



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

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