



Have  
your  
say

# Community Engagement Policy

Council has prepared a new principles-based Community Engagement Policy to outline our commitment to informed, representative and supported engagement and outcomes with the Baw Baw Shire Community.

The draft policy provides a starting point to build on with the community. Council is committed to adapting the policy to get the best outcomes for the Baw Baw community.

This consultation opportunity is open until 5.00pm on Thursday 24 December 2020.

Feedback collated from the community will be collated and presented to Council in early 2021.

To view the draft Policy along with an online survey, visit [www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au/HaveYourSay](http://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au/HaveYourSay)

## About the policy

The policy aims to:

- outline how the community can have a voice in influencing Council decisions;
- identify Council's intention to act on community input;
- increase transparency of the decisions that impact the community;
- build the community's trust in Council's decision-making process; and
- contribute to better outcomes for the community.

## Background

The *Victorian Local Government Act 2020* (LG Act) states that a community engagement policy must include five principles that make sure engagement is defined, objective, representative, supported and informed.

Council's current Community Engagement Policy was adopted in 2014 and has a focus on building relationships and seeking diverse community opinions to inform decisions. Council's draft 2021 policy builds on this focus, and includes the LG Act principles to outline how we use community engagement to inform Council decisions.

Under the LG Act, what is known as *deliberative engagement* practices must be used to allow community the ability to influence Council's strategic direction.

Council has included deliberative engagement practices in the new policy and will apply them to the development of the following key strategic documents: Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

Not all matters have equal importance for the community. The 'Level of Engagement' model in the policy defines the five different ways the community can be involved in the decision making process. The five levels refer to the community's ability to influence a decision, which include: **Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Empower**. Deliberative engagement occurs at the Involve, Collaborate and Empower levels.

## Contact us

For more information about this policy, please contact Council's Corporate Strategy team on 5624 2411 or by email at [customer.service@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au](mailto:customer.service@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au)



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## Tell us your feedback

Name .....

Address .....

Phone .....

Email .....

How do you participate in Baw Baw life?

- Resident
- Non-resident owner
- Business owner
- Worker
- Student
- Leisure/recreation
- Shopper/visitor
- Other (please specify)

Does the draft policy provide a way for the community to influence Council's strategic direction?

Yes  No

If no, please tell us how we could do this better:

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## Have your say: Community Engagement Policy

After reading the policy, do you have a good understanding of when Deliberative Engagement practices will be used?

Yes  No

If no, please tell us how we could do this better.

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Council will engage with the community in different ways depending on the significance of the matter (see 'how we do this' in the Level of Engagement model, page 7 of policy)

Which of the methods do you think are most appropriate for the Baw Baw community? Are there other methods you think are suitable?

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Council has defined three broad categories to establish the level of community engagement needed and if matters require deliberative engagement (refer to pages 8 and 9 of policy).

Do the levels represent what is important to you?

Yes  No

## Have your say: Community Engagement Policy

Here is how we've defined Community Engagement in the policy.

*"The meaningful, respectful exchange of information and ideas. It is a planned process that provides opportunities for Council and the community to communicate, improve services, and enhance decision making through participation."*

Do you have any suggestions to improve this definition?

Yes  No

If yes, please let us know below.

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Here is how we've defined Deliberative Engagement in the policy.

*"When a representative sample of the community is provided with the information and time to reach a joint position or preferred solution through considered discussion."*

Do you have any suggestions to improve this definition?

Yes  No

If yes, please let us know how below.

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## Have your say: Community Engagement Policy

Is the language used in the policy easy to understand?

Yes  No

If no, please suggest how we could do this better.

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If you have any other suggestions on the draft Community Engagement Policy 2021, please let us know below.

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Are you interested in contributing further and would like to be a part of influencing Council's strategic direction?

Yes  No

(If you tick yes, please ensure your contact details have been entered.)

### What happens next?

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback. Your thoughts and ideas are highly valued and will ultimately form part of Council's decision making.

Council Officers will consolidate comments and feedback and consider all submissions to assist in making further recommendations to Council.