

# GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

Policy Number **X.X**

## Community Engagement Policy

Version 1.0

Adopted by Council **Day Month Year**

<b>Business Unit:</b>	Community Strengthening
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Manager Neighbourhoods
<b>Approved By:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Next Review:</b>	February 2021

**DOCUMENT REVISIONS**

<b>Version #</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Date Adopted</b>

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Engagement Policy is to formalise Council's commitment to engaging with the Greater Shepparton community through the use of appropriate, effective and inclusive community engagement practices.

The policy recognises the need to customise community engagement methods and processes, and community engagement can be dependent upon the topic/issue and/or any legislative requirements.

## OBJECTIVE

1. To inform and strengthen Council's community engagement by encouraging a consistent, responsive and considered community engagement approach and methodology with the ultimate aim of strengthening our community through leadership, decision making, and advocacy.
2. To ensure community engagement is integrated into Council activities to inform decision making, foster relationships, and encourage capacity development.

## SCOPE

This Policy outlines Council's position, role and commitment in regards to community engagement across the organisation and is applied at all levels.

This policy applies to all Council Officers, Councillors, and Council engaged consultants providing a guide for all forms of engagement with the Greater Shepparton community.

## DEFINITIONS

Reference term	Definition
Accessibility	Undertaking community engagement in a manner that considers needs of individuals and specific groups of people – for example: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, vulnerable, aged, and disabled.
Community	People who live, work, visit or utilise services and amenities in the Greater Shepparton Local Government Area.
Community Engagement	An interactive process providing a range of opportunities for community to inform decision making, foster relationships and encourage capacity development.
IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation	The International Association for Public Participation's Spectrum which helps define the public's role in any participation process. (Attachment 1)

## KEY TERMS

Council	Greater Shepparton City Council
Policy	Greater Shepparton City Council Community Engagement Policy
Procedure	Greater Shepparton City Council Community Engagement Procedure
Toolkit	Greater Shepparton City Council Community Engagement Toolkit

## POLICY

### 1. Our Commitment

- I. We will ensure that the purpose of our engagement is clear, relevant and the methods used are well suited to generate highly effective community engagement.
- II. We will provide information that is easy to understand and accessible.
- III. We will act transparently and use a range of methods to enable everyone to have a voice on matters of importance to them. We will provide engagement opportunities that are mutually respectful, undertaken in reasonable timeframes and with a shared understanding of how the input received will inform decision making processes.
- IV. We will value all participants' knowledge, expertise and experiences, acknowledging that everyone has different views and needs.
- V. We will undertake evaluation processes to continually improve our approach to community engagement.
- VI. We will report back to our community in a timely manner about how their input was considered and influenced the final outcome.
- VII. We will use information provided by community engagement to advocate on behalf of our community to relevant parties.
- VIII. We will recognise there will be differences of opinion.
- IX. We will conduct all community engagement within legislative requirements.

### 2. Values and guiding principles of Council's Community Engagement

- I. Respect first, always
- II. Take ownership
- III. Courageously lead
- IV. Working Together

- V. Continually innovate
- VI. Start the celebration

### **3. Policy Application**

- I. When conducting community engagement Council will be guided by the Procedure and utilise the tools provided in the Toolkit.

### **4. Community Engagement Principles**

- I. The purpose of community engagement is varied, and is modelled on the IAP2 levels<sup>i</sup> of:
  - i. Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
  - ii. Consult - To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
  - iii. Involve - To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
  - iv. Collaborate - To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
  - v. Empower - To place final decision making in the hands of the public.IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process.
- II. Community engagement can be voluntary or may be a legislative requirement as per Section 208B and Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act).
- III. Whilst the *Local Government Act 1989* and a range of other legislation set out minimum requirements for some specific consultations, each engagement process needs to be considered on its individual basis and merits. In many instances Council will exceed the minimum requirements to gain a strong understanding of our community's wants and needs to ensure we are achieving the best possible outcomes for our community.

### **5. Strategic Link**

Community engagement is a core process that needs to underpin the Council Plan and Integrated Planning Framework and ensures that community needs and aspirations are considered in developing and implementing Council's strategic directions and priorities.

### **6. Procedure**

*Greater Shepparton City Council Community Engagement Procedure* outlines the process and procedure for conducting community engagement.

## 7. Toolkit

*Greater Shepparton City Council Community Engagement Toolkit* provides Council Officers with the tools to conduct community engagement.

### RELATED POLICIES AND CORPORATE PROCEDURES

- Community Engagement Corporate Procedure (if adopted)
- Community Planning Policy 55.POL1
- Council Plan 2017-2021
- Emergency Communications Plan, Greater Shepparton Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Greater Shepparton City Council Code of Conduct
- Language Services Corporate Procedure 02.PRO2
- Privacy Policy 37.POL12
- Right to Make a Submission Corporate Procedure

### RELATED LEGISLATION

- Local Government Act 1989
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

### REVIEW

The Manager Neighbourhoods Department will be responsible for reviewing this Policy every two years, and within six months of a general election.

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**Peter Harriott**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

**Date**

## ATTACHMENTS


### IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

#### Attachment 1: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation<sup>ii</sup>

## IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC		We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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<sup>i</sup> IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:  
[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum\\_8.5x11\\_Print.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf) . Reproduced with permission from the IAP2 Federation.

<sup>ii</sup> IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:  
[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum\\_8.5x11\\_Print.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf) . Reproduced with permission from the IAP2 Federation.

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