

Yarra Ranges Council

Community Engagement Policy

Summary of changes

Minor wording changes to improve clarity have been made in the draft revised Policy. Additional changes, based on internal and community feedback include:

- Stronger connection to legislative requirements.
- Removal of unclear or ambiguous statements.
- Explanation of how community engagement contributes to decision-making.
- Reordering of content to better reflect the planning of formal community engagement.
- Formatted to be more concise.

Section	Existing content in the current Policy	Proposed change & pg. number in the Draft revised policy
Acknowledgement of Country	Acknowledgement of Country	Updated to approved Council version 2023, pg. 1
Revision history table	Not included	Included, pg. 1
Administrative changes clause	Not included	Included to allow for administrative changes without Council endorsement, pg. 1
Review date	No content – broadly referred to in Section 1	Specific date included pg. 1
Introduction	Combined introduction and purpose 'What is the purpose of this policy?'	Separate introduction and purpose, pg.3 and 4
		Inclusion of reference to the unique makeup of Yarra Ranges, pg. 3
Purpose		Clarification of the purpose, pg.4
		Inclusion of commitment to gender equity, diversity and inclusion pg.4
Scope	High level, broad scope. Addressed changes to the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act).	Inclusion of 'Levels of responsibility' table, highlighting specific roles from Contractors to Councillors, pg. 5
		Inclusion of reference to the policy as only one of many resources and support available to officers, pg. 5
What is community engagement?	No specific definition	Inclusion of a clear definition specific use of 'Community Engagement' at Yarra Ranges, pg.. # aligned with the definition on pg. 5
	Levels of engagement (IAP2 spectrum) with examples of engagement tools.	Moved to the 'How we engage' section, pg. 12
	Reference to Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989	Moved to the 'How we engage' section, pg. 12
		Included other ways the community can have a say on Council matters and get involved.

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How does community engagement contribute to Council decision-making?	Not included	Inclusion of clarification of the factors considered when making decisions, including community engagement.
Community engagement principles and commitments	The commitments are grouped under themes. The diagram includes additional themes, not reflected in the principles or commitments.	Removed the diagram. Broke the commitments into dot points for clarity, pg.8-9
		Incorporated feedback and lessons learnt into the commitments.
Why we engage?	Description of benefits of community engagement for Council and the community.	Content from this section is covered in other sections. 'Why we engage' removed.
Who we engage?	Includes a list of community groups and stakeholders that may be engaged with.	Renamed 'Who Council will engage', pg.11 The list of suggested groups has been removed.
		Highlighted additional barriers for consideration by officers, pg.11
		Additional information related to the Gender Equity Act 2020 and Gender Impact Assessments as they relate to community engagement, pg. 11
When we engage?	Three lists of when we will, may and will not engage.	Renamed. The lists have been consolidated into two lists of will and will not engage.
		Any broad or unclear statements have been removed e.g. we will engage when 'changing something'
		Inclusion of an overarching statement of 'In situations when a project or issue meets criteria in both sections, the determining factor will be if there is/ is not a genuine opportunity for input to inform, change or influence a decision.
How we engage?	Outlined specific steps in community engagement planning. Based on industry standards they are widely available from other sources.	Renamed 'How Council will engage' Removed the specific steps for planning engagement. These are captured in internal resources available for officers.
Subsection: Deciding the level of engagement		Removed the example initiatives in the 'Levels of engagement' and updated the tools to be more reflective of current practice. Under the subtitle 'Deciding the level of engagement'.
Subsection: Deciding the engagement approach	Not included	New subsection. Replaced the operational steps with the following information previously in the 'What is engagement' section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - descriptions of deliberative and participatory engagement

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - determining the level of engagement - reference to Section 223 process
		Inclusion of a list of policies, processes or projects with requirements for legislated engagement and the type where relevant, pg.14
Subsection: Deciding on the tools for engagement subsection.	Content within the 'Design and Plan' specific steps	New subsection. Expanding on the considerations for selecting engagement methods. Pg.14
Subsection: What does consistency look like?	No content	New subsection. Reinforcing that while each engagement is unique, there are minimum requirements for officers to consider, to provide a consistent experience for the community. Pg.15
Other Statutory consultation	Generic information.	Removed. Content updated and incorporated into the list under subsection 'Selecting the engagement approach', pg.13
Charter of Human Rights	Reference to this legislation	Moved to new section, 'Legislative context', pg 16
Protection of privacy	Reference to Council's Privacy and Health Information Policy	Moved to new section 'Other relevant Council policies', pg. 13
Informing the community of engagement outcomes	Content within the 'Review and Respond' specific steps	New section, for clarity, pg. 16
Evaluation and performance	Content within the 'Review and Respond	New section. A clear statement on commitment to continuous improvement in community engagement, pg.16
Legislative context	No content	New section. Inclusion of more detail on the requirements for key strategic documents under the Act.pg. 16
		Inclusion of the Gender Equality Act 2020
		Inclusion of the Charter of Human Rights, previously a stand-alone section
Other relevant legislation	No content	New section, including a list of other relevant legislation, pg. 17
Relationship with Council Plan	No content	Inclusion of the connection between Council's key strategic document, the Council Plan and community engagement.pg. 17
Other relevant Council policies	No content	Inclusion of Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Privacy and Health Information Policy, under this heading pg.18
Definitions		Removed definitions for words not in the Policy. Updated to reflect concepts in the Policy, pg.18
Appendix 1	No content.	Details for community engagement on Proposing a local law and Leases as per the Act, pg. 20