



1.0 AUTHORITY

- *Local Government Act 2020*, s. 55

2.0 INTENT

The foundation of local government is built around the principles of democracy. A key hallmark of those principles is the opportunity for the community to engage and be involved in Council's decision-making processes.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Council understands the views of its municipal community as a key consideration in decision-making and to achieve compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff and Councillors undertaking, or required to undertake, **community engagement** activities and covers all forms of community consultation and engagement other than activities that must follow a **prescribed statutory process** for **community engagement**.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Community Engagement Strategy 2021-2026.

This policy is guided by the universally recognised standards for public participation developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

4.0 POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Community engagement will be conducted in accordance with the following principles which are consistent with the Community Engagement Principles set out in section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

- 4.1.1 Community engagement** is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be part of the decision-making process
- 4.1.2 Community engagement** is carefully and inclusively planned to ensure that the design, organisation, and implementation of the process serve both a clearly defined purpose and the needs of the participants
- 4.1.3 Community engagement** is **representative**; it seeks out and facilitates the participation of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision
- 4.1.4 Community engagement** provides participants with the information and support they need to participate in a meaningful way
- 4.1.5** Participants in **community engagement** are informed of the ways in which the **community engagement** process will influence Council decision-making

4.2 The type and form of **community engagement** Council undertakes will be fit for purpose and proportionate to the significance and complexity of the matter as well as the level of resources required.

- 4.2.1** Procedural materials to be developed to support this policy may provide further guidance



4.3 Having regard to the significance of and level of public interest in a matter, Council will ‘close the loop’ by informing the municipal community of the outcomes of **community engagement** by one or more of:

- 4.3.1** a resolution made at a Council meeting
- 4.3.2** publication on one or more of Council’s website, social media pages or printed publications
- 4.3.3** advertising in local and/or metropolitan newspapers
- 4.3.4** any other appropriate means; including, but not limited to, media statements by the Mayor or appropriate senior staff, consistent with Council’s Media Relations Policy

4.4 Council will undertake **community engagement** that includes **deliberative engagement** practices in the development of, but not limited to:

- 4.4.1** Community Vision
- 4.4.2** Council Plan.
- 4.4.3** Financial Plan
- 4.4.4** Asset Plan
- 4.4.5** Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

4.5 Council will undertake **community engagement** consistent with this policy and its principles on, but not limited to:

- 4.5.1** The budget
- 4.5.2** Making a local law
- 4.5.3** Acquiring or selling land
- 4.5.4** Development of policies, plans and strategies

5.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- Mornington Peninsula Shire Council Plan 2017-2021: Our Peninsula 2021
- Mornington Peninsula Shire Community Engagement Strategy 2021 – 2026
- Mornington Peninsula Shire Public Transparency Policy
- Mornington Peninsula Shire Media Relations Policy

6.0 DEFINITIONS

Community means **Municipal Community** as defined in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and includes all residents, ratepayers, landowners and members of the general public including individuals, groups, visitors, organisations, government and business.

Community engagement is a process to enable members of the municipal community to contribute to Council’s decision-making.

Deliberative engagement is a form of community engagement that requires participants to critically consider arguments and weigh-up competing demands in order to determine preferences for resolving public policy questions.

Prescribed statutory process means a form of community engagement that is set out in legislation (other than the *Local Government Act 2020*) and must be undertaken in a particular way. Examples include advertising of planning permit applications and special charge schemes.

Approved by: Council

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Public health and wellbeing matters refers to the matters specified in section 26(2) of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* in the event that Council seeks include those public health and wellbeing matters in its Council Plan under section 27 of that Act.

Representative means that community engagement activities generally involve a sample of the broader population that will be affected by a decision. How representative that sample is of the target population is often assessed by the proportionality of key characteristics. To illustrate, if our target population was 100 animal-lovers made up of 70 dog-lovers and 30 cat-lovers, then seven dog-lovers and three cat-lovers would form a representative sample.

7.0 POLICY OWNER

The Council takes stewardship of the policy and the Manager Advocacy, Communications and Engagement is the person responsible for delivery of this policy through the Shire.

8.0 DOCUMENT CONTROLS

Council will review this policy after one year of the date of adoption.