
POLICY TITLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY NUMBER CPOL/GOV025

ENABLING LEGISLATION

Section 55 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires Council to adopt and maintain a Community Engagement Policy.

1. PURPOSE

Effective community engagement enables the public to participate in decisions that have an impact on their lives.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the:

- Community Engagement Principles that Council will follow
- types and form of community engagement proposed, including our deliberative engagement practices
- Types of documents which the policy will be applied to
- the process for informing the community about the process and its outcomes.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to Councillors, Council officers, consultants and contractors.

3. DEFINITIONS

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2):	The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is an international organisation dedicated to advancing the practice of public participation.
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4. THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Council's community engagement process gives effect to the community engagement principles, set out in section 56 of the Act:

- a community engagement process must have a clearly defined objective and scope;
- participants in community engagement must have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation;
- participants in community engagement must be representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of the community engagement;
- participants in community engagement are entitled to reasonable support to enable meaningful and informed engagement; and
- participants in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will influence Council decision making.

5. POLICY

The Community Engagement Policy will be applied at the planning stage of any project or initiative, when a change in service, activities or infrastructure is considered, when an issue is raised and requires a decision or when more information or evidence is required.

Engagement may be required at multiple stages within a project, program or development.

Council will:

- ensure that the purpose of community engagement is genuine and adheres to the principles of this policy
- adjust the type and form of community engagement depending on the complexity and significance of the matter, such as to inform the development of the Council Plan, Budget, Local Laws, Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan. This may include the establishment of advisory groups and steering committees or special one-off forums/conferences to be a part of appropriate engagement.
- use the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum to assist with selecting the level of participation, including when deliberative practices should be applied;
- ensure there is consideration given to value for money, principles and scale of engagement required, in line with the IAP2 spectrum;
- make sure the information provided to the community is clear, easy to understand and accessible to all people
- clearly communicate which aspects of the engagement are negotiable, and which are not negotiable. For example, some processes and projects are mandated by other tiers of government, which limits Councils ability to influence or amend the process
- use various techniques and approaches to maximise public participation within reasonable timeframes
- inform the community about how their input has influenced the final outcome or decision; and
- undertake regular reviews of our engagement activities to promote continuous improvement of our engagement practices.

Our Community Engagement Guidelines outlines our community engagement process, and the document is available on our website.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to council processes such as service requests, complaints or consultation activities prescribed in other legislation, such as those related to planning permit applications and planning scheme amendments, governed by the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

6. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

PRO/GOV025 Community Engagement Guidelines

POL/GOV017 Social Media Policy

CPOL/GOV026 Model Councillor Code of Conduct

CPOL/GOV003 Media Policy

POL/CORP211 Privacy Policy

POL/STAFF127 Employee Code of Conduct

7. RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1989

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Disability Act 2006

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2004

Road Management Act 2004

Multicultural Victoria Act 2011

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Gender Equality Act 2020

Public Administration Act 2004

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

8. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	February 2021	Initial release
1.1	March 2022	Review
2.0	March 2026	Major review

Signed: Stuart King

Mayor

Date: 19 May 2026