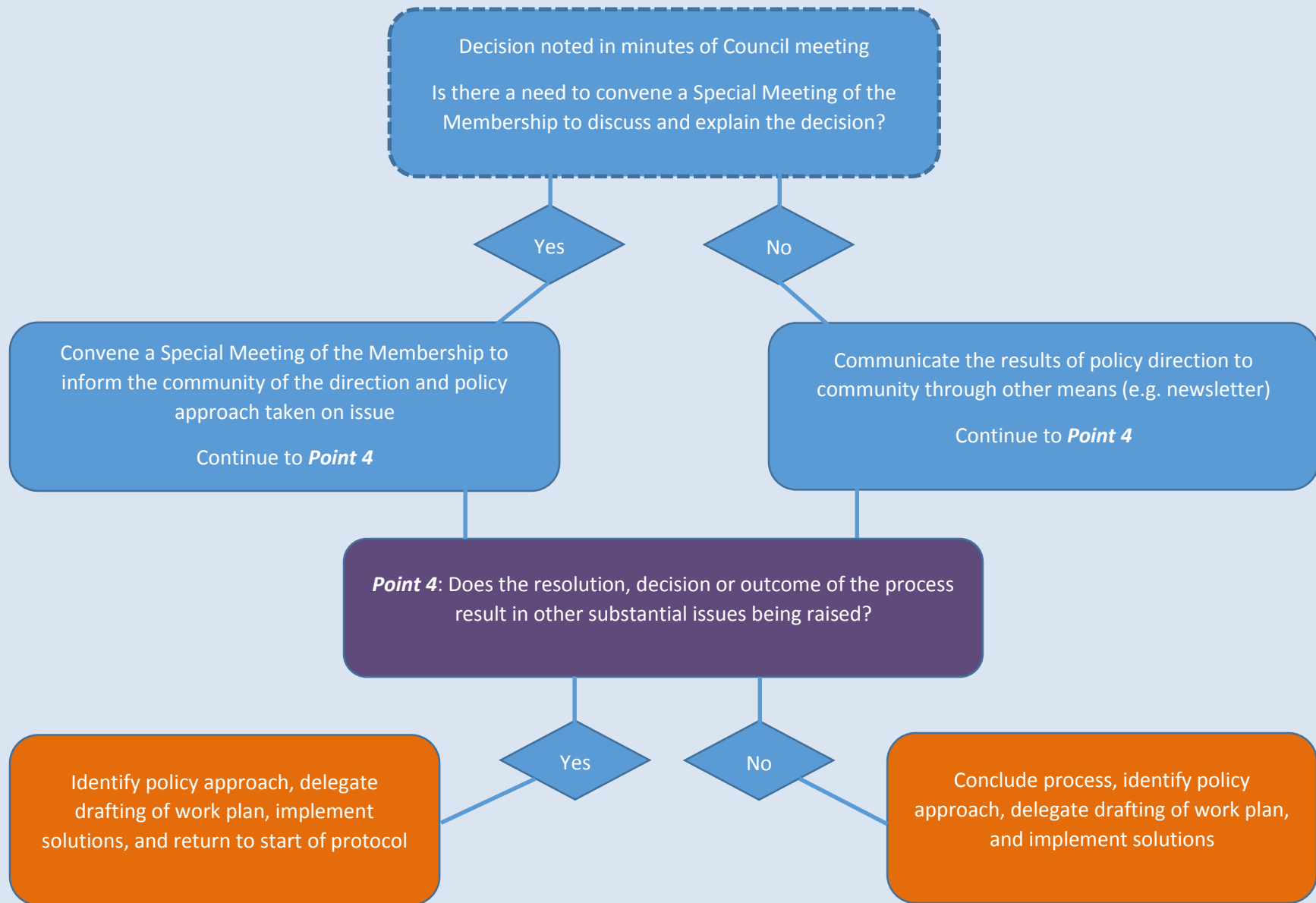
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*Decision Tree: Continued from Page 35*









*Managing  
Information and  
Understanding  
Context*

## MODULE EIGHT: COMMUNITY PROFILE

### *Purpose*

Module eight provides an overview of the issues that affect MoCreebec's ability to gather information and understand the needs of community members. The module also provides an outline of the means by which MoCreebec engages with members of the community to consult them on their concerns and circumstances. Building a community profile is key to providing quality service delivery. Moreover, participation by members of the community in information gathering processes is important for creating feedback loops that support proactive communication.

This module will inform members of the community on what MoCreebec's information needs are from the membership. The module will also point out the points of engagement and participation where members of the community are instrumental in building the feedback loops and sustained communications needed to better serve Clan families and members of the MoCreebec community.

### *Why is a Community Profile Important?*

A community profile is important for five primary reasons. Each reason is outlined in further detail in this module. The reasons can be summarized as follows:

1. Facilitates reviews of local community economic development opportunities;
2. Contributes to building the case for access to external funds and programs;
3. Provides means to effectively engage, consult and communicate;
4. Enables the MoCreebec community to share its story with others; and
5. Supports a system of communication in response to emergencies and crises.

A community profile is a depository of data, information and analysis about a community, its members and living conditions. The profile is used to inform decision-makers choices on what can and should be done to develop and to actualize community potential and to raise living standards so that individual members can, in turn, reach their own potential.

A community profile can be a powerful tool for decision-making. It becomes an effective way to balance and to validate different perspectives and viewpoints. It serves as an unbiased reference point for weighing those opinions that might otherwise influence an unfounded course of action. A community profile can therefore present greater clarity.

### *Surveys, Baselines and Trends*

As stated above, a community profile is a depository of data, information and analysis about a community. Analysis is conducted using information. Information is created using data. Data is therefore the starting point for developing a community profile. Good data gathering methods are therefore key to a useful profile. A lot of thought should go into how data is gathered, when, and how often.

One of the key components of good data gathering methods is to make sure that it is user friendly. This is particularly true of surveys, which are the most common form of data gathering for small communities. Surveys should be short, to the point, and designed to capture information beyond simple responses.

Survey questions should also be consistent over time so that answers can be compared across periods and changes or trends can be identified. If each time a survey is conducted, the questions are different, then it will be very difficult to generate reliable information and even more challenging to conduct meaningful analysis for decision makers.

Over time some questions on surveys might be added or removed. This is normal and often necessary. However, the bulk of the questions should remain the same for the sake of data consistency and comparison. When consistency is maintained it permits baseline and trend analysis for decision-making and evaluation purposes.

Consistency in data gathering and collection allows MoCreebec to take baselines at specific times in an effort to understand impacts from major decisions. For example, regular and consistent data collection on the number of MoCreebec members living outside of Moose Factory and Moosonee can become a baseline for evaluating the effectiveness of investments in local economic development projects.

Trend analysis is also useful. However, trends can only be established when historical data is available going back a number of years (or months, if the data is collected on a monthly basis). Trends can also be used in other areas of MoCreebec's activities, e.g. tourism. Trends can be established for occupancy rates at the Cree Village Eco Lodge during different seasons and community events.

Data can also be used to establish baselines and trends for issues relating to lands and resources. If MoCreebec were considering a plan for a community wood burning strategy, then a question could be added to an ongoing survey about use of wood burning stoves. It is better to add questions to existing surveys than to create multiple, overlapping surveys.

The question(s) would best be added prior to initiating the strategy or program. In this way it would establish a baseline. As yearly data is collected on usage rates, then a trend could be established that would allow for evaluation of the program's uptake and effectiveness. This is just one example of what can be achieved with effective use of surveys.

### ***Personal Data Privacy and Confidentiality***

Data collection and sharing implies issues of privacy and confidentiality. In order for members of the community to trust the process of data collection, they must know that the information they share is being used only for intended purposes and that if any information is shared publicly, it is only shared in a summarized and general form. Data from and about individual members should never be shared in a way that identifies an individual community member.

Furthermore, community members should be given access to any information collected from and about them. However, no one has the right to access data or information about another individual without the other person's permission and consent. Only general-level information about the community, as a whole, can be shared broadly with any member of the community and made public through online or other communications media.

### ***Community Participation and Investment***

Data collection has obvious benefits but those benefits cannot be realized without the trust, participation and investment of community members. The MoCreebec Council is the entity responsible for making decisions about and representing the interests of the broader community membership. It does this on the socio-political and socio-economic levels. In order to do an effective job of representing and making decisions, the MoCreebec Council requires information.

Clan Council Reps bring knowledge of their Clan family's needs. This is the primary source of information for decision-making. However, this knowledge is sometimes insufficient. Clan Council Reps should encourage their families to participate in surveys so they themselves can become more effective decision makers.

## ***Primary Benefits of a Community Profile***

### *Facilitates reviews of local community economic development opportunities*

What is the first question one would ask if they were thinking about investing in a local bio-mass renewable energy project? Likely, the question would be, how many homes could benefit from such a project? How would that question be answered? The community profile would include the data to answer the question.

What is the first question one would ask if they were thinking about building a residence for seniors that would provide special care so they can still live in the community? Likely, the question would be, how many MoCreebec members would require such a service. The community profile would reveal the answer.

These and other questions relating to the community economic development priorities for MoCreebec could be answered by having access to a community profile. The profile would not include data that could potentially cause privacy concerns. For example, MoCreebec would not ask members for their personal information like income and salary.

The data would be more specific to the capabilities and the needs of membership. For example, data could be collected on levels of education and number of children. These data points would help design employment and child services programs that are part of larger community economic development concerns.

In relation to land use and access issues, the data in the community profile could include the number of individuals that go spring and fall goose hunting or the number of homes that use wood as a source of heating during the winter. These data points would help to identify who could be involved in ecological programs or be guides for tourists staying at the Cree Village Eco Lodge.

Having a community profile also provides for the means to negotiate impact and benefit agreements. Two of the key questions relating to these types of agreements and negotiations is the scope of the impact and who will benefit. To answer these questions during key negotiations there needs to be accurate data on record. Proving that members of the community will be impacted and should benefit from resource development initiatives requires having a community profile in place.

### *Contributes to building the case for access to external funds and programs*

Linked to initiatives for community economic development is the ability to access funding from external entities, e.g. government grants and program funding for community-based organizations. In order to make a case for access to funding, it is helpful to have some basic information about the members who will be the recipients of the program funding.

Moreover, it helps to have some information available in order to report back on the quality of service delivery relating to funds that were accessed by MoCreebec. Maintaining a profile of the MoCreebec community increases the chances that increased funding can be accessed as time goes on and needs change. It is therefore of direct benefit to members of the community to collaborate in maintaining the information in the community profile.

### *Provides means to effectively engage, consult and communicate*

The MoCreebec community deserves to be consulted, engaged, and communicated with on a regular basis. However, this becomes a challenge when even the basic information about members is not available. Not having an updated email address, home address, and phone number on file can make the difference between being informed and uninformed.

The onus is on each member or family to inform MoCreebec, directly or through their Clan Council Rep, of changes to their basic contact details. MoCreebec's administrative staff only has the capacity to maintain the community profile when they are provided with the information. It can be very time consuming to follow-up with everyone in the community to verify basic contact details.

Part of being an engaged member of the community means taking the initiative to keep MoCreebec updated about changes in your contact information. MoCreebec wants to know how best to reach its members because it is important that everyone, that can, does participate in community activities that help define the community's future.

#### *Enables the MoCreebec community to share its story with others*

A community profile is about more than just data, it is about understanding who we are. A community profile can also be a basis for sharing a story with others. In addition to data on the capacities and needs of members, the community profile also includes information about the history of the MoCreebec people and its projects and successes.

Building a community profile that speaks to the vision the MoCreebec community has for its future helps communicate MoCreebec's potential. It is about showing off the potential of the community and inspiring others to get involved. A well maintained community profile will also help attract businesses to the area to expand economic opportunities and build upon our vision.

Yes, there is a key difference between the profile that is used for internal purposes and the profile that is shared with others outside of the community. But the two are linked.

#### *Supports a system of communication in response to emergencies and crises*

Moose Factory and Moosonee, the two main communities of MoCreebec's membership, are not immune to potential emergencies that stem from environmental factors and forces. The obvious threat to the safety of these two communities is spring flooding during the break-up period. Members of the MoCreebec community are impacted by this annual event and the ever-present danger or potential for damage that it poses.

Knowing where our community members are and how to reach them is an important factor in any crisis management strategy. It is also important for communicating with members about the need to prepare for events that can cause emergencies and crises. Under these circumstances, having an updated and accurate community profile is key to giving excellent community service.

#### ***Developing and Maintaining the Profile***

A community profile needs to be updated on a regular basis. The bulk of that responsibility rests with MoCreebec's administrative staff. However, a key role rests with each member of the community as they actively participate in filling out surveys and providing up-to-date contact information for themselves and their immediate family members.

Developing and maintaining the MoCreebec community profile is an important function that supports the decision-making role of the MoCreebec Council, Chief and Deputy Chief. MoCreebec makes use of all the available technologies to maintain the community profile but there is no technology that can substitute for a lack of input from members of the community. Building the capacity of the community depends on the participation of every member in the community.



### *What Information goes into the Profile?*

The community profile is composed of three types of information: primary, secondary and specialized. The difference will become clear once we explain what categories are used. The profile can be divided up into four categories of information: individual-level, households, Clan family-level, and community-level data. The community profile begins to take shape when the types of information overlap and intersect with the categories of information.

Community-level information is unique in the sense that it is often derived from the other categories. For example, employment data at the individual level can be aggregated to show the percentage of the MoCreebec community is employed by the various for-profit or non-profit entities overseen by the Council. However, some community-level data does concern only the entities that operate at that level; for example, electricity consumption by the MoCreebec administrative buildings.

When putting together a community profile, it is important to respect confidentiality and privacy. There are data and information about individuals, groups, and organizations that no other individual group or organization has the right or the need to access. MoCreebec takes security of personal information seriously. The data included in the community profile is classified as either specific or general.

Specific data is subject to confidentiality because the data can be associated with particular individuals. General information is not subject to confidentiality because the information has been aggregated to a level that does not reveal who the underlying data refers to. Privacy and confidentiality are important to gaining and maintaining the trust of community members. Once again, the purpose of the profile is to assist MoCreebec in better serving members of the community.

Individual-level information might include data on the following: Clan family affiliation, contact information, beneficiary number, place of residence, subscription to the official MoCreebec newsletter, education and training, employment (i.e. employed/unemployed, part-time/full-time, retired, student), and the traditional harvesting practices engaged in on a seasonal basis. This information allows for better community-level planning related to employment and other community economic development initiatives.

Household information might include: number of occupants, use of various energy sources (i.e. wood, gas, propane), housing status (i.e. owner/renter), and data on electricity consumption rates. This information relates to houses operated under the MoCreebec Housing Corporation and private homes of members in the two communities of Moose Factory and Moosonee. The information allows for better housing needs assessments and planning at the community-level.

Clan family-level information might include: number of Clan members, Youth Council Rep, Elder Council Rep, MoCreebec Council Rep, and residence (i.e. location) of members of each Clan. This information allows MoCreebec to understand the dynamics of each Clan family, in terms of needs for access to programs and housing.

Community-level information might include: number of employees per corporate entity and the number of individuals currently accessing non-profit and for-profit community-based services and programs.

Surveys will need to be conducted to gather most of the data mentioned above. Primary data is gathered more frequently. Secondary data varies somewhat from survey to survey. Specialized data often requires a one-time survey to be commissioned and completed.



### *Survey Methods and Frequency*

There are two main types of surveys, sample and census surveys. A sample survey gathers data from a small subset of the population and then draws conclusions about the overall population based on the survey results. With a census survey, the entire group is surveyed. In the case of the MoCreebec community, it is a challenge to use sample surveys because they rely on having a statistically significant sample size in order to draw conclusions about the overall population.

Since MoCreebec's membership is relatively small—compared to the population of a large city or province—conducting a sample survey would still require gathering data from close to a quarter of the community. Moreover, a lot of the data to be gathered in a survey of the membership does not lend itself to statistical analysis. One cannot use the phone numbers of a sample of individuals to guess at the phone numbers of other individuals.

In most cases, MoCreebec requires responses from the entire population in order to make the data useful and relevant. This can present a significant challenge. However, it is not always necessary to get data from everyone. Moreover, some data can be gathered without input from members of the community. For example some contact information and basic data about housing is already available from sources like a phone book or *Canada 411*.

To reduce the chances of people not filling out a survey, the surveys themselves should be made simple and easy to fill out. They should also not take very long to complete. Keeping the length of surveys to a minimum is important. A core number of questions should be included in every survey so that the profile is kept accurate and updated. Often this can be achieved by having the first page of every survey include personal data.

Another issue arises with gathering accurate information about dependents and children who are not old enough to fill out a survey on their own. Surveys should include questions about dependents and young adults of up to 25 years of age. This puts an onus on parents to fill out the information for their children. Setting the cut-off age at 25 years will reduce the number of surveys needed to be filled in and will reduce the chances of youth slipping through any cracks in the community profile.

In addition to the primary questions that should be included in a yearly survey, there could also be a secondary set of questions that can be administered at the same time as the primary survey or more frequently, say on a quarterly or biannual basis. Secondary survey questions are still used on a regular frequency, be it monthly, quarterly, etc. These questions would change depending on what needs to be asked from the membership. For example, secondary survey questions can be used to establish a baseline for program evaluations.

Finally, there will, from time to time, be a need for specialized surveys. Such surveys will likely be done only once to address a specific need for information. For example, a survey could be done to collect the beneficiary numbers of all members. Once this is done, however, there is no need to do the survey again until there are significant numbers of new members registered who have not provided their beneficiary numbers to the MoCreebec administration.

### *How can MoCreebec Members Help?*

Members of the MoCreebec community are key to the success of building and maintaining the community profile. The community profile is, after all, about them. The benefit and value of participating in surveys is clear, they help MoCreebec provide better services and programs to the community.

## MODULE NINE: THE LANDS AND RESOURCES CONTEXT

### *Purpose*

Module nine provides an overview of the key areas of interest to members of MoCreebec as they relate to lands and resources. In this module we are referring to resources in terms of “natural resources”. In the module titled “**Political Economy**” resources will be discussed using a slightly different meaning. Natural resources and land are often classified as either renewable or non-renewable. This distinction is central to MoCreebec’s concerns and focus for development, access and use.

The module will outline the various activities that make up MoCreebec’s interest and stake in lands and resource issues. The MoCreebec community has long recognized that resource development includes derivative opportunities that span the “up-stream” and “down-stream” scope of industries as diverse as hydro-power and tourism. The desire to balance the goals of community economic development and sustainable traditional harvesting practices is also presented as a cross-cutting issue for community consultation and decision-making.

### *The Basis for Shared Access and Benefit*

#### *Lands and Resources in Quebec*

MoCreebec members are unique in the sense that they are beneficiaries of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (JBNQA) but have not been able to access benefits under that agreement since it was signed; unless of course members return to the Quebec communities from which their ancestors originate. The door remains open but with members residing in Ontario they remain out of reach of direct benefits under the JBNQA.

However, if members return to the territory covered by the agreement, then they can practice traditional harvesting activities in that territory. The following quote from a report on the status of the MoCreebec people outlines the relationship between MoCreebec members with the *Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec* (GCCQ), as a result of their status as beneficiaries, though residing outside the lands and territory included in the JBNQA:

*“Nonetheless, all James Bay Cree beneficiaries under Section 3 of the JBNQA, regardless of residence, are represented by the Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec), the Cree Regional Authority, and their original Band Council, since they are recognized as members of a Cree Community. Even though they do not reside on the land which has been negotiated through the land claims, they are eligible to vote for and hold office in both corporate entities as representatives of their Quebec Cree communities...”*

#### *Lands and Resources in Ontario*

MoCreebec members that reside in the communities of Moosonee and Moose Factory are affected by developments in the Moose River basin. Though members of MoCreebec are not signatories under *Treaty 9*, and subsequently not recognized as having territorial rights over the land, they do have claim to be consulted on lands and resource issues, as a First Nation community residing in the area and accessing land for traditional harvesting and stewardship purposes.

MoCreebec is a community of members that have traditional claims to access the lands along the James Bay and within the Moose River Basin for traditional harvesting and stewardship purposes. This claim and the rights and responsibilities it encompasses stem from multiple generations of people living in the region and ancestry in Moose Factory and Moosonee that goes back before the JBNQA and *Treaty 9* were signed.

The following quote from the same report alluded to above states that generations of MoCreebec ancestors have carried out traditional harvesting and stewardship activities in the Moose River Basin area:

*“The James Bay Crees claim aboriginal rights to fish, hunt and trap in northeastern Ontario. Historical evidence seems to indicate that Quebec Crees have traditionally hunted in locations near the Moosonee and Moose Factory Area. MoCreebec families have always depended on hunting, trapping and other traditional activities to supplement their income.*

*Certain MoCreebec Indians have, for many years, used Moose Factory as their supply depot for trapping on their traplines. In the 1950s, DLAND, in collaboration with the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, developed a program and invited the Quebec Crees to manage the fur resources in many remote areas of Ontario where the Treaty 9 Indians were inactive.”*

It is clear from the above that MoCreebec peoples have traditional claim for harvesting and stewardship practices in the Moose River Basin region. This does not, however, mean a claim to the land. It simply means that there is a basis for MoCreebec people to be consulted, on developments that occur in the region, as a party affected (to a lesser degree) by changes to the local environment and ecosystem.

### ***The Issues of Major Concern***

#### ***Annual Break-up***

The Moose River is an ecosystem that has sustained local inhabitants for generations. The river brings life to the communities, in more way than one. It also brings with it a yearly risk of flooding. It is as though the river is reminding us to protect it from irreversible harm, to respect it. Annual spring break-up is an example of an event that focuses the attention of all MoCreebec members on the environment, land and resources.

Break-up is a naturally occurring event. It is also an annual event. As a result of break-up, the channels in the river shift each year.

Elders and regular users of the river are quick to pick-up on these shifts and adapt to the normal changes that occur each spring. In this way, break-up affects transportation routes. It can also affect local businesses and particular buildings, e.g. the Cree Village Eco Lodge.

Emergency response and management efforts are key to being ready if the risk of flooding escalates during the spring break-up season. As further developments occur in the region, they are likely to affect or be affected by the annual spring break-up. Risk mitigation and planning to deal with the eventuality of some flooding is an important lands and resource issue for the MoCreebec community.

#### ***Traditions: Hunting, Fishing and Trapping***

Hunting, fishing and trapping are traditional activities that MoCreebec members have and continue to engage in, in the Moose River Basin region. The Moose River Basin is truly a beautiful region with excellent potential for tourism and other economic developments. However, there remains an important issue that must be addressed when considering such developments; that is, their potential impact on traditional harvesting practices.

Access to lands is important for continuing the practices that have sustained MoCreebec peoples historically and continue to be an essential component of the identity that the community desires for generations to come. Traditional harvesting practices are a good way to pass on other cultural practices and values that, in turn, foster strong, resilient and engaged youth and communities. Passing on traditions tied to the land and resources is paramount for the continued development of a community based on the guiding principles outlined in the Constitutional Framework.

### *Wood Harvesting*

The option and ability to harvest wood locally for use in wood-burning stoves is a critical issue for MoCreebec members. Not everyone uses a wood stove, but being able to opt for that source of locally supplied renewable energy during the winter is part of MoCreebec members' ongoing concerns for access to and use of local natural resources. The feasibility of using wood-stoves for heating depends on access to a sustainable supply of fire wood.

MoCreebec therefore has a vested interest in co-managing forest resources along with other local governments and First Nations. There are challenges involved in co-management but there are also opportunities. Wood harvesting is a practice that members of MoCreebec have a vested interest in developing and protecting for members of the local community.

### *Resource Development within the Moose River Basin*

Resource developments that could occur and are occurring within the Moose River Basin are mining, hydro, and forestry. Agriculture has not to date been a significant activity in the Basin but could potentially expand into the territory. These developments can be classified along a continuum between either renewable or non-renewable. These activities can either be undertaken by local, regional, national or international corporations.

Impacts from these activities can also be classified along a continuum between either high-impact or low-impact and causing either positive or negative externalities. MoCreebec members are significantly impacted by such developments, though to a lesser degree than is the case of First Nations with land claims in the Basin. MoCreebec does have a claim on being consulted, a claim based on traditional use of the land. MoCreebec is therefore a stakeholder and also a potential partner.

### *Local Renewable Energy Generation*

The vast majority of MoCreebec members reside in communities that are still considered remote and somewhat isolated from larger city centres to the south. The remoteness and the accompanying higher costs of infrastructure have traditionally meant that energy, i.e. fuels and electricity, come with a higher cost. There is an ongoing interest in the potential to develop local, renewable energy supplies for the MoCreebec community.

To develop any significant renewable-hydro projects in the area would require access to lands and resources. Therefore, it is in the interests of MoCreebec to understand how Provincial and Federal policies affect its ability to invest and develop renewable energy projects going forward. Positive relations with other First Nations is also key to investments.

### *Tourism, Recreation and Heritage*

Not only is the Moose River Basin rich in resources that can be used for industrial development, it is also a region that is rich in wildlife and remote enough that it opens up unique opportunities for those who are seeking a different kind of "get-away" from the usual vacation in the Caribbean or a week in Vegas. The Moose River Basin provides one of a kind opportunities for "rest-seekers" and "adventure-seekers" alike.

MoCreebec is in a good position to develop small-business ventures that tie into its world renowned Cree Village Eco Lodge. Tourist packages have long been an untapped jewel for economic development in the community. Knowing how to develop attractive packages that build on a "living heritage" and thriving "community spirit" is key to balancing the pros of development with the cons of stress on the local environment that can be caused by disrespectful use of the land and resources.

### *Education and Traditional Knowledge*

The MoCreebec people have a tradition of stewardship of the land. The generations of MoCreebec people who have lived in the Moose River Basin have lived off the land in close proximity to their brother First Nations. In fact, there was a time when all Crees of the James Bay region shared a common heritage, though they developed slightly different dialects and were typically associated with Clan families residing in specific regions.

MoCreebec has a vested interest in keeping its collective wisdom, traditions, and values alive by viewing the responsibility to pass on this heritage within the framework of seven generations. Educating the youth to respect the environment and to be stewards of its development and use is something that elders in the community continue to press upon the leadership. Lands and resources equate to more than just jobs and dollars, they are a lifeline that goes to the root of one's identity.

### *Housing and Infrastructure*

Housing and related infrastructure projects require access to land. Housing was one of the primary issues leading to the decision of the MoCreebec people to form an association that has evolved into the MoCreebec Council. Housing needs will continue to grow making access to land an ongoing issue for members of the MoCreebec community.

In addition to housing within communities, there is also the issue of camps located on traplines or in areas used for hunting and other traditional activities. These camps do not represent permanent dwellings and are therefore not of concern when discussing affordable housing and living standards. However, it remains important to members of the MoCreebec community to have access to these camps today and into the future.

### *Transportation and Roads*

MoCreebec members, for the most part, live and work in the communities of Moosonee and Moose Factory. These communities are remote and transportation is an issue for those wishing to access work opportunities in the area immediately outside these two communities. Existing transportation options and infrastructure can make the commute between the two communities and outside these communities expensive. This is a reality of living in the place called "Home".

As new transportation infrastructure and roads are put into place, members of the MoCreebec community will be increasingly impacted, either positively or negatively. Having a say in how these developments move forward is an important part of having a stake in the lands and resources of the region. New roads, whether seasonal or all-season roads, can also open up new tracts of land for development and housing purposes. Once again, the principles of stewardship should be practiced in all aspects of land use planning.

### *Waste Disposal*

Waste disposal (garbage and human waste) is also an important issue affecting the land and the resources, e.g. water, in the surrounding area of the community. MoCreebec members have a vested interest in proper management of wastes and by-products of consumption and use of resources. These issues are likely to increase in importance as the population of the region increases, housing developments expand, and new waste products appear.

In the future, technologies may advance to a point that permits more economical use of resources and also opens up the possibility of locally recycling a greater amount of materials. Such developments should be explored as a way of practicing stewardship of the land.



### *Public Policy and Regulation*

The lands and resources of the Moose River Basin are also affected by Provincial and Federal regulation, policies, legislation, and standards. The creation of a Provincial Park has a bearing on how that land can be used and accessed by members of the MoCreebec community. Moreover, environmental standards and regulation determine how well the environment is protected and also how often First Nations should be consulted.

In particular, the Moose River Basin is affected by what is known as the *Far North Act*, which stipulates under what conditions developments in the northern regions of Ontario can be carried out. Public policies from other levels of government can and do impact the lands and resource issues of interest to the MoCreebec community. MoCreebec has a vested interest in keeping informed of public policies that impact how lands and resources are administered, regulated, and developed.

### *Technology, Technology, Technology*

Technology is increasingly having an impact on our lives. At first glance, it may not be obvious how technology, e.g. iPhones, tablets or even the Internet, might have an impact on how members of the MoCreebec community see the local environment. However, there are impacts that the MoCreebec community should be aware of and follow.

For example, on April 30, 2015, the Federal Government sent out a news release stating that, in partnership with Google, it had created “street views” for a number of Northern National Parks. This could also occur closer to home. Technology has the potential to alter or enhance the way tradition is practiced and stewardship of the land and the resources is implemented.

Technology is also a catalyst for development. The Moose River Basin is a region that has a number of rare-earth metal deposits. These metals or minerals are valuable precisely because they are essential components in technologies that we use on a daily basis. It is important to understand the connection between the “up-stream” and “down-stream” industries that drive developments, some of which are key to developments in the Basin.

### *Up-Stream versus Down-Stream Activities*

The distinction between up-stream and down-stream industry activities is important. Many industries operate as systems, with underlying principles, much like the environment does. Understanding how one end of an industry affects the other end can also shed light on how or when specific industries might expand or contract their activities in the Moose River Basin area.

Industries operate on the principle of demand and supply. Generally speaking, if demand goes up, then supply will follow, and *vice versa*. Prices of commodities, e.g. lumber or gold, also come into play in determining how industries react to changes in the market economy. If prices and demand are high, then this usually sparks new developments and new companies set up shop. However, if prices and demand are low, then companies can go bankrupt or put their projects on stand-by.

An up-stream company is a company that operates at the initial stages of an industry. Mineral exploration is a typical up-stream activity. A down-stream company is a company that operates at the consumer-level of the market economy. Cell-phones and cell service represents a down-stream activity. The up-stream and down-stream interact by supplying the raw materials for the products and, in turn, the products for consumers.



### *Up-Stream versus Down-Stream Flow*

The Moose River and its tributaries also have a flow and represent a system, an ecology. In addition to resource development and land use planning, there is also an important role for MoCreebec in stewardship of the natural ecosystem of the region that is called home. The water runs downstream in this system but other things, e.g. fish, run upstream. These are valuable resources as well, not only for their potential economic value but also as integral parts of an ecosystem that demands respect.

A huge part of the local culture is the practice of going out on the land, whether this is upriver or downriver towards the James Bay. The up-stream and down-stream activities that make up the traditional harvesting practices of the MoCreebec people are an important part of the value system that elders have passed on. Preserving these aspects of the lands and resources of the region are key to sustaining the seven generations outlook that has been passed on through collective wisdom and the teaching of elders.

### *Living Lightly on the Earth (Land)*

Perhaps the best way to describe the balance between development and protection is by way of the phrase “living lightly on the earth”, which is the moto for the Cree Village Eco Lodge. This is in contrast to the difference between mere extraction of resources and preservation done at the exclusion of other objectives. Extraction alone cannot bring sustainable development, nor will preservation at all cost meet the needs of the community.

MoCreebec has a vested interest in identifying a balance, a balance that respects the guiding principles of the Constitutional Framework and fosters the stewardship of the land that has long been the custom and tradition passed on by elders through collective wisdom.

### *Decision-Making Protocol*

The “**Protocol for Decision-Making**” sets out the “**Decision Points**” that must be considered when reviewing and assessing high-impact decisions on the potential and future of the MoCreebec community. Lands and resource issues are significant. They often involve balancing risks and opportunities. The protocol provides the framework for making sure that the MoCreebec community is kept up-to-date on developments and key decisions, but more importantly the protocol sets out the process for involving the community in making decisions that affect lands and resources.

In addition to the protocol, it is important to consider how the “**Guiding Principles**” shape the way in which the content of decisions are made. The protocol deals only with the process. The content is a matter of consensus building and identity. These are shaped by the principles and values that members use to make decisions. The best and most balanced decisions will be those that are made while evaluating and considering the values of the community.

Collective wisdom is one value and principle worth focusing on here. Elders in the community are the bridge between previous generations and future generations. Elders have the knowledge of how to live lightly on the earth and have learned, over time, the value of conserving a stewardship function as a First Nation’s community. The collective knowledge of elders should continue to shape the decisions made about how to balance development and protection.

Sustainable development is about making use of resources today so that generations of tomorrow can also benefit from them and share in the traditions that have been passed on by previous generations.

*Tools and  
Knowledge for  
Participatory  
Governance*

## MODULE TEN: SCENARIO PLANNING

### *Purpose*

Module ten provides both a general overview of scenario thinking and scenario planning, as well as, a specific roadmap for how members of MoCreebec can implement this tool in their long-term, decision-making processes. This module will outline how scenarios can be used as a way of engaging the membership and fostering dialogue and discussion about things that impact the community's future. Scenarios also rely on knowledge about the past and present and therefore incorporate collective wisdom into the storylines that are developed.

Scenario planning is essentially about telling stories. We have all heard storytellers describe events and experiences of the past. Scenario planning is a process whereby one tells stories about the future as though they have already happened. When stories are told in this way, it stimulates the visionary and strategic thinking required to understand the impacts of present decisions and the cumulative impacts of decisions made in the past.

### *What are scenarios?*

A number of definitions have been provided by those that use scenarios in professional settings. The following definitions have been taken from a book, by Thomas Chermack, titled, *Scenario Planning in Organizations: How to Create, Use, and Assess Scenarios*.

*"An internally consistent view of what the future might turn out to be—not a forecast, but one possible future outcome."* Porter

*"A tool for ordering one's perception about alternative future environments in which one's decisions might be played out."* Schwartz

*"Tools for foresight-discussions and documents whose purpose is not a prediction or a plan, but a change in the mind-set of the people who use them."* De Geus

*"A series of imaginative but plausible and well-focused stories of the future."* Kahane

*"A scenario is simply a means to represent a future reality in order to shed light on current action in view of possible and desirable futures."* Godet

From the above definitions it is possible to see that scenarios are not "fixed predictions" about the future. Rather, scenarios result from a process of thinking that aims to change mental models and perceptions about the environment within which an organization carries out plans and activities.

### *Mental Models and Perception*

A mental model is a system of attitudes, beliefs, values, and principles that frames the way we perceive opportunities, challenges and events. Mental models frame "what" and "how" we learn from every day experiences.

For example, if you were brought up to see elders as teachers, then your mental model would shape the way you listen to the stories and advice of an elderly member of the community. Another example would be the attitudes one has about the environment. These values shape the way we determine and view opportunities for economic development relating to lands and resources.

Closely tied to mental models is our ability for perception. The more knowledge and experience we have, the more perceptive we become. However, even those with less experience and less developed knowledge will perceive things of value, yet differently.

Perceptions are neither right nor wrong but they can either reflect reality or not. An individual's ability to perceive is limited. Group perceptions are often more accurate

than individual perceptions because they incorporate different points of view and are more likely to draw out aspects of reality that one individual alone could not perceive. Scenario planning attempts to bring multiple perspectives together to create opportunities for group learning and re-perceiving.

### *What does Time have to do with it?*

The answer is that “time” has everything to do with it. There is no need to go into a deep philosophical debate on the nature of time and space in order to appreciate that the past, present and future shape our mental models and perceptions of reality. Time also frames our understanding of our own potential and the feasibility of actualizing it fully.

We are all used to looking at a clock to see what time it is. But what if you were told time, as you know it, does not really exist. Clock time is a human invention or convention that uses the sunlight hours to determine when and how things should be organized. In other contexts people tended to refer to moments in time not based on seconds and minutes but based on the position of the sun in reference to fixed objects, i.e. reference points.

Time is therefore a notion that does not make sense unless we make sense of it through reference to something else. This might sound like an obvious and useless point but it is key to understanding and capturing the value of scenario planning methods.

Our perception of time is based on what our mental models tell us our reference points should be. Moreover, our assessment of what is possible (i.e. potential) and what is feasible (i.e. actualisable) are also based on reference points set in time.

If you told someone that you were going to build a bridge between Moosonee and Moose Factory within an hour, they would probably

not believe you. Therefore, our perception of time plays an important role in what we will see as possible and feasible.

When the present is seen as the dividing line between potentials and actuals, then the past and future merge to occupy a common space. The past and future become options, while the present becomes our common ground.

### *Scenario Thinking and Scenario Planning*

One might ask what the difference is between scenario thinking and scenario planning. The difference is not in the direction but in the focus of these two activities. The focus of scenario thinking is on the individual level thought process, whereas scenario planning is focused on the group level discussion process. In order for scenario planning to function effectively, individuals need to think in terms of scenarios and be at ease with uncertainty.

Scenario thinking can be defined as the ability to suspend judgement, to consider multiple plausible events, to weigh different factors, to identify driving forces, to recognize patterns and systems, to think contextually, to develop narratives that structure uncertainty, and the self-knowledge to recognize one's own bias.

Scenario planning can be defined as the process whereby a group of individuals come together in a disciplined approach to share perspectives and to assist each other to identify biases and false assumptions so that decision-making can be based on a more accurate appreciation of events and the environment as they play out over time, under constraints, and within uncertainty.

Scenario thinking is the skill set developed by individuals for analyzing their environment in reference to time and inherent uncertainty.

Scenario planning is the tool that is employed by a group to capitalize on scenario thinking.

### *Scenario Planning and Decisions*

Many things need to come together before a "potential" can become "actualized". Planning is key to setting in motion the process of transforming potentials into reality. Many little things must be actualized before they can converge to create the kind of successes most people associate with high-level goals.

Our notion of time is also important for decision-making. Time can be expressed in terms of the "space" between the potential and the actual conditions of life and activity. This "space" is the environment or "reality" that confronts us. Decisions shape this space, giving birth to the actualization process.

Scenario planning shapes our understanding of the reality—with all its constraints and uncertainties—that an individual, organization or community must confront in order to achieve its potential. Scenario planning is therefore a tool to facilitate decision-making within uncertainty and under constraints.

Scenario planning is not concerned primarily with forecasting the future so much as with understanding and orienting our "direction" in time, where time is defined as the space or gap between our potential and our reality.

### *Scenarios as Strategic Conversations*

Since scenarios reflect the gap between what is possible (i.e. plausible or feasible) and what is currently actualized (i.e. reality), they are useful for strategic conversations within organizations or communities. Scenarios tell a story about a plausible course of events as they evolve from past to future or from potentiality to actuality. A scenario should provide sufficient detail to demonstrate the logic behind the flow of events that occur.

The process of developing scenarios is part of the strategic conversation. However, the final

scenario storylines also provide a tool for communicating strategic priorities. Scenarios provide a basis on which to test assumptions about plans for program and project activities.

### *Scenario Analysis as Storytelling*

We have all heard someone tell a story. Most stories we hear are about past events. Why is this? Are we wired to think with our eyes focused on the past? Not necessarily the case. Even stories about past events often have the purpose of directing activity into the future. For example, a story about an accident that someone experienced might actually be told with the point of helping others avoid such accidents in the future. Therefore, even with stories about past events there are elements with a future focus and orientation.

Yet most stories we hear remain fixed in past events. Perhaps we feel more comfortable with things that have already happened and can be known with some degree of certainty. However, imagine for a moment if it were possible to tell a story about future events as though they had already happened. Take a second to re-read this point. What if it were possible to tell a story about future events as though they had already occurred? Well it is.

Our ability to tell stories about the future is constrained by the same limits we have in telling stories about the past. Our perception and knowledge of causes and effects is limited and we have to rely on assumptions that might or might not reflect reality.

Think about it. A story about the past, when understood as an "interpretation" of past events is limited in a similar way to a story about the future that is based on an "interpretation" of existing patterns and driving forces within our environment. The limitations are not the same but the impact on the plausibility of the stories is similar.



### *Future Unravelled, Past Respected*

As MoCreebec considers scenario planning as a method to assist with determining its future direction, it is important to turn to the guiding principles that the MoCreebec community has established for itself. These guiding principles, and whether they are considered or not, do shape the mental models of participants in the scenario development process. This is not a bad thing, rather it must be recognized and pointed out so that people do not make undue, unfounded or false assumptions.

One false assumption would be that every member of MoCreebec operates with these guiding principles in mind. The way the future develops, on the socio-political landscape, will depend in large part on the intentions, level of commitment, and participation of members from the community. The past is therefore respected in honouring the guiding principles, yet the future can only be unravelled through putting the guiding principles into practice.

MoCreebec had its first experience of scenario (i.e. option) development back in 1993 during the same period in which the Constitutional Framework was being developed. At this time, nine options for the socio-political future of the MoCreebec people were considered.

These nine options for the future governance structure of the MoCreebec community reflect a previous experience with scenario thinking. This experience provides a good foundation for engaging members of the community in scenario planning exercises going forward. This experience can be built upon and further capacity developed.

### *Our Elders Could Teach a Thing or Two*

Elders and ancestors of the MoCreebec people would have had direct experience with uncertainty. Their lives living off the land were often dictated by uncertain events, e.g.

whether the weather would be extreme one year or whether the trapping would be good in a certain region or not. However, amidst all this uncertainty, the elders and ancestors of the MoCreebec people were successful in surviving under, what would today, be considered extremely difficult circumstances.

There was a wisdom inherent in the way the elders and ancestors of the MoCreebec people would have conducted themselves while living off the land. They would have had a great capacity for distinguishing between uncertainty and predetermined elements of their environment. They would have had a deep appreciation for the systems and the underlying natural laws that affected the environment they depended upon for survival.

Moreover, they would have been excellent storytellers and teachers. They would have developed scenarios on an ongoing basis using the traditional knowledge and collective wisdom they shared within their Clans and communities. Without knowing it, MoCreebec's elders and ancestors would have been expert scenario thinkers. The fact that so many of them saw the implications of their actions in terms of multiple generations is a testament to their ability to think not only about the past but to consider the future too.

### *Predetermined versus Uncertain*

The scenario planning process is essentially about understanding the environment by critically assessing our assumptions about how it will evolve over time. Doing so involves mapping out various factors and variables that will change or stay the same into the future.

Whether something stays the same or changes in the future is probably unknown initially but it does not mean it is entirely unknowable. Some variables may be predetermined. The aim of scenario planning is therefore to accept



uncertainty exists and yet to engage in an attempt to find structure within uncertainty.

Uncertainty can naturally cause a person to feel uncomfortable or uneasy. Engaging in scenario thinking provides a safe context within which to get comfortable looking at uncertainty. If we avoid looking into the future, because we feel uncomfortable with uncertainty, then we put ourselves at risk of falling victim to forces too great to deal with on a last minute basis.

Foresight is what we develop when we get comfortable with analyzing the uncertainty that the future beholds. Fortunately, the past and present provide us with clues, often in the form of trends and patterns. Our efforts in developing foresight are not wasted; they are crucial to building decision-making capacity (i.e. self-governance) and self-determination.

### *Natural Law and Systems*

Elders have much experience and have been witnesses to many changes and events in their lives. This richness of perspective allows them to see or perceive things that youth and other members of a community may not perceive without assistance and direction. One capacity that comes with experience is the ability to perceive how certain natural laws operate in our environment and affect the systems that impact our lives and our daily activities.

Some would quickly point out that natural laws are the causes for things to happen and reoccur. Traditional medicine and much of traditional knowledge are based on intuition, collective wisdom, and awareness of natural laws and the natural systems they affect.

Natural laws create predetermined driving forces. Natural laws also affect the systems we face in our environment. For example, the annual freezing and thawing of rivers is based on natural laws and is part of a system called

the seasons. An appreciation for these systems can help someone relate to “time” as variance between potentiality and actuality. A systems approach to analysis facilitates understanding of the driving forces included in scenarios.

### *Adaptive versus Transformative*

There are two main methods for undertaking scenario planning: adaptive or transformative. An adaptive method involves identifying multiple plausible futures under a context of risk management. The transformative method involves identifying multiple plausible futures under a context of visionary and consensus driven processes.

The adaptive method is best suited to situations where a decision-focus or issue poses low predictability but likely high-impact consequences to the decision. The adaptive method is usually conducted within a smaller group of internal stakeholders. Its primary orientation is towards adapting to the unchangeable circumstances that confront us.

The transformative method is best suited to situations where the unpredictability comes primarily from the socio-political sphere of our environment. Decisions have high-impact consequences. The primary orientation of the transformative scenario method is to change (i.e. transform) the circumstances that confront us by building consensus about desirable and undesirable plausible futures. Transformative scenario planning can often involve a wider scope of stakeholder groups who may not see eye to eye at the beginning.

Choosing an appropriate method depends on whether the purpose of the process is to build consensus for common direction or whether the purpose is to identify hidden risks or opportunities in an existing direction, one already decided upon. The methods involve a similar process but have distinct orientations.

## *The Scenario Planning Process*

The following is a step-by-step break-down of the scenario planning process as it could be applied within the MoCreebec community. The distinction between the transformative and adaptive methods should be made at the appropriate stages of the scenario planning process. The options for both methods can be treated separately where there is divergence in orientation and brought together again where there is convergence.

The stages of the process have been outlined below using the winter trap-line as a metaphor for the scenario development process:

### *Stage One – Breaking Trail*

#### *Step One – Building the Case, Focus, and Horizon*

The first step taken to “break trail” will help determine how challenging the process will be. It is like breaking trail in the snow. Taking a first step forward will give one an idea how deep the snow is and how easy it will be to establish a path forward. Breaking trail is a good way to see what goes on when building the case for a scenario planning project.

Someone has to break trail. That role usually falls to the person responsible for the area identified as experiencing uncertainty. This could be a program director, a manager, or a board member of one of the MoCreebec corporations. The person breaking the trail is the one who determines the scope of the proposed scenario project, identifies the focus, and selects a horizon year for the purposes of the scenario storylines.

It is also the role of the person breaking trail to convince others to follow the trail they are creating. In particular, when it comes to scenarios and the scenario planning process, it is critical to have the support of Chief and Council, as they will have to be part of the

process and may need to approve actions or activities (e.g. consultation with members) taken by the scenario team. It is important to have the buy-in of Chief and Council because the outcomes of the scenario process will only achieve their full value if the leadership of MoCreebec is involved and informed.

#### *Step Two – Setting Up the Scenario Team*

The second step to breaking trail is to get a group of individuals—ideally 4 to 6—to focus their attention on developing the scenarios by being fully engaged with and dedicating sufficient time to the process. The more people pack down a trail the easier it will be for others to follow it later. The scenario team is ultimately responsible for packing the trail and determining its direction.

An important part of determining the overall direction for the scenario project involves choosing between a transformative and an adaptive scenario process. The scenario team should come to a consensus about whether MoCreebec has the ability to transform the circumstances surrounding the issue of focus for the scenarios or whether MoCreebec will be required to adapt to the circumstances.

#### *Step Three – Determining Who to Consult*

The third step in breaking trail involves deciding who to consult during the scenario development process. This is the role of the scenario team and it is their responsibility to aim to consult as widely as possible without incurring too great a cost or without risking delays in the process.

Determining who to consult is also defined by whether the scenario development process chosen is transformative or adaptive. A wider group of stakeholders will need to be involved if the overall objective is to be transformative, not merely adaptive, in MoCreebec’s approach to uncertainty in its operating environment.

## *Stage Two – Setting the Traps*

### *Step Four – “Snowshoe” Workshop*

The initial workshop is key to the overall process. It sets the framework for developing the scenarios and assures that everyone on the scenario team has a good understanding of the approach (transformative or adaptive), focus issue(s), scope and horizon month or year. The first workshop is also where the scenario team identifies someone internally or externally to act as the “facilitator”.

The facilitator is tasked with documenting the entire process and assuring that the ideas and information that are shared are captured and considered without prejudice. It is also the role of the facilitator to assure that the scenario team is testing their assumptions and doing their upmost to reduce the impact of biases during their assessments and analysis.

The first workshop is called the “Snowshoe” workshop because it is the function of a snowshoe to spread itself over a surface and provide for a way of channeling weight onto the snow. The initial workshop serves a similar function when it comes to breaking trail in the scenario process. The workshop serves the function of gathering as much information as possible without sinking under the weight of analysis and biases.

The initial workshop can be likened to setting traps to see what kind of information can be captured for purposes of analysis later in the scenario process. Data gathering for scenarios is therefore similar to setting traps. Snowshoes are helpful whenever one goes off the beaten path. The workshop is a first step in going off the beaten trail to set the (information) traps.

The initial workshop should be followed up with interviews or discussions with the stakeholders that have been identified as necessary to consult. Consulting these

stakeholders will also provide a wealth of information that will set the foundation for the next steps in the scenario project.

### *Step Five – Identifying Systems and Driving Forces*

The scenario team, led by the facilitator, should engage in a process to identify the underlying systems affecting the focus issue and the future dynamics of the community’s context and environment. An example of an underlying system would be the migratory patterns of Canada geese to the James Bay and how changes to these patterns might impact the transfer of traditional knowledge and the community-based activities.

In addition to the underlying systems, it is important to identify the driving forces that, in turn shape the way the underlying systems function and evolve. In the case of migrating geese, a driving force (i.e. driver) would be ecological productivity or the “greenness” of areas in route to seasonal breeding grounds. Changes in industrial activity may therefore affect bird migration. Farming might draw migratory birds where other activities might deter birds from a certain path.

Understanding systems and drivers can come from both scientific knowledge but also from traditional knowledge passed on and shared by elders in the community. A mix of scientific and traditional knowledge could very well provide the best result but in each case evidence-based knowledge should prevail.

### *Step Six – Research and Further Interviews*

Once the underlying systems and drivers have been identified there will be need for further research. Finding evidence from the scientific disciplines, including political, economic and social, will require research books and online sources. Conducting research in the field of traditional knowledge will require conducting interviews with elders from the community.

The scenario team will be responsible for dividing up the work of conducting either scientific research or following up with elders in the community to provide perspective. Sufficient time should be given to allow for adequate research and information gathering. Patience is needed at this time. Research requires space and time to harness the creative juices and stimulate intuitive thinking.

### *Stage Three – Checking the Traps*

#### *Step Seven – “Skinning” Workshop*

The purpose of the “Skinning” workshop is to remove the part of the animal that will be the focus of the “tanning process”. Other information—like the rest of the animal—is never discarded. It now serves a different purpose. However, it is the skin that we want to focus our attention on. Therefore, it is during the “Skinning” workshop that the direction of the scenarios is determined.

It is at this stage that the data collected is further analyzed for patterns, trends, drivers and systems. The drivers are drawn out and clustered into major categories. The clusters of driving forces are then analyzed for logical connections. The two main clusters are highlighted for further consideration. The other clusters are not discarded but are rather put aside temporarily until later in the process.

The main clusters are then assessed based on an impact/uncertainty matrix. This matrix allows the scenario team members to determine where the primary driving forces are positioned in relation to each other and within the impact/uncertainty context. A scale of 1-10 is advisable for both the level of impact and the degree uncertainty.

The two driving forces with the highest impact and the greatest degree of uncertainty are drawn out to become the primary focus of the scenario storylines going forward.

#### *Step Eight – Structuring the Uncertainty*

At this point it is useful to return to the other clusters of driving forces and information that have been gathered but put aside. Returning to this information is important because it can often contain new insights that need to be drawn out once the main clusters and drivers have been selected for the storylines. It is important to determine whether the driving forces identified are in fact uncertain or whether they may in fact be predetermined.

Even within uncertainty, there can be some degree of structure that, if understood, can help frame the best course of action in an otherwise uncertain environment. By returning to all the drivers previously discovered, the scenario team can engage in a discussion about whether these forces are in fact uncertain. If they happen to be predetermined, then they may need to be included in all of the scenario storylines going forward. The distinctions between storylines should reflect only what is truly uncertain.

#### *Step Nine – Drafting Scenario Storylines*

The next task of the scenario team is to draft the scenario storylines. Ideally, no fewer than three or no more than five scenarios should be developed. Each scenario should reflect one of the main factors contributing to uncertainty in the environment. Other driving forces and predetermined factors can then be incorporated into the storylines as deemed appropriate by the team.

A critical point to keep in mind while drafting scenarios is each scenario must be plausible. Plausibility requires internal consistency and logical connections. Contradictions should be avoided and routed out. For example, low annual snow fall, low spring water levels, and flooding during break-up should probably not be grouped together in the same scenario.



### *Step Ten – Research and Further Interviews*

As the scenario team drafts the scenario storylines, they will encounter issues that may require further research. It may also be necessary to conduct further interviews. This is a normal part of the scenario development process. The ultimate value is in the learning that takes place and the greater understanding that the scenario team members acquire from engaging fully with scenario development.

Further research may also be necessary to flush out key issues and to make sure that terms and concepts are being used correctly. A story that misrepresents facts or does not do a good job at communicating ideas runs the risk of confusing rather than clarifying things for others. Drafting the scenarios is an iterative process and multiple drafts may very well be necessary before any one version can be considered final.

### *Stage Four – Tanning the Skins*

### *Step Eleven – Write-up of Final Scenarios*

The scenario team will have by now done a great deal of research, thinking, reflection, discussion, and sharing of perspectives with others. It is now time to write up the final draft of the scenario storylines. There are a number of ways in which this can be done. It should be remembered that the ultimate purpose of the stories is to communicate perspective. Scenarios should hopefully reflect a synthesis of learning that results in the merging of multiple perspectives on an issue.

One way is to publish the scenarios in the form of a newsletter. The newsletter can have an opening message from the Chief and/or Deputy Chief about why the scenario process was started and how the scenarios will be used over the coming months or year. Following the opening message, each scenario can be developed as a story about a plausible future

with a particular horizon month or year. The scenarios can either be developed with the use of a narrative format or can be outlined using bullet points that highlight key elements about the proposed future state of the environment.

Another way of publishing the scenarios would be to write them in the form of articles in a newspaper. The newspaper does not actually have to exist and it is perhaps best that it does not. A name could be given to the newspaper, such as the *MoCreebec Times* or the *Globe & Community*. The fictitious newspaper could be the medium for communicating all scenario projects undertaken by MoCreebec. The articles would be presented as happenings or events that take place on the future date of the newspaper issue.

The articles could be written with the horizon month or year as the date of the newspaper issue. The newspaper could also be a way of creating advertising space for current projects (e.g. Cree Village Eco Lodge) and programs being undertaken by MoCreebec. These advertisements would have to be general enough that would not have a specific expiry date associated with them. The advertisements would also show MoCreebec activities as “going concerns” with future sustainability.

These are two ways to creatively communicate the scenarios. They are not mutually exclusive. They can be done together but time and effort will need to be invested if both are done for each scenario project. The main point should always be to find the most effective way of engaging the membership in thinking about the scenarios and then using those stories to think about the future of MoCreebec, as an organization and as a community.

Writing is a creative process. It takes time but there should be a set amount of time allocated to drafting the storylines. Timing is important. The scenario process needs to have deadlines.

### *Step Twelve – “Moccasin Sharing” Workshop*

The best way to assure that a writing project is completed on time is to set a date for a workshop where those storylines will be used. The “Moccasin Sharing” workshop is just that kind of opportunity. Its date should be set before the scenario storylines are drafted. That way the scenario team has a fixed date or deadline to work towards for the purposes of drafting their final communications pieces.

The “Moccasin Sharing” workshop is essentially about role-playing or walking a mile in someone else’s shoes: viewing things from someone else’s perspective. This workshop provides an opportunity to review the scenario from the perspective of different stakeholders. Every issue has its stakeholders.

The scenario process would have identified who those stakeholders are and some of them may have been consulted during the scenario project. The “Moccasin Sharing” workshop provides a unique opportunity to revisit the final scenarios from the perspective of those different stakeholder groups.

### *Step Thirteen – Identifying Sign-posts*

The last step of stage four is to identify and develop sign-posts for foresight. This can be done during the “Moccasin Sharing” workshop or at some other meeting among the scenario team members. Identifying the sign-posts for each plausible future scenario is important because it is these sign-posts that will provide MoCreebec with the foresight to anticipate if and when a particular future scenario is starting to evolve.

Being able to anticipate what could happen, sooner than later, is not only a key component of good risk management but also a critical element of change management. Change is part of the transformative scenario approach.

An example of a sign-post related to a driver for scenarios relating to investment options would be when the interest rate begins to fluctuate outside a certain range determined to be the sign-post for MoCreebec finances.

### *Stage Five – Displaying the Furs*

### *Step Fourteen – “Storytelling” Workshop*

The final stage of the scenario process is to share the scenarios with a broader audience. The “Storytelling” workshop is a space to communicate the scenarios to the community, including the rationale for why it was felt important to start the process and what MoCreebec aims to do with the scenarios going forward. The “Storytelling” workshop can also be an opportunity to get feedback from the community on the implications of each storyline.

These workshops can be done with smaller groups or in a larger group setting. Some groups may have particular interest in learning more about the scenarios, e.g. the MoCreebec Council, the Youth Council, Committees or the Elders Council. The scenarios can also be accompanied by storytelling about the past as well. In this way, sharing of past experiences and future expectations comes to life.

### *Step Fifteen – Communicating Scenarios*

The scenarios, once written, can be communicated more broadly within the community through online and other communication mediums. One idea could be to host an interview over the local radio station outlining what the scenarios have discovered and what they mean to the MoCreebec community and the broader communities of Moosonee and Moose Factory. The written scenarios can also be disseminated through MoCreebec’s own newsletter or through a special portal on the MoCreebec organization website.



### *Hurdles and Hilltops*

Scenario planning is a tool, it is not a silver bullet. Nor will scenario planning predict the future. What scenario planning will do is help with capacity and awareness building. Scenario thinking is primarily about learning. However, for learning to take place, there has to first be a recognition that something is currently not known or understood sufficiently.

Because scenarios are about learning, they are not easy to do well. Learning is never easy. But, with a little effort and some humility, we can all expand our horizons, increase our perception, and learn new things about our environment. Building the case for a scenario project is essentially about building the case for staff training and community building.

There are hurdles to gaining support for the scenario process. Some of these hurdles can stop the process in its tracks, other hurdles can prevent it from even getting off the ground. One of the main hurdles is to gain sufficient support from senior management to carry a scenario project forward to fruition.

Scenario planning requires the support of the leadership. Without support the broader learning outcomes will not be possible nor will it be possible to sustain the activities requiring resources from MoCreebec Council.

Another hurdle to avoid is allowing dominant personalities to “take over” the conversation and deter others from sharing their thoughts and perspectives. If dominant personalities are allowed to overrun the process, then the scenarios will reflect a narrow-minded perspective on the issues being dealt with.

A key difficulty with scenario projects is getting a team that can think openly and be self-aware. It is also important to have a team that thinks logically and intuitively so as to be

able to distinguish between “predetermined” and “truly uncertain” factors and events.

It is also important to recognize that newly generated insights should not be used to build new “unquestioned” future scenarios. The scenario team should maintain an open mind to plausible events and new understandings of underlying systems and drivers. Getting comfortable with testing assumptions and having one’s assumptions tested is a key outcome of the scenario process and learning.

Finally, there is a potential hurdle in opening up the scope of the scenario project to too many stakeholders. There is a trade-off between the number of people involved and the efficiency of the process. The point of balance will be different for each project and each issue area being explored. This balance needs to be set from the beginning when the scoping of the scenario project is conducted.

### *When to Use the Scenario Process*

Scenarios are a useful communications and learning tool under many circumstances. They can be used as part of a larger strategic planning process or as a way of gaining insights into the sustainability of a particular project. Scenarios can and should be used when there is a significant level of uncertainty in the context of decision-making.

Scenarios take time to develop, so it is often best if they are applied to decision-making processes that are dealing with long-term planning horizons, e.g. three to five years or longer. A good timeframe for conducting a scenario project would be 3-6 months.

Scenario thinking and planning activities can also be done for issues or projects with a shorter timeframe. The depth of the analysis will be weaker but the learning can still take place within a scenario project with limited scope and fewer consultation activities.

## ***“Energy for Community” Scenario Case Study***

### *Stage One – Breaking Trail*

#### *Step One – Building the Case, Focus, and Horizon*

Johnny Thunder is a make-believe member of the MoCreebec staff. Johnny’s position is also make-believe. He is the *Energy Advisor* to the Chief and Council. It is Johnny’s role within MoCreebec to develop policies and plans for the future energy needs of the community.

Johnny is also involved in writing proposals for things like investments in alternative energy, e.g. solar and geo-thermal sources of power. He is likewise engaged in housing development issues and works closely with the MoCreebec Housing Corporation.

Johnny is concerned that the future energy needs of the MoCreebec community are not well understood by the general membership. He believes that a scenario project may be a good way to involve the Chief, Council and broader community in determining the needs and opportunities that may arise from local generation of alternative energy.

However, to do so, Johnny recognizes the need to identify what will drive demand for energy into the future and how energy demand and supply might be affected by unforeseen events and circumstances. There is significant uncertainty facing these issues and Johnny immediately recognizes the value of conducting a scenario project.

Johnny identified a 5-year scenario horizon as the best point of reference for the discussion. A 5-year horizon is close enough to give a sense of urgency but still long-term enough to encourage the big-picture thinking necessary to see fulfillment of long-term investments. He realized that a 5-year horizon is a period that is conducive to realizing potential.

In addition to determining the horizon year, it is important to set the scope of the project. Johnny determined that the focus of the scenario project should be on the potential of local energy sources to meet the demands of future energy needs. Johnny received support from Chief and Council to engage in an exploratory process to consider these issues.

#### *Step Two – Setting Up the Scenario Team*

A team is needed. Johnny identified five people who were interested in and involved in energy related issues in the community. The scenario team decided to call themselves the “Thunder Birds”. Their first task was to determine whether they should use an adaptive or transformative scenario process.

The Thunder Birds decided a transformative process would be more relevant because the obstacles were mainly regulatory and political. The team believed that the process for change would need to be transformative and that the value from the scenarios would be derived from much more than just learning how to adapt to unchangeable circumstances.

#### *Step Three – Determining Who to Consult*

Given all that Johnny has considered to date and the decision to move ahead with a more transformative approach to scenarios, he is also deciding to consult widely with the members of the MoCreebec community. It is in his plans to consult with external experts too. The community will be brought into the process at various stages to provide feedback.

In order to make the consultation process a success, Johnny decides to conduct phone interviews with the external experts. In the case of local members, the consultations will be done in partnership with a theatre group that has been approached and is willing to put on two separate plays relating to energy consumption and generation, respectively.

## *Stage Two – Setting the Traps*

### *Step Four – “Snowshoe” Workshop*

Johnny and the Thunder Birds began conducting research related to local generating capacity and alternative energy sources and quickly determined that wind, biomass and geothermal were the most promising options but that some of these options had challenges and environmental issues associated with their implementation. More learning was called for.

The Thunder Birds decided that the first workshop, the “Snowshoe” workshop should focus on the underlying challenges of these alternative forms of energy. They decided to bring in an environmental consultant as a facilitator for the discussions and to invite representatives from various government ministries who could speak to the regulatory challenges in greater detail.

The Snowshoe workshop was organized as an evening session at the Cree Village Eco Lodge and it was attended by three representatives from the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry, one representative from the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, seven representatives from local community-based organizations, MoCreebec staff, and at least a dozen concerned members of the community.

The workshop was a brain storming session that succeeded in getting a lot of valuable data and insights on the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and regulatory issues that would be impacted by the various alternative energy sources being considered.

The discussion provided the Thunder Birds with a wealth of ideas on where to do further research. In particular, it provided Johnny with the sense that the issue was more complex than originally thought and the realization that there was a significant amount of uncertainty from issues relating to the

political and legal aspects of the energy scenarios. This reaffirmed Johnny that he was correct in framing the scenario project in terms of a transformative process.

The Snowshoe workshop likewise provided Johnny and the Thunder Birds with a guide to the questions they should be asking stakeholders in follow-up phone interviews. The workshop also highlighted the desire to include a fourth alternative energy source that could become feasible within the timeframe of the scenarios.

That fourth source of energy would remain nameless but would be added as something that would require a “brand new” approach to thinking about alternative energy. It acquired the unofficial title of “Thunder”, which was appropriate because it is currently unknown how to harness the energy from lightning. Leaving it nameless was seen as a way of forcing the scenario team to stretch their thinking and remain open to “wild” thoughts.

### *Step Five – Identifying Systems and Driving Forces*

Johnny and the Thunder Birds began doing further research based on the information they obtained from the Snowshoe workshop and the follow-up interviews with additional stakeholders. Their objective was to identify the underlying systems and driving forces that were at the heart of determining the feasibility and desirability of local alternative energy generating capacity.

The scenario team started to realize that the soil conditions and weather patterns were two of the dominant systems at the core of all three of the alternative energy sources first identified. Soil conditions affected not only the types of trees (i.e. hardwood or softwood) that could grow in the area but were also linked to the water table and stability of the ground for geothermal and wind, respectively.

Each of the energy sources that had been prioritized also had their respective driving forces that determined efficiencies as an alternative energy source. Wind was driven by average wind speeds in the region, which the data showed was highly variable. Geothermal was driven by the efficiency of horizontal versus vertical networks of tubing. Biomass was driven in large part by the distance of trees and the cost effectiveness of transport.

#### *Step Six – Research and Further Interviews*

Knowing the main systems and drivers that would affect each of the alternative energy sources, the Thunder Birds went out again to consult stakeholders through a series of phone interviews. The interviews were done with the objective of seeing where the trends were developing, e.g. what local forestry might look like in the coming five years with possible all-season road access to areas where hard wood tree growth could be sustained.

The scenario team also thought it would be appropriate to consult with elders from the community to see what they thought about alternative energy sources, their impacts on the environment, and the effects of each on the socio-cultural aspects of community life. Elders had for a long time been concerned about the potential impacts of wind turbines on migratory birds, in particular geese.

#### *Stage Three – Checking the Traps*

#### *Step Seven – “Skinning” Workshop*

The Thunder Birds decided that they were ready for the “Skinning” workshop, which is meant to raise all the pertinent research that has been accumulated and to focus attention on the elements that are of most value to the discussion going forward. In this case, the skin represents the drivers and data that reveal the structure of underlying systems and the root causes and sources of uncertainty.

Johnny asked a colleague to facilitate the workshop because he wanted to be part of the discussion and felt that at this point and after all the research that was done, he was no longer unbiased. He needed to step back and participate in the scenario project as just one other stakeholder. His colleague would do a better job of facilitating because we had not been so heavily involved in the research and would not be as invested in the process.

The Skinning workshop was successful in identifying 25 drivers of alternative energy generation in the area. Other patterns, trends and system consideration were also raised and noted by the facilitator. These were in turn categorized and clustered into groups. One group of drivers, for example, was labelled under “storage capacity issues”. These drivers included things like trends in technological advances and demographic changes that would shift the demand for storage capacity.

The clusters of drivers and trends were then assigned values that placed them in relation to each other, on an impact/uncertainty matrix. Once the clusters of drivers were mapped out visually on a matrix, the workshop participants could see where each cluster resided in relation to the others. The two clusters or drivers with the highest level of impact and uncertainty were selected for purposes of scenario storyline development.

The clusters of drivers that were determined as having the highest level of potential impact and degree of uncertainty attached to them were as follows: (1) “distance of infrastructure from communities”, and (2) “altering stability and acidity of soils”. The first cluster of drivers related to the cost/benefit calculations of harvesting biomass and the cost of local grid connection infrastructure. The second cluster related to conditions for wind turbines and planting of hardwood trees.

### *Step Eight – Structuring the Uncertainty*

The four scenarios directions had been determined: (1) able to generate and/or build infrastructure near community; (2) unable to generate and/or build infrastructure near community; (3) able to significantly alter the stability and acidity of soils; and (4) unable to significantly alter the stability and acidity of soils. The main thrusts of the scenario storylines had been determined but there was a lot of other information that the Thunder Birds could return to and reincorporate.

Johnny and the Thunder Birds decided to review all the drivers and systems that they had researched to see what could be used to add insight and perspective into the four main scenario storylines that had been identified. Doing this helped reveal some further structure and tease out new insights about what was driving uncertainty around the use of local alternative sources of energy.

### *Step Nine – Drafting Scenario Storylines*

Johnny grew up in a family of talented story tellers and had developed a skill for writing. He knew firsthand that a good story—a truly captivating story—has to be believable. The Thunder Birds had to captivate the members of the community with their scenarios so Johnny decided to put emphasis on making sure the storylines were plausible. He did not want the scenarios to be full of contradictions that would reduce their intended impact.

Johnny also realized that all of the scenario storylines should incorporate a few common elements. These common elements are the predetermined forces that were identified during the research as having an impact regardless of the drivers of uncertainty. For example, the Thunder Birds decided to refer to the growing demand for energy of all the households in Moose Factory and Moosonee.

### *Step Ten – Research and Further Interviews*

The Thunder Birds decided to share their draft scenario storylines with a few of the key stakeholders and a couple of energy experts. The responses and feedback were valuable and required some tweaking. In a few instances, the energy experts picked up on a few items that were contradictory. The scenario team was therefore able to remove those contradictions before sharing widely.

Developing a story is not always easy. It is not like writing a report. It has to be interesting and captivating. Johnny and the Thunder Birds therefore needed to do some further thinking and research to identify some creative elements that could be built into the stories in order to make them more readable, engaging and culturally relevant.

### *Stage Four – Tanning the Skins*

### *Step Eleven – Write-up of Final Scenarios*

Johnny decided to take a trip up the river to go fishing with the scenario team. They all left on a Saturday morning in mid-August to fish at the mouth of the French River and at Bushy Island Rapids. The water levels were extremely low and they had to walk the boat in a number of spots. They had not expected the water to be that low. The experience showed them that uncertainty is a part of life.

The fishing trip also provides the necessary inspiration for the scenario writing. Johnny decided to name the four scenarios using the names of the four dominant fish species in the area: pickerel, pike, whitefish and sturgeon. Each fish represented a different type of water habitat and Johnny decided to draw a parallel between these four fish and the scenarios he was putting together.

The “pickerel” scenario would depict a future where soil could be altered representing the



habitat where pickerel reside as being in faster water with changing tides. In contrast, the “pike” scenario would depict a future where soil could not be altered representing the habitat where pike reside as being stagnant.

The “sturgeon” scenario would in turn depict a future where infrastructure would have to be developed further away from the communities. Sturgeon are often found further up river and further away from Moose Factory and Moosonee. The “whitefish” scenario depicts a future where infrastructure can be located closer to communities. Whitefish come from the Bay and can be fished closer to home.

#### *Step Twelve – “Moccasin Sharing” Workshop*

The Thunder Birds were fortunate that the Council had called for a General Membership Meeting soon after the scenarios were finalized. This allowed the scenario team to incorporate their work into a broader discussion and to organize the “Moccasin Sharing” workshop as a part of a larger community meeting that addressed energy related issues. Johnny was happy to have that level of support from the Chief & Council.

The Moccasin Sharing workshop provided those that came out to the General Membership Meeting with an opportunity to learn about the scenario research that Johnny and the Thunder Birds had just finalized. It was an opportunity for the community to put themselves in the shoes of the next generation of adults who would be facing different energy needs and opportunities 5 years into the future. It was also an opportunity for the community to “witness the future” from the perspective of other stakeholders.

#### *Step Thirteen – Identifying Sign-posts*

The scenario team found the Moccasin Sharing workshop of great value because a number of new insights and community

concerns were raised. It provided the perfect backdrop on which to identify “sign-posts” for the different scenarios.

Sign-posts are indicators that would allow the scenario team to monitor events and trends and to see if one or a number of the scenarios were in fact developing over time. Being the community *Energy Advisor*, Johnny was particularly interested in having indicators that he could monitor, going forward, in his work. Sign-posts would also be a valuable tool to have when attending training workshops and industry conferences. Johnny immediately saw the value for focusing his future research.

#### *Stage Five – Displaying the Furs*

#### *Step Fourteen – “Storytelling” Workshop*

The “Storytelling” workshop was simplified for this scenario project. In place of a workshop involving a wider audience, Johnny was asked to present the scenario and the sign-posts to the MoCreebec Council. This provided him with the opportunity to provide some final feedback to the Council on the work that the Thunder Birds had done.

#### *Step Fifteen – Communicating Scenarios*

Finally, to communicate the scenarios on an ongoing basis and to keep the community’s focus on the energy needs and energy futures for the membership, Johnny decided to write a series of articles for the MoCreebec newsletter. Four articles would be circulated with one scenario storyline included in each newsletter submission. The newsletter provided a good medium for communicating the written scenarios.

Johnny continued to engage members of the community in discussions about the future of alternative energy in the region. He now had more tools and knowledge for engaging with members of the MoCreebec community.



## MODULE ELEVEN: POLICY DEVELOPMENT

### *Purpose*

Module eleven deals with a key component of governance, policy. The module will outline a model for how to “do” policy development. This process will be referred to as the policy cycle. This module will outline how the policy cycle functions and how it can be adopted and adapted to the context of the MoCreebec community. The stages of the policy cycle will be outlined in sufficient detail to allow one to engage and plan activities in support of developing, reviewing and adjusting policy for MoCreebec entities and programs.

The implementation of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework is an ongoing and continuous process. It is complimented by policy development. The Constitution is a “vision” statement that provides guidelines and guidance for self-governance. The Bylaws, which occupy the next level of detail, include the “process” for arriving at decision points. In addition to these two levels, there is further need to capture the “content” of decisions. Therefore, policy is about the content that comes about through due process that is guided by a vision and principles.

### *What is Policy?*

Policy is the outcome of a decision-making process. It puts in place procedures or directives, with the aim of establishing order and filling gaps. It is designed and reviewed in light of new and reoccurring issues, challenges and organizational needs. It is developed and implemented under conditions of resource constraints and multiple competing priorities.

The first point is key. It will be discussed further in the next section but for now it is worth mentioning that decisions get recorded

and they are often recorded in the form of a policy. However, not all decisions become policy. Some decisions are made on an *ad hoc* basis because they do not reoccur with any degree of frequency. Policies would not exist without decisions. However, decisions can stand without there being formal policies.

Policies imply establishing order. Often a policy is put in place within an organization to fill an institutional gap. Policies are framed as either “procedures” to follow or “directives” to clarify action. Therefore, policies help with the implementing the MoCreebec Constitution and Bylaws because they create ordered activity and action.

Moreover, policy, like culture, is never static. It is meant to be stable but should be open to learning and change, if necessary. Policies that are well thought out and carefully designed do not require frequent adjustments. Good policy creates stability. However, even in the best run organizations, circumstances change and so too does the need for updated procedures and directives.

Scenario planning can help with better understanding the operational environment and is therefore linked to policy development because it provides the foresight to design good policy and the foresight to know when policies need to be reviewed and adjusted to meet changing circumstances.

Finally, policies are almost always developed and implemented under conditions of resource constraints and multiple competing priorities. Policy helps create efficiency and effectiveness under such circumstances. It is key to appreciate what resource constraints mean. There are different types of resources. Human, financial, infrastructure, cultural, and land-based resources may or may not impact how policy is developed and implemented. Constraints can come from any of the above.

### *Policy and Decision-Making*

Policy is an outcome of decision-making. It can also be an input for subsequent decisions. Policy is best understood as the means of capturing and transferring the wisdom of previous decisions and creating a process for applying that wisdom to similar situations. New decisions can take existing policy into account. In turn, existing policy can be adapted to reflect new decisions. The cycle is an important one. This cycle is outlined in greater detail at the end of this module.

Decisions require an understanding of context. So too does the design and implementation of policy. Policies have to fit the organization and community they were intended to serve. Like individuals, policy “serves” a purpose. If policy is not at the service of the community, then chances are it might need to be reviewed and adjusted. The decision to change policies, however, should be weighed just as carefully as the decision to develop new policies from scratch.

### *Policy for Organizations*

Policy can have an internal orientation; that is, to improve the processes that any program or project will normally involve. Program and project policies, as well as financial and staff policies, help make an organization more capable of running effectively and efficiently.

Putting policies in place reduces repetitive thinking. Once a policy is thought through, it only needs tweaking during implementation.

Decisions relating to lands and resources will also affect the internal policies of MoCreebec by shaping the way activities are undertaken and staff are allocated to particular activities. The community consultation protocol, for example, is a policy that directs both internal and external activities.

### *Policy by Organizations*

Policy is not only for internal purposes. It can also be used to create order in the way an organization works with partners or members, as in the case of MoCreebec. Policies created by organizations for dealing with stakeholders are just as important as policies created for internal administrative purposes.

Externally oriented policies require a similar development process but often involve more consultation work in getting the policy right.

Decisions relating to lands and resources have a direct impact on external policies. Many land and resource issues involve other entities, levels of government, community groups and organizations, companies, and partners. Big decisions about lands and resources do not occur with great frequency but their impact is often greater. Policies help guide the process of making these high-impact decisions.

### *Hurdles and Hilltops*

Developing policy does not come without its challenges. The primary hurdle that is often confronted is gaining support from the right people and recognition that an issue or problem, needing a policy solution, does exist. Support from Chief & Council is necessary “to go out deep and far enough” in resolving gaps and issues facing MoCreebec as an organization and as a community.

Recognizing that an issue or problem exists is only the beginning. The next step is to get buy-in from the community and other key stakeholders about what the actual problem is and how to define it. Determining the best policy instrument or solution to a problem requires consensus and/or compromise. There are many challenges in pursuing policy. Leadership is critical to overcoming the hurdles and hilltops to policy development.

## *The Policy Cycle*

The policy cycle outlined in this section is derived from the fourth edition of *The Australian Policy Handbook* by Catherine Althaus, Peter Bridgman and Glyn Davis. This book is an excellent source of learning for anyone interested in delving deeper into the cycle for developing good policy.

It should be noted that although this module proposes a series of stages to follow for the policy cycle, there is no reason to think that this cycle has to follow this exact order. Some of the stages could be shortened, combined, removed, delayed or modified to meet the particular circumstance of the community.

The policy cycle is meant as a guide to the policy development process. It can be helpful to approach policy making within a project management framework. Doing so reflects the multiple stages required in formulating good policies that will stand the test of time.

### *Issue Identification*

It is important to understand what an issue is and who is involved in the framing of issues. An issue is something of concern. But to whom? Issues are problems in search of solutions. But by whom?

Issues can be framed as either a cause or a symptom of something else. For example, arriving late to work could be both a cause and a symptom of a larger concern or problem. Arriving late could be a symptom of inadequate transportation during peak hours of the day or it could be a cause of clients being turned away or poor service delivery.

The framing of issues is an important part of the policy cycle. Framing is the process of identifying whether something is a cause or a symptom; who the issue concerns; and, who should be responsible for addressing the issue.

Part of framing an issue is understanding the scope of its impact. An issue can be personal, e.g. saving money to buy a boat to go hunting. An issue can be family related, e.g. planting a garden to grow potatoes. An issue can be community-wide, e.g. addressing erosion of the dike on Moose Factory Island. An issue can also be regional, e.g. winter road access.

MoCreebec is primarily concerned with issues that are community-level or regional in scope. Personal and family issues should be first addressed within the Clan families. When it comes to land and resource issues specifically, MoCreebec needs to understand its own role within the larger framework of traditional land use and access. Many of the community-level and regional land and resource issues need to be addressed in collaboration with other local administrative bodies, including other First Nations governments.

Proper framing of an issue is the first step in providing direction for good policy analysis. If an issue is not properly framed, then the search for solutions will be complicated. Issue drivers are key to the framing process.

A “driver” is a “principle cause” of something else (i.e. the issue) occurring. Drivers have explanatory power, they explain why things happen or do not happen. Identifying the “drivers” of an issue is one of the primary responsibilities of those who guide the policy cycle and the policy development process. Drivers are not always apparent. They often need to be discovered, revealed or exposed.

We now turn our attention to who frames an issue? Issues can be framed by program staff within MoCreebec, by Clan Council Reps, by the Chief or Deputy Chief or by an individual or group of MoCreebec members. Depending on who identifies the issue will determine how it is framed. Issues are framed by applying assumptions and perspectives to the matter.

Members of the community may be able to identify issues but may lack the experience of framing them in terms of causes or symptoms of deeper problems and concerns. Sometimes the issue being raised is important but when it comes to allocating time and resources, it may not be as important as other pressing issues.

Some issues may be political or sensitive in nature. When an issue is deemed political or sensitive, MoCreebec program staff and/or Council should be careful to frame the issue in a way that reduces the political or sensitive components of the problem or concern. It is important to recall that trust comes with listening to members of the community even when issues are political or sensitive in nature.

However, it is ultimately the role of the MoCreebec leadership to frame issues so that the policy cycle can be directed towards finding solutions to critical problems.

Understanding an issue's context is key to developing good policies. Policy analysis is the process applied to understand the context of issues and is the next step in the policy cycle.

### *Policy Analysis*

Depending on how complex an issue is, it may not be fully understood from the onset. The initial framing of an issue will help give direction but it is during the policy analysis stage that the structure and drivers of an issue become clearer. Often it is necessary to begin a search for a solution before one really starts to grasp the complexity of an issue.

It is key to start somewhere and vital to not get discouraged when an issue reveals itself as being more complex than originally perceived. Policy analysis requires getting comfortable with uncertainty, complexity, and imperfect information. Analyzing a policy issue requires the individual or team to suspend judgement and to look where the available data leads.

Policy analysis involves asking questions. The key questions to ask in all cases are as follows:

- What is the scope of the issue or problem? How many members of MoCreebec does it impact?
- What are the objectives for developing policy options for this issue? Are there guiding principles that can be used?
- What has been done in the past to address similar issues? Are there examples from other communities?
- What are the drivers (i.e. root causes) of the problem or issue? Are these individual or community-level drivers?
- What are the costs and benefits of addressing the issue? Is there a way to involve the community directly?
- What are the existing programs and services in place to address these types of issues? Are these meeting needs?
- What information can be accessed to research this issue further? Is there a need to gather more data?
- How much time is there to research the context of the issue? Does time permit new data gathering efforts?
- Who is involved or affected by the issue, directly or indirectly? Are these individuals part of any networks?

Policy analysis is an iterative process that evolves as information is gathered and new questions are raised. Patience is necessary. Some options or sub-issues will not come to light immediately. The thinking process involved in policy analysis is “inductive”. It takes time to accumulate sufficient information to be able to identify trends, patterns, structure, networks, and priorities.

Once the policy analysis process has identified a number of possible options, the next step is to link and evaluate the policy instruments.



## *Review of Policy Instruments*

Policies put on paper might look good but policies put in practice are what makes the difference at the end of the day. The test of good policy is how effectively and efficiently they are implemented. In order to pass the test, policy must be linked to an instrument or mechanism for implementation.

Various policy instruments exist including:

- Advocacy and Campaigns
- Agendas and Community Meetings
- Budgets and Capital Allocation
- Council Resolutions
- Memoranda of Understanding (MoU)
- Networks and Committees
- Organizational Procedures
- Partnership or Funding Agreements
- Program and Service Delivery
- Strategic Plans and Protocols
- Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Voting by Members and Council

Policy can be implemented through advocacy and campaigns. These instruments involve raising the importance of an issue with other levels of government and public authorities so that they themselves take action or identify an issue as important and needing resolution. Advocacy is highly political and when done well can raise the profile of a community and bring indirect benefits in the way of resources and clout of the MoCreebec community.

Policy can also be implemented through the setting of agendas and calling of community meetings. Policy is not always something that has to be written down. Policy can also be about process. This is often referred to as procedures. Agenda setting is an effective policy instrument. An agenda sets priorities and priority setting is policy. Community

meetings can also be an effectively way of getting members involved in implementation.

One of the principle ways in which policy gets implemented in organizations is through the budget and the allocation of capital resources. Budgets determine the ability to take action requiring financial and other capital resources. The budget process is perhaps the most powerful instrument for implementing policy options. Allocation of capital resources, including human resources, is closely tied to the budgeting process and ultimately to policy.

Council resolutions are often the most highly recognizable form of policy instrument. The documentation of resolutions made by Chief and Council sets the priorities and precedents for future decision-making. Resolutions may not have immediate effects but they are often the first step to building the foundations for other policy instruments to be applied.

A MoU is a political agreement between two entities or organizations. A MoU is not usually legally binding but it sets out the framework and principles and guidelines for a working institutional relationship. A MoU involves a commitment and usually requires an allocation of financial or in-kind resources. A MoU can be an effective way to address institutional gaps across entities by building greater collaboration and community-wide support.

Policy can also be implemented through networks, such as committees, or inter-government working groups that manage a political relationship. A network is a group of individuals that are in frequent contact about particular issues and actions. Networks may already exist or may need to be developed.

Developing a network around an issue can be a way to implement solutions. Committees are useful, for example, when further study and deliberation are required. Networks provide a

potential way to directly involve MoCreebec members in implementing solutions.

Organizational procedures, i.e. standards, are what people identify most closely with policy instruments. Included in this category are such things as human resource policies, hiring policies, health and safety policies, and request for proposal (RFP) or procurement policies. Organizational procedures are often the most visible form of policy instrument. People can see when procedures have changed. It affects them directly. It is therefore important to adapt procedures to the organizational culture and to the demands placed on the programs and services provided to the community.

Partnership and funding agreements are also policy instruments. Agreements often come with their own built in procedures and reporting requirements. External partnership and funding agreements often come with policies and procedures of their own. Results based management systems are often included in external funding agreements, e.g. with the Provincial or Federal Governments. These systems operate as policy instruments in the absence of specific organizational procedures.

Program and service delivery is closely tied to organizational procedures. Often the two are the same. However, it is useful to separate them here because some organizational procedures pertain to the overall MoCreebec organization, while program and service delivery procedures pertain to a particular program or service area. Procedures relating to one program may not apply in the case of other program areas, and vice versa.

Strategic plans and protocols help to establish priorities, rules or standards for carrying out specific projects and/or activities. Strategic plans can be an effective instrument for setting policy direction in organizations, programs or projects. Protocols are also an

effective instrument for creating clarity and certainty when responding to complex issues and situations requiring input and feedback from multiple stakeholders.

ToR are linked to contracts and procurement of services in much the same way a MoU is to formal arrangements and agreements between organizations. Setting out the terms of reference that will govern an agreement or contract is in effect developing policy. It is putting in place a structure for evaluating outcomes and reducing the need for ongoing review of decisions. ToR are decisions laid out in advance of work to be done.

Perhaps the best known instrument of policy is the taking of a vote. Voting occurs in two primary instances in the Constitutional Framework. The first instance is when General Members Meetings are called and an issue is put forward for vote. The second instance occurs within a narrower scope but more often, within the MoCreebec Council.

However, in both instances mentioned above the emphasis is always placed on building consensus prior to requiring a vote. Building consensus takes us back to the top of our list of policy instruments, i.e. advocacy. Building consensus within the community is a form of inner-community advocacy. Advocacy is a skill that effective leaders possess. They are able to convince others of the warrant or merit of a particular course of action.

Determining the right combination of policy instruments is only part of the challenge. Building momentum and consensus around policy options is an ongoing effort. Once a combination of policy instruments has been chosen, documents, i.e. plans or procedures, will need to be drafted for review. Moreover, it will be necessary to make provisions for training of staff and other stakeholders on how policy instruments will work in practice.



## *Consultation*

Consultation serves two primary purposes within the policy cycle. First of all, it provides a space for members of the community to voice an opinion about the proposed policy options; to propose new policy options; and, to evaluate the underlying assumptions on which policy options have been identified. Consultation also provides a mechanism for input that allows MoCreebec to effectively accommodate the needs of specific groups (e.g. elders or youth) within the community, during the policy implementation process.

The “**Protocol for Decision-Making**” is a key component of the consultation stage of the policy cycle. The protocol sets out the process by which feedback and input from the community will be gathered. It also clarifies the process by which MoCreebec members can participate directly in the decision-making process pertaining to lands and resources.

Consultation and engagement should be seen as priorities when it comes to developing policy. The Constitutional Framework puts great emphasis on “participation” as both a guiding principle and a mandate of the Chief and Council. Members of the MoCreebec community should be given as many opportunities, within reason, to participate (consulted and engaged in formal policy development) in formal decision-making.

On rare occasions, timing may not permit wide consultation and engagement. The need for consultation and engagement should be weighted by the importance of the issue. Not all issues will require broad community consultation at the planning stages. However, most issues will still require engagement and some degree of participation. Consultation is important for building awareness about policies that will impact individuals later on.

## *Coordination*

Coordination refers to the need for internal consistency, coherence, and compatibility. The three “C”s of coordination are an essential part of conducting due diligence. Problems arise when policies conflict with each other, create confusion or divert attention from intended actions and priorities. The previous stages of the policy cycle aim at understanding the policy context, gathering information, and building consensus. All of these activities require coordination.

The three “C”s can be used throughout the policy cycle but it is a good idea to have some additional time or space allotted to this purpose prior to making any final decisions. Adequate time should be given to assessing whether the policy options being explored are indeed internally consistent, coherent, and compatible with existing policy, priorities and principles. In particular, it is good to evaluate whether the choice of policy and instrument are consistent, coherent and compatible with the MoCreebec’s guiding principles.

There are a number of ways in which policy coordination can be achieved. Firstly, it can be achieved by means of Council deliberation. Secondly, it can be achieved by means of a Committee or Board that would be tasked with review of an issue. Thirdly, coordination can be achieved by delegating the process to an expert, e.g. legal counsel or accountant.

## *Decision*

Modules four, five, six, and seven of this *Toolkit* are dedicated to “decision-making” and “decisions”. There is no need to go into much more detail in this section but it is important to reiterate that decisions can be considered either high-impact or low-impact. Decision makers, spaces and points should be understood with this distinction in mind.

## Implementation

Drafting policies and deciding to adopt them is only half the battle. Implementation is the true test of a policies flexibility, effectiveness, and enduring power. It is not unknown to see policies “shift” during flight. Implementing policy is like flying through turbulence. Items stowed away in compartments tend to shift and if not careful could fall out of place. Like turbulence, policy implementation can be prepared for in advance. Planning for implementation should be done at the policy analysis (i.e. drafting) and consultation stages.

Some degree of flexibility and accommodation should be expected during implementation of policy. However, the degree of flexibility required will be a reflection of the extent to which policy analysis and design has resulted in clarity of purpose. To a certain degree flexibility should be incorporated into policies. However, when due consideration is not given to context, then the outcome is policy that is poorly implemented and that fails to achieve its desired outcome or level of performance.

Implementation and coordination are closely linked. Coordination continues, post-decision, as a key component to policy implementation. Networks that were created during the policy analysis stage become the means by which policy is implemented on the ground. It is crucial to remember that internal consistency, coherence, and compatibility maintain their relevance during this stage of the policy cycle.

Policy implementation also requires resources. Sometimes the policy decision will be concerned with allocating resources but more often than not, policy decisions themselves require resources to be implemented. At a minimum, staff (i.e. human resources) are involved to carry out the intentions and goals of policy objectives. The need for resources should also be considered in policy analysis.

## Evaluation

The policy cycle ends and is often re-started with evaluation. Evaluation of outcomes and the effectiveness (cost and otherwise) and efficiency of implementation are important. Reporting is key to being able to evaluate the policy cycle. There should be some form of data capture incorporated into high-impact policies. Low-impact policies may not need to have their own data gathering mechanisms, as these kinds of policies often are part of larger programs that already track certain indicators.

In the case of high-impact policy decisions, it may be necessary to develop new mechanisms for evaluation. Module Two introduced the Constitutional Development and Amendment Committee (CDAC), as the independent body that reviews the “constitutionality” of policy decisions made by the MoCreebec Council. The CDAC’s mandate includes conducting evaluations of the policy cycle, as well as, the consistency of policy with the Constitutional Framework. Review can also take place on a more *ad hoc* basis. For example, MoCreebec staff will, from time to time, review the policies in place for various programs.

The ultimate responsibility for review of the policy cycle rests with MoCreebec Council. The Council is the body that will consider recommendations from the CDAC or staff and approve changes to existing policy and procedures. Once again, a certain degree of flexibility should be allotted to program managers and directors to adjust the policies they oversee and manage.

Evaluations should always be done with the aim of improving the political economy of the entire community; that is, the ability to make decisions that govern access to and allocation or use of resources for the common good of the MoCreebec community, i.e. present and future generations, and the environment.

## ***“Dog Aggression and Child Safety” Policy Case Study***

### *Issue Identification*

In early February a tragic event happened to a child who resides on Tent City Drive. A loose dog that had recently become very aggressive attacked a nine-year-old child who was playing in the snowbank along the wooded area of Hospital Drive. The child thought the dog was being playful at the beginning but the dog’s demeanour quickly turned aggressive.

The child was badly bitten on both legs and then on the face, while he was on the ground. The child was found, half an hour later, in the snow bleeding, crying, and nearly frost-bitten from the cold. The child was in shock and, though he was not far from home, did not want to get up for fear that the dog was still nearby and would attack again if he stood up.

It turns out that the child was bitten by a dog that lived only a few houses from the child’s home. The child had previously played with the dog. However, a group of other children from the neighborhood had been throwing sticks and snowballs at that dog, which led it to become more aggressive in demeanour. Moreover, the child’s parents were good friends with the family that owned the dog.

The incident sent shock waves throughout the MoCreebec community and in both Moose Factory and Moosonee. The MoCreebec Council decided to raise the issue at its meeting to determine whether any specific action could be taken to prevent any similar incidents from happening in the future. There was unanimous consensus to learn from the incident and to develop a preventative policy.

The MoCreebec Council determined that there was need for further research in order to frame a balanced approach to child safety and healthy and active dogs, in the community. In

the past many have opposed having their dogs tied up on a 24/7 basis. It was seen that doing so might actually increase the aggressiveness of dogs in the community and potentially lead to a higher rate of attacks if these dogs did get loose or untied. Significant variation existed between members of the community when it came to the practice of regularly walking dogs.

The MoCreebec Council saw the issue of dog aggression and child safety as something that affected the entire community. The incident was indeed worrying and the Council felt it was necessary to understand the root causes of the incident and to determine if there were any policy options that could help reduce the risk of such an occurrence happening again.

There was a need to understand if this was a systemic issue that could reoccur or if it was something isolated and difficult to prevent. The Council did feel that one of the drivers underlying the risk of dog aggression towards children was the number of stray dogs that were not receiving regular meals. Another driver was the packing behaviour that dogs exhibited during mating season.

However, the recent incident did not fit with either of these drivers. The dog was being regularly fed and the incident occurred during the winter, not during the spring mating season. Council decided they needed to know more about the issue and recognized they did not have all the answers. The issue warranted further research and discussion.

### *Policy Analysis*

The MoCreebec Council requested assistance from staff. It was proposed that an *ad hoc* committee should be formed and tasked with researching what could be done to prevent future incidents of this sort from occurring. The Council requested that the staff identify a few additional members of the community

who would be interested in participating in the *ad hoc* committee. An *ad hoc* committee was formed and met six times over the months of February and early March.

The committee conducted research on the matter at hand and presented their findings to the Council in mid-March. One of the sources of information that the committee relied heavily on was a website about dog behaviour called Cesar's Way. One article on the website was of particular interest: "Dogs, children, and safety". The article explained many of the reasons why young children are particularly vulnerable to aggressive dog behaviour.

Some of the major findings from the *ad hoc* committee's research included evidence that dogs on short leashes can become aggressive; that certain species of dogs are particularly prone to aggressive behaviour; and, that children under the age of eight years of age are particularly vulnerable, due to a common tendency of dogs to equate physical size to an ability to exert dominance.

Other findings of interest included the fact that there is a key distinction between "stray" dogs and dogs that are allowed to "run loose"; that as long as dogs are fed the chances of them developing aggressive tendencies are minimal; and, that during the spring mating season dogs will pack together and tend to be more aggressive than other times of year.

These findings were presented to Council along with a number of recommended ways to address the issues, i.e. policy instruments.

#### *Review of Policy Instruments*

The MoCreebec Council was presented with a number of policy instruments as options for implementing some of the initial policy options presented by the *ad hoc* committee. The proposed policy instruments included a budget for a fenced in dog park in a forested

area where dogs could be taken to get exercise or be left for extended periods of time. It was determined that there should be a dog park in both Moosonee and in Moose Factory. This would be combined with funds to help dog owners improve systems for tying up dogs to provide larger spaces for dogs to roam.

The *ad hoc* committee likewise determined that it would be a good idea to have a public campaign to teach children of eight years or younger to allow dogs to sniff them before playing with those dogs and to avoid dogs that are roaming in packs.

The committee thought it would be a good idea to have a separate dog park for problem dogs and stray dogs without owners. Those animals without owners would be provided food if they were seen to be at risk of becoming aggressive. Efforts would be made to find homes for stray dogs. But if homes could not be found, then stray dogs would be neutered and left to reside in either of the two dog parks where other dogs would be present.

#### *Consultation*

The Council decided to take the *ad hoc* committee's recommendations and raise them at a General Membership Meeting. There was unanimous support for the public campaign and numerous ideas were shared. The General Membership Meeting itself acted as a jump start to the campaign effort by building awareness of the issue and fostering broad support for changes and education.

Other proposals, including the fenced in dog parks were viewed with more scepticism. The dog park idea was seen as problematic by some because it would potentially occupy large portions of land that could be used for other purposes. Some were concerned that a fenced in area would prevent people from easily walking within the community. There

were also issues of maintenance and visual appeal of the fence as well as enforcement of park access and use policies by dog owners.

Other members of the community thought the dog park would be a good idea and that it could be developed strategically in areas as a buffer between homes and bushy areas where bears might roam. The advantages of having a fenced in area with dogs patrolling against bears was appealing to those who saw that as a threat to the safety of children in some of the more wooded areas of the community.

### *Coordination*

The public campaign to educate children about dog safety was seen as an initiative that would best be undertaken in collaboration with other organizations in Moose Factory and Moosonee. MoCreebec therefore decided to establish its own campaign using signage, workshops for parents and notices on local cable channels. However, the messaging was developed for anyone living in Moose Factory and Moosonee.

The MoCreebec Council also needed to work closely with the Provincial and Federal Governments to resolve land use and access issues in order to assess the feasibility of putting in place the dog parks. The permits and approvals were granted and the feasibility study showed that a two parks would be better on Moose Factory and three smaller parks would be best for Moosonee.

### *Decision*

Council decided to proceed with the public campaign to educate children on ways to prevent unintended accidents by, for example, letting dog's sniff them before petting or playing with them. Council was less certain about the dog park idea and decided to proceed with a phased approach. A pilot project to build one dog park was approved.

### *Implementation*

That following fall, MoCreebec began to implement the public campaign for children and families of children under the ages of eight years old. Ads were placed on locally owned community cable channels. There was also a social media strategy developed and initiated by staff at MoCreebec. A number of parent workshops were planned and a community walk was organized where dogs and children were given the opportunity to interact and good habits were encouraged.

The fall also saw the start of the pilot project to build an initial dog park on Moose Factory Island behind the MoCreebec office buildings. The location would permit MoCreebec staff to monitor the progress with compliance of park policies and it also provided a one-stop location for those dropping their children off to the day-care centre. They could also now drop off their pets at the same time.

### *Evaluation*

Over the course of a year the public campaign and the pilot dog park were initiatives were implemented. These efforts were closely monitored and participants were encouraged to report issues or ongoing concerns throughout the stages of implementation. The active feedback allowed MoCreebec staff in charge to evaluate the success of the programs and whether it was worth while expanding the efforts going forward.

The *ad hoc* committee that had been formed at the start of the process was re-established and tasked with evaluating the success of these two policy initiatives. The conclusions helped formulate further policies and projects. The committee proposed the campaign continue on a bi-annual basis. It was also suggested that an additional two dog parks be built with a few alterations from the original pilot project.



## MODULE TWELVE: POLITICAL ECONOMY

### *Purpose*

Module twelve serves as both a summary of and an addition to many of the previous modules. To some, the topic of political economy may be viewed as too academic and having little bearing on issues of daily living. However, such a view is far from accurate. Political economy, as explained in this module, goes to the core of the MoCreebec community's potential. At the end of the day, all decisions made on behalf of the community are made from political economy perspectives. Whether this is recognized and understood, or not, is another matter.

Political economy was so important to the creators of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework that they included reference to this concept in the Constitution itself. It is there for a reason. That reason and rationale needs to be discovered by each and every member of the MoCreebec community. It is by gaining an understanding of the broader implications of political economy that MoCreebec members will be able to contribute to the decisions and policies, and ultimately the future, of the MoCreebec community, in the places they call home.

### *Simply Put, What is Political Economy?*

Political economy can be defined as the rules, structures, procedures, and policies that are in place to make decisions about the acquisition and allocation of resources for the purposes of self-governance and self-determination.

What are rules? Rules in most cases are laws. However, MoCreebec does not currently make laws, *per se*. The MoCreebec Council does, however, table resolutions, which create precedents for future decision-making.

What are structures? Structures, e.g. leadership or program structures, are the backbone of the MoCreebec as an organization. Structure permits the acquisition and allocation of resources in an efficient and effective manner.

What are procedures and policies? These have been covered in greater detail in the previous module of the *Toolkit*. Procedures and policies are written and non-written (verbal) elements that contribute to implementing decisions.

### *Self-Governance and Self-Determination*

The ultimate aims and objectives of political economy are to support self-governance and self-determination. It should be highlighted that these aims and objectives are undermined by narrow focus on self-interest and personal gain. Political economy should therefore be viewed as an “instrument” that can either be used for good, or not. Political economy also deals with “incentives”. Creating the right incentives for decision-making and action is key to the political economy discussion.

Political economy at its best can result in a community and individuals achieving their potential. Political economy at its worst can undermine the achievement of community potential and, ultimately, undermines the full potential of individuals. The aims and the objectives of political economy must be framed in terms of the common interest. Common interests should be the focus for developing the rules, structures, procedures and policies that build sustainable practices for acquisition and allocation of resources.

### *Acquisition of Resources*

MoCreebec, as a service-oriented, community organization is rightly concerned with the need to acquire resources, i.e. human, capital, financial, social, political, technological, and legal resources. In order to provide services and programming to the community, resources



are needed. Expansion of resources permits wider scope of programing. Again, it is worth framing the discussion in terms of potentiality and actuality. Acquiring resources builds potential. Allocating resources strategically and responsibly builds our present reality.

Acquiring resources should be done in a principled manner. Decisions to seek funding from some sources may come with strings attached or significant administrative burdens. These issues should be weighed when evaluating the desirability of going after funds from different sources. Liabilities are also an issue. Acquiring resources may seem to be a straight-forward process but it requires due diligence and risk management. It may also require evaluation of “opportunity costs”.

An opportunity cost is the cost of doing one thing when doing so closes another door. This occurs when two opportunities are mutually exclusive. Some funding sources only allow you to apply and receive funding once. If another more important issue comes up, and funds have previously been received, then the resources may not be available when needed most. These and other considerations should be taken into account when weighing options.

Another issue to keep in mind with acquiring resources is that sometimes the political or social costs do not warrant the additions. It can happen that signing a certain agreement could mean MoCreebec members lose their ability to manage other resources. This can happen when there are conditions attached to an agreement. It is often the case with signing impact-benefit agreements that compensation is given because of damages. The issue then becomes whether those damages or the risks involved warrant considering the benefits.

Acquiring resources also involves maintaining or increasing their capacity. This is particularly the case with human resources. Staff members

of MoCreebec’s various for-profit and non-profit entities should be given the means to build their capacity and skills. The same is true of Clan Council Reps and others involved in the management of programs and services.

The main point to remember is that not all resources are used for the same purposes. Human resources need to be managed and built up. Financial resources should be properly managed but inevitably are spent to acquire other types of physical resources or to improve upon those already in place. Since no resource is infinite, diversification is a good approach to resource management.

### *Allocation of Resources*

Having resources is just as challenging, if not more so, as not having enough of them. There are other issues and concerns that arise when resources are in abundance. The main concern becomes *what to do with them?* It turns out this is no easy question to answer. It is often easier to build consensus and focus around the need to find resources, then it is to build consensus and focus around how to allocate those very same resources once obtained.

Political economy is concerned with these questions. Political economy focuses attention on the rules, structures, procedures, and policies that will best help a community manage and allocate its resources. Politics is not something to be despised, it should be embraced as the natural evolution towards building consensus around common interests. Politics is not merely about advancing self-interests, it is primarily concerned with directing and focusing self-interests towards common interests. *When politics achieves this, it achieves its highest purpose.*

Not everyone thinks alike. That is a good thing. But what does it mean to dialogue about priorities when there is disagreement

among members of a community. This is the essence of the political process. Agreement must be generated, developed, and fostered. It takes effort, but that effort generates lasting results. The political process is a participatory process that involves sharing and exchange of ideas. Embracing a politics of openness and dialogue builds capacity and ultimately some form of consensus.

The important point to remember is as long as self-interests are directed towards achieving common-interests, then the political process is set on solid foundations. It is when the aims of politics reverse and common-interests are used to serve private-interests that the process breaks down and the foundations of a political economy are undermined.

The second part of political economy is the economic factors that must be considered by the political leadership. Economics concerns development. In MoCreebec's case, the focus is on community economic development. The question to ask is: *How should MoCreebec invest its resources to raise the standard of living of its members and support the community to become increasingly self-reliant and independent?*

The answer to this question is the often elusive yet ever present objective of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework. It is elusive because the context of the MoCreebec community is constantly evolving. It is ever present because the need is always palpable, in one form or another, for every generation.

The economics of political economy has to do with understanding the "drivers" of change in the local, regional, and broader economy that MoCreebec is a part of. Different sectors of the economy have different drivers. In turn, those drivers vary slightly depending on the local dynamics and strength of infrastructure. Making political economy decisions requires having a good appreciation for these drivers.

Finally, this takes us back to the political side of the political economy equation: MoCreebec is like a canoe on course towards an island. If the weather is stormy and a strong wind is against the canoe, then the paddlers will have to work very hard to move against the wind and waves and still stay on course to arrive at the spot on the island where camp is located.

On the other hand, even if the weather is calm and the water smooth, the paddlers will still need to make an effort to stay course and reach their desired destination. Political economy is similar to canoeing. It requires constant attention and effort to balance the forces that can send a canoe off course. It is certainly easier to paddle when there is no strong wind against the paddlers. However, sometimes a strong wind can play to one's advantage. But even if the wind is in the same direction one still needs to work at staying balanced to not tip over in the waves.

Moreover, the wind can pick up at any time or change direction. The MoCreebec leadership, like paddlers, need to be ever vigilant of the signs that a wind is picking up or changing direction. Reaching shore depends upon it.

### ***Political Economy and the Constitution***

In many ways, the MoCreebec Constitution is like a life jacket or a floatation device that accompanies a paddler in the canoe. Sure, the life jacket may not always be worn, but it is within arm's reach. Likewise, the Constitution may not always be referenced, but it is always guiding the decisions of those in leadership.

The Constitution should not be changed arbitrarily. If constantly tampered with, it will lose its ability to function during a crisis or an emergency. A key part of political economy is to make sure decisions made do not harm or undermine the Constitution. Decisions made should rather support and sustain its integrity.

### *Political Economy of Land and Resources*

It was mentioned earlier that the primary concerns of political economy are to acquire and to allocate resources. It is worth making a distinction between some types of resources. The land and the “resources” found on or under the surface of that land are not the types of resources that were being referred to in previous sections of this module. The earlier discussion concerned financial, human, and other physical and non-physical resources other than land-based resources.

Traditionally, land-based resources have been considered a shared resource not owned or used by any particular individual. That tradition continues to this day. Land-based resources are truly a common-interest held in trust and requiring stewardship, not control. These views affect the way in which the MoCreebec community views land-based resource development as a means of acquiring other resources that can bring material wealth to the members of the community.

MoCreebec also finds itself in a unique situation. Members of MoCreebec are members of the broader community of First Nations in Canada. MoCreebec members therefore have special rights to access and use land-based resources in the Moose River region. However, MoCreebec members residing in Moose Factory and Moosonee share these resources with other First Nations communities that have signed Treaties granting Territorial Rights to lands in the Moose River Basin.

MoCreebec is therefore an equal partner in preserving the land-based resources of the region but an unequal partner in the political economy of those land-based resources. This inevitably impacts the decision-making status MoCreebec maintains when it comes to access to benefits from impacts relating to resource

(i.e. land-based) developments. MoCreebec is impacted by these developments. It has a stake in their outcomes. The community has traditional access claims. Maintaining a stable position for MoCreebec in discussions around land-based resource development is therefore a primary (political economy) concern of the MoCreebec Council and community.

### *Decision-Making and Political Economy*

Decision-making is what political economy is all about. Firstly, decisions are made about whether and how to access resources (e.g. financial). Secondly, decisions are made about the rules, structures, processes and policies to put in place to manage those resources. Thirdly, decisions are made about where and how to allocate resources. Finally, decisions are made about the right balance between protection or preservation and development of land-based natural resources.

All of the aforementioned areas for decisions are key to the sustainability and growth of the MoCreebec community; cultural, political, and economic growth and sustainability. Decisions may appear simple but the impacts can begin to magnify over time as they either improve or diminish the potential of the community as a whole and individual members.

Fortunately, MoCreebec’s guiding principles are there to assist with high-impact decisions.

### *Political Economy and Guiding Principles*

When political economy decisions are taken in light of guiding principles, e.g. the common good, the outcomes of such decisions benefit the entire community. However, if decisions are isolated from guiding principles, then the outcomes tend to serve the interests of only a select group of individuals. The spirit of the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework aims to protect against abuse and mismanagement of the affairs of the MoCreebec people.

The task of ensuring the spirit of the framework is respected is the responsibility of all members of the MoCreebec community. However, it is the role of the leadership, in particular, to assure that decisions are being made in accordance with the principles and spirit of the Constitutional Framework.

### *Equality*

The principle of equality is fundamental to understanding what the Constitution has in mind for MoCreebec's political economy. It is, however, concerned more with allocation rather than acquisition of resources. Equality of opportunity is critical to assuring that decisions are taken for the benefit of the entire community. Every member of MoCreebec has a potential to realize. The potential of any one individual member is of equal value to that of another.

Equal opportunity should be given to help all members of the community realize their full potential as members of the community. As long as an individual is willing to do their part to realize their potential, then MoCreebec is obliged to correspond on the basis of equal access to opportunities. If opportunities are limited, then equality of opportunity should translate into allocation based on merit or open and transparent program criteria.

### *Independence*

Independence is related to freedom but also closely tied to responsibility. Responsibility is discussed later. Freedom comes in degrees. We are never completely free of conditions and circumstances but our decisions can still be shaped by a sense of ownership for our future. Independence can be described as the maximization of options.

Options provide degrees of freedom. The more degrees of freedom we have the more flexible we are at adapting to unchangeable

circumstances and conditions. Independence is therefore about protecting the freedom or option to decide. Improving the degrees of freedom of MoCreebec is of primary concern to the political economy of the community.

### *Interdependence*

In order for the political and economic considerations of the community to coincide in such a way that personal-interests become directed towards and aligned with common-interests, a sense of interdependence must be fostered by the members of MoCreebec. It is only by fostering a sense of interdependence that people will begin to direct their personal-interests towards achieving the full potential of the community.

Political economy decisions should weigh the extent to which the goal of interdependence and cohesion is being fostered and enabled. For example, viewing the Cree Village Eco Lodge as a training facility encourages parents and youth to value its potential as a means of helping members of the community develop skills, knowledge and experience on the job. Investing in the Eco Lodge has multiple goals, some of which cannot be explained in purely financial terms. The community-wide benefit and the ability to foster a sense of cohesion and interdependence is of significant value.

### *Participation*

Creating opportunities for members of MoCreebec to participate in the acquisition and allocation of resources is also important. Not only is it important to involve community in decision-making, especially when it comes to high-impact decisions, it is also important to engage members of the community in the process of acquiring and allocating resources.

When people participate in processes they gain an appreciation for how things work and hopefully begin to see a value in supporting

the MoCreebec community through broader volunteer efforts. It is also through engaged participation that members of the community begin to see opportunities for advancing their personal-interests in alignment with the common community-level interests. This is how community spirit is born and sustained.

### *Self-Reliance*

With independence and, yes, interdependence comes self-reliance. Self-reliance is a product of both having the ability and access to the support network, i.e. social capital. Self-reliant is not the same thing as self-sufficient. No one is entirely self-sufficient. We all need networks of support. Being self-reliant means that the focus is on the ability of the individual to care for their essential needs in a pro-active way.

The MoCreebec Constitutional Framework envisioned that members of the community would be self-reliant within their family units. The family is the core of the community. It is MoCreebec's aim and mandate to support the core groups of the community, families. In turn, families support the individual members of the community. In order for MoCreebec to play this role it too must be self-reliant. By being self-reliant it sets an example to families, who in turn set the example for each and every member of the community.

### *Common Good*

One can never overestimate the importance of the common good. Sure, the common good is difficult to define sometimes. It can be interpreted in different ways. It seems to shift around like a moving target. However, when it comes down to it, the common good is the “stuff of political economy”. It is the role of those involved in political economy to improve their ability to aim at a moving target. Leaders must remain vigilant to the challenges and priorities of the MoCreebec community.

Those involved in making decisions that affect the political economy of MoCreebec are accountable to the common good. They are responsible for seeking out the direction that will best serve the common-interests of the community and align individual self-interests towards building a self-reliant community.

### *Accountability*

Accountability is not only a guiding principle, it is a core value for political economy issues. Accountability goes to the root of decisions about acquiring and allocating resources. The rules, structures, processes and policies of the for-profit and non-profit entities should be directed towards being accountable to the MoCreebec Council, the Clan families, and ultimately to the entire membership.

Accountability is not only an issue relating to the use of financial resources. Accountability is equally important for human resources. Staff of MoCreebec should also see themselves as accountable to and serving the interests of the broader community. On the job training in ethical practices is important. In particular, employees of the various entities overseen by the MoCreebec Council should prevent, as much as possible, putting themselves into conflict of interest situations.

### *Responsibility*

Responsibility is essentially the “ability to respond”. The question is, respond to what? As it relates to political economy, the ability to respond deals with taking action in three key areas: identifying resources, consulting with the community, and implementing services. These are the three areas where MoCreebec, as an organization, has responsibility for the political economy of the community.

At the individual level, community members must be willing and able to respond through participation in consultation processes.



### *Sharing*

At first glance, one might think that sharing has little relevance to a discussion about politics and economics. Once again, such a view would be missing the point and also missing an opportunity. Sharing should be a core value of political economy. Not all resources are financial in nature and therefore not everything has to be justified in reference to budgets. Members of the MoCreebec community can also share their time and talents in the form of volunteerism.

If the political economy of MoCreebec only depended upon financial resources that were administered through “transactions”, then the community would face a huge vulnerability. There are many aspects of a community’s political economy that can be supported through “in-kind” contributions of talent and time. Often it is through volunteer initiatives that the common-interests of the community can be supported by individual self-interests. Volunteering can be a way of accumulating valuable experience that builds character and compliments work-place skills.

### *Kindness*

If you thought sharing had little place in a discussion about political economy, you will probably think kindness is even less relevant. Once again, you would be mistaken. Kindness is, like sharing, a choice. It is a disposition and a mindset. One could even argue kindness is a “way of life”. To the extent that kindness is a way of life for those tasked with making choices and deciding upon issues of political economy, the community is in good hands.

If the mental models of those making the most important decisions for the future of a community are not based on kindness, then it will be based on some other value that will not lead to identifying the common good.

### *Strength*

Strength comes with integrity. Political economy is also about building institutions that have integrity and derive their strength from rules, structures, procedures and policies that aim to build lasting and sustainable achievements. Strength also comes from supporting the integrity of the Constitutional Framework. Respect for the Constitution goes to the heart of making the political economy of the MoCreebec community strong.

Strength comes with the ability to make the right (political economy) decisions for the common-interests of the community despite the challenges and distractions of individual self-interests. This type of strength is what leadership is all about. Strength also demands accountability and responsibility because without these, the integrity of the MoCreebec institution becomes weak. A weak institution that lacks integrity cannot be strong.

### *Honesty*

In order to increase the integrity and strength of an institution, there must be an honest willingness to see where there are weaknesses and vulnerabilities. It is also important to be honest in assessing these vulnerabilities and in addressing them proactively. Correcting for weaknesses, which are present in every institution, requires honesty and strength. Honesty is at the root of any “virtuous cycle” where continuous improvement is possible.

For example, it does not make sense to first invest in new forms of energy when a building itself is leaky and poorly insulated. It might be the most attractive option but it would not be the best decision. It takes honesty to admit the best course of action would be to invest in efforts at insulating a building before finding ways to cut the cost of energy by generating it as opposed to purchasing it from the grid.



### *Collective Wisdom*

We now turn our attention to what is perhaps the most central principle in the *Toolkit* and in the Constitutional Framework for political economy decisions, collective wisdom. Our elders lived on the land and made use of the resources at their disposal in a sustainable way. It was their ability to survive and learn from the land the virtues and values of a life respecting the guiding principles included in this *Toolkit*.

Collective wisdom is a collection of traditional knowledge and experience that provides perspective and directs decisions and choices. Collective wisdom is also helpful when it comes to identifying community-level issues that require urgent or immediate attention. Collective wisdom is what elders possess as a contribution to the MoCreebec Council. It is for this reason that an Elders Council is key to supporting the strength and integrity of the work undertaken by MoCreebec institutions.

Members of the MoCreebec community should be encouraged to take advantage of and provided with opportunities to learn from the collective wisdom of their elders, those living and those that have passed away. Stories and traditions passed on from generation to generation are the tools by which collective wisdom is transferred to the youth, who then become tomorrow's elders.

Elders too should seek to become worthy of respect and set the example for youth of the values and virtues that will sustain them and the MoCreebec community now and into the future. MoCreebec should aim to create as many opportunities for elders and youth to interact. Decisions made in light of political economy considerations shape, either directly or indirectly, the ability of the community to maintain its multi-generational practices and values of interdependency.

### ***“Political Economy Value Chain” Holistic Approach***

The following is a breakdown of the various components of a “value chain”, as they pertain to the political economy of the MoCreebec community and as depicted in *Figure 2*. A value chain is a conceptual tool that helps with visualizing the core operational aspects of what drives the creation of value in an organizational setting. In this case, the organization is the MoCreebec Eeyoud.

The value of the “value chain” is derived from gaining perspective about the linkages and ties between activities that can often best be understood as “operations” and “overhead”. A value chain is divided between primary activities and support activities. Value chains are more common in business operations where products are produced but the tool is also relevant to service oriented operations.

MoCreebec exists in large part to provide a means for addressing the socio-economic and socio-political needs of the MoCreebec people. With this in mind, the MoCreebec value chain looks at “primary activities” as those activities that are oriented towards serving the members of the MoCreebec community. “Support activities” are those that build the capacity to deliver “primary activities”. The ultimate objective of both primary and support activities is to provide membership and community-level benefits.

As *Figure 2* highlights, benefits to individual members and the broader community are increased when each activity is strengthened and when there are strong linkages between activities and activity groups (i.e. primary and support activities). The purpose of this section is therefore to show how each activity is key to building a strong value chain. As with all chains, they are only as strong as the weakest link. This is true of MoCreebec's value chain.

### *Primary Activities*

Primary activities are those that directly affect the membership. They form a grouping of sequential activities that ultimately lead to program and service delivery. Activities of a primary nature can be viewed much like an assembly line where one part is built onto another. In the case of MoCreebec's political economy, the "product" is actually delivered as a program or a service to membership.

### *Funding and Resource Generation*

It has already been stated in this module that political economy is essentially concerned with the acquisition and allocation of resources. The primary activities in the value chain are therefore concerned with either one or the other, acquisition or allocation of resources. It is important to see funding and resource generation as a key component and starting point of providing sustainable service delivery to MoCreebec members.

As an ongoing activity, funding and resource generation is closely linked with the next primary activity but it is also closely linked to two of the support activities, i.e. Chief and Council decision-making and strategic agreements, partnerships and procurement. Acquiring resources should be considered with careful attention to these other, closely linked, activities. Paying attention to these connections builds and adds value.

### *Financial Management and Investment Strategy*

Financial management and investing is a primary activity because it directly affects the quality and sustainability of membership programs and services. Anyone who has worked in a finance related field can confirm that "cash flow" is key to staying solvent and operational. Managing cash flows and financial resource transactions is vital to design and delivery of programs and services.

As mentioned in the previous section, financial management and investment strategies are linked to funding and resource generation. It is likewise closely connected to all the support activities. It is at this stage in the value chain that decisions are made to allocate resources between a mix of direct (primary) and indirect (support) activities.

### *Program, Policy, and Economic Development*

After decisions have been made about the allocation of financial and other resources, the next question that arises is what programs, policies and economic development initiatives should be put in place to set up the structures for delivery of services. Programs, policies and economic development initiatives are the front line activities of MoCreebec as a not-for-profit and community-based organization.

Designing programs, policies and economic development initiatives is closely linked to two support activities, human resource training and technology and infrastructure development. Human resources, technology, and infrastructure are key to assessing the feasibility of programs, policies and initiatives.

### *Communications, Community Engagement, and Participation*

Programs, policies and initiatives need to be effectively communicated to the members of the community. This can often require efforts to engage and seek the participation of Clan families and the general membership. Success requires participation and engagement. Full participation and engagement require effective communication between MoCreebec staff and the broader community membership.

This particular primary activity is closely tied to a number of important support activities, including human resource training, technology and infrastructure development, and Chief and Council decision-making.

### *Program and Service Delivery*

The final activity in the primary activity group is program and service delivery. This activity is at the front-lines of efforts to deliver benefits to individual members and the community in general. Program and service delivery is one of the main objectives of the MoCreebec corporate entities. Providing programs and services that meet the needs of membership is what led to the Constitution in 1993. The Constitution states that it is about opening up opportunities for the community.

Program and service delivery require support from Chief and Council as well as the three other support activities. Human resources are key to delivery of programs and services. Staff require training and development to do this. Technology and infrastructure support service and program delivery. Moreover, partnerships and strategic agreements help strengthen the linkages between outside resources and those available within the community.

### *Support Activities*

Support activities are those that have an indirect impact on MoCreebec membership. That is not to say that membership is not directly involved in some aspects of these activities, e.g. voting on whether to agree to the terms of a strategic agreement, but the impact on program and service delivery for individual members remains indirect. Support activities are like cleaning one's fishing net. If they are not done regularly, then the value of the primary activity, i.e. fishing, will diminish.

### *Chief and Council Decision-Making*

Perhaps the most important support activity in the political economy value chain, Chief and Council decision-making is dealt with in great detail throughout the *Toolkit*. The function of making decisions can be viewed in two principle ways, as due diligence and as a

means of providing focus and direction. The decision-making function does not always speed things up but that is not its purpose.

Chief and Council support the value chain in assuring primary activities are consistent with the principles, purpose and objectives of the Constitutional Framework. Chief and Council decision-making is likewise concerned with “steering” or directing the programs and services in a way that provides a sustainable political economy. The fact that Chief and Council decision-making is a support activity does not in any way reduce its core value.

### *Human Resource Training and Development*

All of the primary activities, and for that matter all of the support activities, require staff and individuals with knowledge, skills and experience. Even training and human resource development requires trainers who are skilled in providing training and mentoring to others. This support activity therefore is principally concerned with identifying and addressing any weak links in the value chain.

Political economy is strengthened when there is a pool of highly skilled individuals willing and able to contribute to the common good, either through paid or volunteer capacities. Training and development are essential for building a strong and viable community and in supporting the entire political economy value chain. Increased capacity is at the core of supporting the full realization of potential.

### *Technology and Infrastructure Development*

Many programs and services would not be feasible to implement or practical to deliver if there was no infrastructure to do so. The same would be true with a lack of technology. Communicating and engaging with members of the community would be more difficult if existing technology was not in place. It is critical, therefore, to maintain such resources.

As mentioned above, technology and infrastructure development is closely linked to communications, community engagement, and participation. It is critical to program and service delivery. Chief and Council will, from time to time, need to make decisions about upgrading, maintaining and acquiring new technologies and infrastructure.

### *Strategic Agreements, Partnerships and Procurement*

The acquisition and allocation of resources is often the result of strategic agreements, partnerships, and procurement arrangements. It is vital to have such agreements and partnerships in place in order to provide real benefits to members of the community. The political economy process is perhaps best recognized for its channeling through these support activities and the interaction with Chief and Council decision-making.

The right combination of agreements and partnerships can become a significant source of opportunities for MoCreebec membership. However, the wrong combination of agreements and partnerships can create limits on the achievement of the community's full potential. It is therefore key for decisions to be made in a way that balances current needs with future anticipated needs. Agreements and partnerships also need to be maintained and sustained. Failing to do so will impact primary activities, e.g. program and service delivery.

### *Benefits: Membership and Community*

The MoCreebec Constitutional Framework specifically mentions access to benefits under the *JBNQA*. However, what is implied by the Constitutional Framework is that such benefits would be allocated to members through the MoCreebec governance structure. Even if members of MoCreebec are, under the *JBNQA*, considered beneficiaries, they are

first and foremost beneficiaries under the MoCreebec Constitutional Framework.

The political economy value chain provides a conceptual framework to see how MoCreebec goes about creating benefits to individual members of the community and to building whole-of-community benefits that support the common good of all members. Individual members benefit when the community benefits, and *vice versa*.

Benefits are the result of acquiring resources, managing those resources well, putting in place well-run programs and services, and delivering those services with skill and attention to the needs of individual members. When this process is supported by strong capacity and good decision-making, the entire community benefits in addition to individuals.

### *Value Added through Linkages*

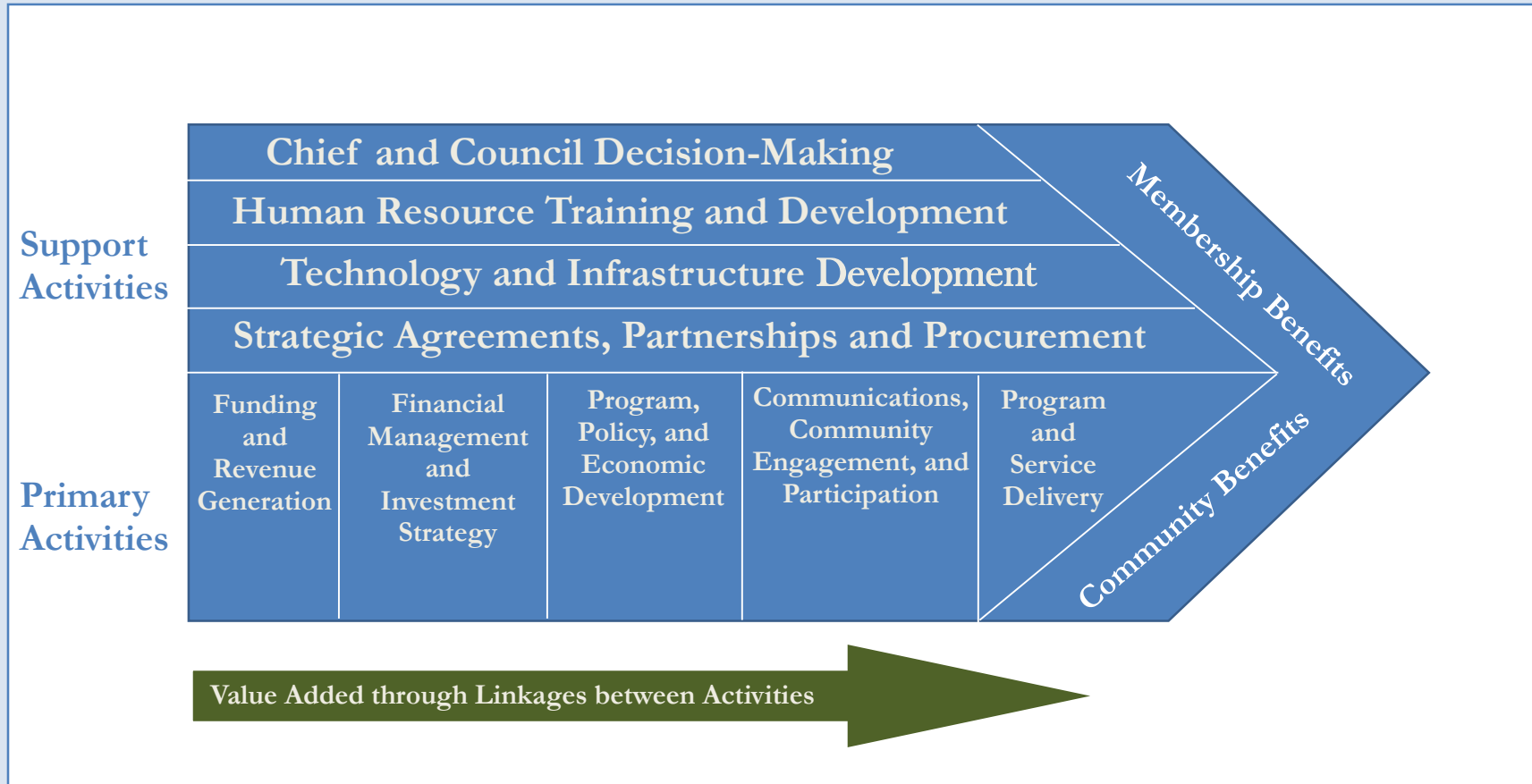
The value chain is about creating value from linkages between primary and support activities that relate to the political economy of the MoCreebec community. When linkages are identified, supported and maintained, then the ability to constantly improve on program and service delivery becomes second nature.

Value in political economy is derived from linkages. These linkages are key to building a system that generates benefits to individual members and to the broader community as a whole. The *Toolkit* has put forward a number of ideas and tools for building a holistic approach to generating value for the people of the MoCreebec community.

The value chain is also useful in visualizing the process for actualizing the potential of individual members and the potential of the entire MoCreebec community. The following diagram puts these concepts into a format that can easily be reviewed and discussed in detail.

Figure 2: MoCreebec Political Economy Value Chain

# Political Economy Value Chain



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This section will provide some definitions of terms included in the toolkit that might need more elaboration and clarification.