



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY TYPE	DOCUMENT CONTROLLER	RESPONSIBLE MANAGER	POLICY ADOPTED	REVIEW DUE
Council	Executive Coordinator	General Manager	25 September 2023	September 2025
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To outline a framework for community engagement activities conducted by Council, other than notification and consultation, in accordance with statutory requirements.			
<b>SCOPE</b>	<p>This policy applies to Councillors, employees, volunteers, consultants and contractors when in the course of Council's operations there is a requirement for community engagement.</p> <p>It outlines the principles underpinning Council's engagement activities with the community and the engagement methods which Council may use.</p>			
<b>DEFINITIONS</b>	<p>To assist in the interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:</p> <p><b>Councillors</b> - the Mayor and Elected Members of Devonport City Council.</p> <p><b>Community Engagement</b> - 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).</p> <p><b>Council</b> - Devonport City Council.</p> <p><b>Stakeholder</b> - 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>			
<b>POLICY</b>	<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><b>1. The Benefits of Engagement include, but are not limited to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased community awareness of Council's services, planning and program delivery;</li> <li>Increased awareness across Council of community views and the issues that should be considered as part of decision making;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>Increased level of community ownership and acceptance of decisions;</li> </ul>			

- 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,

	<p>conflicting community views, policy frameworks and context, budget constraints etc;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge that planning is a critical process to deliver successful outcomes and is committed to developing and implementing community engagement plans.</li> </ul> <p>(d) Consideration and Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to demonstrating that Council have considered all community contributions and relevant data, prior to making any decisions that affect the local community;</li> <li>• Committed to providing participants with feedback at key stages throughout the projects and upon completion and how community input influenced the decision.</li> </ul> <p>(e) Skills and Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endeavour to ensure that sufficient timeframes and adequate resources are allocated to engagement processes;</li> <li>• Coordinate its community engagement processes where possible to optimise resources and ensure efficiency and avoid duplication.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Privacy</b></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 Protection Act 2004</i>.</p> <p>(b) Public Submissions In circumstances where the involvement requires members of the public to make submissions to Council, submissions received may be regarded as public and made available for general access, including personal details (e.g. name, address, email address etc. unless there are overriding personal information or privacy considerations against the disclosure of personal details – <i>Personal Information Protection Act 2004</i>.</p> <p><b>4. Reporting</b> Reports submitted to ordinary Council meetings shall include a standard reporting section on Community Engagement.</p>
<b>LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS</b>	<p><i>Local Government Act 1993</i>  <i>Personal Information Protection Act 2004</i>  Devonport City Council Strategic Plan 2009-2030  Communication and Media Policy  Model Code of Conduct Policy  Staff Code of Conduct Policy  Risk Management Framework  Customer Service Charter</p>

<b>ATTACHMENTS (IF APPLICABLE)</b>	N/A	
<b>STRATEGIC REFERENCE</b>	5.2 Promote active and purposeful community engagement and participation	
<b>MINUTE REFERENCE</b>	23/189	
<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	Update Register	Training/Communication
	Advise Document Controller	Advise HR / MCO
	Management Sign Off:    Date: 25 September 2023	