

	COUNCIL POLICY P195 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY	Version No:	3
		Issued:	April, 2020
		Next Review:	April 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the policy of the City of Mount Gambier (“Council”) for Community Public Consultation and Engagement. In this policy “Council” means the elected member body representing the City of Mount Gambier community and “Administration” means the staff operating under delegated authority of “Council”

Scope

This policy applies to Elected Members, employees, and others acting on behalf of Council

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to underpin Council's commitment to the highest level of community engagement.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 To promote positive relationships between Council and the community.
- 2.2 To provide the framework for appropriately structured, targeted and delivered community engagement as part of Council’s decision making.
- 2.3 To provide effective communication and engagement between Council and the community.
- 2.4 To encourage, enhance and provide the opportunity for community participation in the decision making processes of Council.
- 2.5 To achieve a greater level of community input, understanding and ownership of decisions made by Council.
- 2.6 To support Council decision making that is open, transparent, responsive, inclusive and accountable to the community.

3. COMMITMENT

The City of Mount Gambier is committed to effective, ongoing and timely community engagement as an integral part of local governance and key decision making.

Council will be proactive in informing and seeking the views of its community, taking into account the specific needs of difference sections of the community, ensuring appropriate strategies are developed to maximise the opportunities for participation of all members of the community.

Council will be honest about the degree of influence the community is able to exercise in any particular community engagement event or process.

- Council acknowledges that different sections of the community will have different levels of interest in an individual issue and will tailor its engagement strategies accordingly.
- Council’s desire to engage the community will be balanced with other influences such as budgetary constraints.

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- Council will define the parameters of the community engagement process for each specific topic, inline with legislative requirements and best practice, and will use community engagement techniques selected to fulfil the “promise” of the defined engagement process.

4. PRINCIPLES

This policy is underpinned by the following principles that are central to effective communication and engagement.

Community Engagement is any process that involves the community in problem solving or decision making and uses community input to make decisions. Community engagement can include communicating with the community about decisions made; consulting on specific ideas or proposals; involving the community in planning processes; and collaborating with the community to make decisions.

Community Consultation is a part of community engagement and means a planned process by which the Council formally invites its constituents and stakeholders to comment about matters upon which Elected Members are to deliberate.

The City Council of Mount Gambier will incorporate the principles of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) in all of its community engagement practices, both in those areas affected by legislation and in those areas where Council or Administration have determined, as a matter of good practice, to engage with the community.

For the purpose of this policy the following promises apply:

- Inform - One way communication providing balanced and objective information to assist understanding about something that is going to happen.
- Consult - Two way communications designed to obtain public feedback about ideas on rationale, alternatives and proposals to inform decision making – Council will listen and acknowledge concerns and aspirations and provide feedback.
- Involve - participatory process designed to help identify issues and views to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered prior to decision making – Council will work with the community to ensure that its concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed.
- Collaborate – working together to develop understanding of all issues and interest to work out alternatives and identify preferred solutions – Council will look to the community for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions.
- Empower - As per the Local Government Act

Where required by the Local Government Act, or any other Act, Council will at all times meet at least the minimum requirements for public consultation as identified.

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5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 This Community Consultation and Engagement Policy will apply to Council Elected Members, Administration and others acting on behalf of the Council.
- 5.2 The Community Consultation and Engagement Policy is developed and reviewed by Council.
- 5.3 The responsibility of Council and Administration is to assess and identify issues where community engagement will assist the decision making process.
- 5.4 The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:
- Implementing and ensuring compliance with the Community Consultation and Engagement Policy
 - Reporting on outcomes in meeting the objectives of the Policy
 - Reporting on the review and evaluation of the Policy

6. REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed and assessed within 12 months of a general election.

7. AVAILABILITY

This Policy is available at the following location during normal business hours:

- Principal Office, Civic Centre, 10 Watson Terrace, Mount Gambier SA 5290
- Council Website: www.mountgambier.sa.gov.au

8. ACCESS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Any enquiries regarding this Policy are to be directed to the General Manager Community Wellbeing, telephone 8721 2555.

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File Reference:	AF18/49
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999 - Section 50
Strategic Reference:	Our People Our Economy
Related Policies:	M130 – Media – Statements on behalf of Council
Related Procedures:	External Communications / Media Protocol
Related Documents:	

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Responsibility:	General Manager City and Community Growth
Version:	3.0
Last revised date:	21 June 2022
Effective date:	21 June 2022
Minutes reference:	21 June 2022 - Item No. 22.4 - Resolution 2022/69
Next review date:	April, 2023
<u>Document History</u> First Adopted By Council: Reviewed/Amended:	November 2013, <i>(April 2020, 21 June 2022 – COVID-19)</i>