



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY TYPE	POLICY ADOPTED (DATE)	MINUTE NUMBER	POLICY DOCUMENT NUMBER (TRIM)
Council	22 July 2019	153/19	D594695
DOCUMENT CONTROLLER	RESPONSIBLE MANAGER	STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2030 (STRATEGY REFERENCE)	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW
Community Services Manager	General Manager	5.2.1 – Encourage community participation initiatives that support two-way communication and consultation which results in increased engagement	July 2021
PURPOSE	To outline a framework for community engagement activities conducted by Council, other than notification and consultation in accordance with statutory requirements.		
SCOPE	<p>This policy applies to Councillors, employees, volunteers, consultants and contractors in the course of Council's operations requiring community engagement.</p> <p>It outlines the principles underpinning Council's engagement activities with the community and the methods which Council may use.</p>		
DEFINITIONS	<p>To assist in the interpretation the following definitions shall apply:</p> <p>Councillors: the Mayor and Elected Members of Devonport City Council.</p> <p>Community Engagement: a planned process with the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people whether they are connected by geographic location, special interest or affiliation, to address issues affecting their wellbeing. The approach is based on a spectrum of engagement from inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower, as defined by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).</p> <p>Council: Devonport City Council.</p> <p>IAP2: International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).</p> <p>Stakeholder: any individual, group of individuals, organisations or entities that have or feel they have an interest, can affect or be affected by an outcome of issue or decision.</p>		
POLICY	<p>Council recognises that community engagement and participation processes are an important part of democracy. Effective engagement is good practice and critical to good local government.</p> <p>1. The Benefits of Engagement Include, but are not Limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased community awareness of Council's services, planning and program delivery; • Increased awareness across Council of community views and the issues that should be considered as part of decision making; • Increased awareness of the needs, priorities and diversity of the local community, which in turn ensures that Council's service provision and planning functions are aligned appropriately; • Increased level of community ownership and acceptance of decisions; • Council and community working together to address local issues; 		

- Potential for time, resource and cost savings for Council;
- A tool to assist in managing reputational risk.

The level of community engagement undertaken relates directly to the level of community involvement required, and should always be appropriate to the nature, complexity and impact of the issue, plan or strategy.

Council will endeavour to ensure that its engagement processes are appropriate, accessible, well planned and adequately resourced.

2. Principles

The following principles will underpin Council's approach to community engagement.

a) Open and Inclusive

- Recognise community participation as a right of all citizens and an integral component of informed decision making;
- Create, support and promote opportunities for the community to actively participate;
- Encourage involvement from a wide cross section of the community using engagement processes that are accessible and inclusive;
- Openness and a commitment to ensuring that the community is well informed of Council's service delivery and decision-making processes.

b) Mutual Trust, Respect and Accountability

- Treat all participants in the engagement process with respect and dignity;
- Approach engagement from an impartial perspective, free from bias toward any stakeholder involved in the process;
- Is accountable, accessible and ethical in all dealing with the community.

c) Engage Early and Be Clear

- Seek early engagement and regularly involve the community in decision making;
- Communicate clearly the objectives of the engagement process and provide community members with all available and relevant information as part of the engagement process to ensure informed discussions;
- Communicate the parameters of the engagement process with participants from the outset including legislative requirements, Council's sphere of influence, conflicting community views, policy frameworks and context, budget restraints etc;
- Acknowledge that planning is a critical process to deliver successful outcomes and is committed to developing and implementing community engagement plans.

d) Consideration and feedback

- Commitment to demonstrating that Council have considered all community contributions and relevant data, prior to making any decisions that affect the local community;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed to providing participants with feedback at key stages throughout the projects and upon completion and how community input influenced the decision. <p>e) Skills and Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endeavour to ensure that sufficient timeframes and adequate resources are allocated to engagement processes; Co-ordinate its community engagement processes where possible to optimise resources and ensure efficiency and avoid duplication. <p>3. Community Engagement Framework This policy forms part of a broader Community Engagement Framework, which includes the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This <i>Community Engagement Policy</i>; <i>Community Engagement Matrix</i>; and <i>Community Engagement Toolkit</i>. <p>4. Privacy</p> <p>a) General Personal information obtained during and as a result of community engagement will be managed in accordance with the <i>Personal Information Act 2004</i>.</p> <p>b) Public Submissions In circumstances where the involvement requires members of the public to make submissions to Council, all submissions received will be regarded as public and made available for general access, including personal details (e.g. name, address, email address etc., unless there are overriding public interest considerations against the disclosure of the personal details – refer to <i>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2002</i>).</p> <p>5. Reporting Reports submitted to ordinary Council meetings and Council Section 23 Committee meetings shall include a standard reporting section on Community Engagement.</p>									
LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS	<p><i>Local Government Act 1993</i> <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act 2002</i> <i>Personal Information Act 2004</i> Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement, IAP2, Community Engagement Matrix Community Engagement Toolkit Communication and Media Policy Model Code of Conduct Policy Staff Code of Conduct Policy Risk Management Framework Customer Service Charter</p>									
ATTACHMENTS (IF APPLICABLE)	N/A									
TRAINING REQUIREMENTS (IF APPLICABLE)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Is training required as result of this Policy</td> <td>YES</td> <td>NO</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Training required by:</td> <td>Councillors</td> <td>Staff</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Department</td> </tr> </table>	Is training required as result of this Policy	YES	NO	Training required by:	Councillors	Staff			Department
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