Governance Policy - 1.9 Community Engagement Policy

Policy	Governance Policy – 1.9 Community Engagement Policy
Purpose	The Shire will inform and consult our community on matters that affect them, understanding that the best outcomes come from working together. Feedback will be used to inform and strengthen the Shire's decision-making process.

Policy

This policy applies to elected members, Shire of Peppermint Grove employees and the Peppermint Grove community, which includes residents, visitors, workers, volunteers and businesses.

Principles

The Shire recognises the importance of open, transparent, accountable, inclusive and appropriate community engagement.

The Shire undertakes community engagement to:

- improve and strengthen decision making
- enable community involvement and participation
- understand community priorities and concerns
- improve the quality of services and facilities it provides.

Council will take account of the views and opinions expressed by the community and balance this feedback with other factors such as budgetary constraints, and legal requirements.

When to engage

The Shire will embed community engagement in appropriate decision-making processes at all levels of the organisation and, where possible, use community engagement outcomes to help inform actions and decisions.

The Shire undertakes to engage when:

- a matter requires information from the community in order for a decision to be properly informed;
- a new significant project or plan is being developed or a major review is occurring with an existing project or plan;
- a matter affects the rights and entitlements of community members or a significant group within the community;

- a matter has a significant impact on the quality of community life, services or facilities;
- it is required under the Local Government Act 1995 or other legislation.

The Shire acknowledges that community confidence in consultation is paramount to its success. If a decision has already been made, or the community or the Shire cannot effectively influence the final decision, the Shire will not undertake a community engagement process.

Where routine matters to be determined by Council require consultation it will be undertaken by staff and the results presented to Council to assist in the decision making process.

Where issues affect the strategic direction of the Shire or are sensitive and potentially divisive, consultation will be undertaken following Council's consideration of the issue so that Council's in-principle resolution can guide the consultation process.

Levels of engagement

Differing levels of participation are legitimate depending on the project goals, timeframe, resources and level of interest in the decision to be made.

The Shire may use the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum to consider and apply the most suitable level of engagement and to define the role of the community in the decision making process.

Tools and Promotion

The Shire strives to deliver meaningful, informed and genuine community participation to inform Council's decision making process. The Shire endeavours to clearly communicate the matters on which it is consulting and to outline any constraints or limitations on the consultation process.

To maintain proactive and best practice community engagement the Shire will explore and utilise contemporary tools of engagement and be open to new and innovative ways to engage. Community engagement techniques will be selected based on the project scope and level of community impact (the number of persons potentially affected by the topic).

Communication methods will be tailored to best encourage participation in each individual project.

Measurement and evaluation

The Shire recognises that the level and type of engagement with the community will vary depending on the community interest in the topic and perceived impact. Both quantitative and qualitative measures will be assessed during project evaluation.

Definitions

IAP2 - International Association for Public Participation. An international member association which seeks to promote and improve the practice of public participation and stakeholder engagement.

IAP2 Spectrum - a process document designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation to define the public's role in community engagement, with increasing levels of influence ranging from 'inform', 'consult' and 'involve' to 'collaborate' and 'empower'. Provides a guide as to how to engage with the community in different situations.

Related Sources

- IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum
- City of Subiaco Community Engagement Toolkit

Related Procedure	Nil
Amended Authority Level	Council
Related Delegation	Nil
Related Local Law/Legislation	Nil
Adopted/Amended	23 July 2024
Reviewed	22 September 2026