

PURPOSE

This policy provides direction for how Glenorchy City Council ('Council') will engage with the community and stakeholders when making decisions, delivering services, or representing the community.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council Aldermen, employees and external consultants who undertake or are expected to undertake community engagement projects or activities as part of their responsibilities.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

Making Lives Better

- Objective 1.1 Know our communities and what they value
 - Strategy 1.1.1 Guide decision making through continued community engagement based on our community plan
 - Strategy 1.1.2 Encourage diversity in our community by facilitating opportunities and connections
- Objective 1.2 Support our communities to pursue and achieve their goals
 - Strategy 1.2.2 Build relationships and networks that create opportunities for our communities

Leading Our Community

- Objective 4.1 Govern in the best interests of our community
 - Strategy 4.1.1 Manage Council for maximum efficiency, accountability and transparency
 - Strategy 4.1.3 Maximise regulatory compliance in Council and the community through our systems and processes
- Objective 4.2 Prioritise our resources to achieve our community's goals
 - Strategy 4.2.1 Deploy the Council's resources effectively to deliver value

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Acts	<i>Local Government Act 1993</i> <i>Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993</i> <i>Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994</i> <i>Public Health Act 1997</i> <i>Dog Control Act 2000</i>
Regulations	<i>Local Government (General) Regulations 2015</i>
Australian/International Standards	IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard 2015 AS/NZS ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems

DEFINITIONS

Community or Communities means any specific group of people who share similar location, interest, or affiliation with the Glenorchy Local Government Area. These include but are not limited to residents, ratepayers, business owners and operators, workers, students, visitors, including tourists and shoppers, government establishments, community organisations, including clubs, churches, and charity groups.

Stakeholder means a person, group of persons or organisations that have or feel they have an interest or can affect/be affected by an issue or decision.

Community Engagement means a planned process whereby Council and the community exchange information through different methods and take actions to solve common problems or make decisions. This process exists on a spectrum from *inform, consult, involve, collaborate*, to *empower*, as defined by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

IAP2 means International Association for Public Participation.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Glenorchy City Council is committed to engaging with its communities on issues that affect them.
2. Council's Community Engagement Framework will guide the delivery of community engagement projects and activities.
3. We will take into account the opinions, ideas and feedback of our community when making decisions or delivering services.
4. We will engage with our communities when in the opinion of Council officers or the elected Council:
 - i) the views of individuals or groups within our community will provide further information valuable to the planning, solution, or decision
 - ii) the issue will significantly affect existing levels of service
 - iii) the issue is complex or controversial
 - iv) the issue will have long term impact on the community, or when it is a legislative requirement.
5. There may be circumstances under which community engagement is impracticable, such as where emergency response is required, or a statutory process may be compromised.
6. The level of community participation in the decision making and the engagement method used will be determined by factors including the level of impact of the issue, time, and resources available, to what degree it will influence the decision or any legal requirements.
7. As much as possible, appropriate level of resourcing, including time, will be committed to community engagement.

8. Community Engagement sessions will be made available to officers whose roles involve delivering projects, programs, and activities within the community.
9. Council's Community Engagement Framework shall be guided by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Core Values and Public Participation Spectrum.
10. Council shall maintain a register of community engagement activities for the purpose of planning and reporting.

Guiding Principles

The following nine (9) principles are to guide Council's community engagement processes:

- Inclusiveness – We will provide opportunities for those who are affected by or interested in an issue to have their say and seek to ensure participants are representative of the concerned communities and stakeholders.
- Fostering and maintaining positive relationships - Council will treat its community and others with respect and in the spirit of achieving efficiency, inclusiveness, and effective participation¹.
- Timeliness – We will plan for engagement and engage early or as soon as practicable in the process and allow sufficient time for the community and stakeholders to participate in the process.
- Partnership – We will seek to build relationships and promote mutual understanding. We will discourage activities that risk dividing the community into conflict or opposing extremes.
- Respect – We will listen to and value the ideas, feelings and opinions expressed. While we cannot satisfy all views expressed, we will take them into account.
- Access to Information – We will provide information to participants to help them form sound opinions and judgements. We will promote the use of plain English in community engagement.
- Transparency – We will be honest and open-minded, and not seek pre-determined outcomes. As stakeholders too, we will communicate our views and consider expert opinions where available.
- Responsiveness – We will acknowledge feedback, provide updates, and inform participants of the outcome of the process.
- Continuous Improvement – We will evaluate and take measures to improve the process. We will endeavour to ensure adequate resourcing is available for better ways and means to engage.

Community engagement framework

This Policy is part of a broader Community Engagement Framework developed by Council to progress a culture of meaningful engagement with the communities and stakeholders in the City of Glenorchy. The Community Engagement Framework includes the following four (4) components:

¹ Fostering and maintaining positive relationships is a component of good governance as recognised in the Good Governance Guide for Local Government in Tasmania 2018. This sentence is Council's undertaking regarding this.

- This *Community Engagement Policy* – this provides direction and outlines the guiding principles for community engagement
- A *Community Engagement Procedure* – this guides Council staff on when and how they should engage with the community and stakeholders under different circumstances (internal document)
- A *Community Engagement Toolkit* – this includes staff guidelines and resources on how and when they should use different methods in delivering community engagement activities (internal document), and
- A *Public Participation Brochure* – this contains information for the public on Council’s community engagement processes and how they can get involved.

Privacy in community engagement

Council is committed to protecting the personal information of all participants of its community engagement process. In demonstrating this commitment, Council will be guided by the Personal Information Protection Principles listed in Schedule 1 of the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*.

Personal information collected in public meetings or any engagement activity will only be used for the purpose of ongoing engagement on the issue by Council. Such information will not be made available to the public.

Reporting requirement

Proposals submitted to Council on policies, programs, projects, and activities are to include a section on Community Engagement. If community engagement is required as part of the decision making on the proposal, an Engagement Plan is to be included in the proposal as per the Community Engagement Procedure.

Reports submitted to Council on policies, programs, projects, and activities where community engagement has taken place as part of the decision-making process is to include information on the engagement process and output.

BACKGROUND

Council is committed to working with its local communities and stakeholders to understand the needs and aspirations of our diverse communities. This has been demonstrated in various ways including the processes and outcomes of the City of Glenorchy Community Plan 2015 – 2040. Council is faced with increased community expectations to deliver improved outcomes for our communities whose problems are also increasingly complex and varying. Council recognises that solving these problems will require working with those who have an interest or are affected in order to ensure effective and efficient solutions, while acknowledging there will be factors that make some people/communities less likely or less able to engage. Therefore, Council has developed a Community Engagement Policy to guide its practice of community engagement to improve public participation in decision making and Council’s service delivery.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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