Community Engagement Policy 2025

Council policy title:	Community Engagement Policy 2025
Council policy sponsor:	Director, Community and Customer Experience
Adopted by:	Bayside City Council
Date adopted:	
Scheduled review:	July 2029
Document reference:	DOC/24/514884

1. Why does this policy exist?

The Local Government Act (Vic) 2020 requires all Victorian councils to develop a community engagement policy (Section 55).

2. Policy intent

Bayside City Council's Community Engagement Policy 2025 (the Policy) affirms our commitment to engaging our community and relevant stakeholders about matters that affect them so we can deliver better quality outcomes.

Community engagement is one of many inputs we use as a customer-focused organisation that help us design and deliver services, policies and plans that are responsive to the changing needs of the Bayside community.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- provide clarity on when, why and how we'll engage with our community and stakeholders to inform Council decisions
- promote and encourage public participation
- strengthen trust and confidence in Council to make evidence-based decisions that benefit the Bayside community
- support the consistent application of transparent, accessible engagement processes.

3. Policy purpose

The policy outlines our commitments for how we'll genuinely include our community in decision making.

This policy provides a clear framework for how Council will:

- plan and deliver community engagement that is appropriate to the scope and impact of Council decision(s) being made
- communicate openly and consider all views
- support community members to contribute to the Council plans and projects which are relevant to them
- keep participants informed about projects they have contributed to and how and why decisions have been made.

(03) 9599 4444
PO Box 27, Sandringham VIC 3191
bayside.vic.gov.au

Bayside CITY COUNCIL

4. Context

This Policy delivers on requirements defined in the Local Government Act 2020 for how Council will:

- Apply the community engagement principles
- Include deliberative engagement practices
- Describe type and form of community engagement proposed
- Specify a process for informing the municipal community of the outcome of engagement.

This Policy will specifically apply to the following Bayside City Council documents and processes as nominated in the Local Government Act 2020:

- A local law (Section 73)
- Community Vision (Section 88)
- Council Plan (Section 90)
- Ten-year Financial Plan (Section 91)
- Development or review of the Asset Plan (Section 92)
- Annual budget or revised budget (Section 96)
- The purchase or compulsory acquisition of land (Section 112)
- The sale or exchange of land (Section 114)
- The lease of land (Section 115)
- Governance Rules (Section 60(4)).

Community engagement undertaken for the Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan will be conducted using deliberative engagement practices.

All other engagement will be planned to reflect the scope and scale of the proposal, the interest and impact on the community, and their level of influence on the decision.

5. Scope

The policy applies to all community engagement undertaken by Councillors, employees, volunteers and contractors of Bayside City Council. It also serves as a guide for external organisations including Council's engagement consultants and contractors that deliver services or infrastructure across the municipality.

5.1 When we will engage

We will engage our community at times which ensure community members and/or stakeholders can contribute with influence on Council decision making.

When we engage our community will be guided by:

- Where community/stakeholders can influence the outcome(s).
- When a change, such as to a service, plan, policy or strategy, facility or building, is proposed and may have a significant impact on the community. The impacts may be built form, financial, environmental, social, economic or governance related.
- When we need information for the development or progress of projects and plans, and/or for decision-making.

5.2 Who we will engage with

Our engagement plans will identify community members and stakeholders with a connection to a project or decision to ensure they are informed and encouraged to participate.

Identified community members will include those who:

- are likely to be affected by an initiative, project or decision
- have expressed interest in the topic or location
- may provide valuable insight and input

- are populations identified through Equity Impact Assessments as impacted by a project or process
- are members of a relevant stakeholder group and can provide lived experience perspectives.

5.2.1 Stakeholder groups
We recognise the value and collective experience that stakeholder groups which represent or have a connection to a specific demographic, interest, location or project bring to the engagement process. Stakeholder groups include community, reference, interest and advisory groups/committees.

Stakeholder groups play an important role in providing early and/or ongoing advice to inform the delivery of significant projects, strategies, and policies. We will engage with relevant groups on plans, projects, and strategies that affect the stakeholders they represent.

We will include stakeholder groups in community engagement programs when the topic is relevant to draw from their specific experience and knowledge. Contributions that we receive from these groups will be used, alongside other feedback and information, to help influence decisions and outcomes and will be included in the engagement summary report.

We will keep all stakeholder groups directly informed about how their feedback has influenced outcomes and decisions, including, but not limited to, as part of an engagement summary report.

5.3 Out of scope
Council may not undertake community engagement in the following situations:

- Projects where there is no decision to be made that may impact our community
- When an adopted policy, strategy or decision has determined a clear direction for implementation of a project
- When decisions must be informed by technical, financial, legislative or safety requirements, and previous and recent community engagement or research (within 5 years only if circumstances are unchanged) on the subject
- Operational decisions which may include strategies or policies that have minimal to no impact on the community
- Where confidentiality requirements prevent engagement.

Where projects are implemented without community engagement, an explanation will be provided.

For projects where community engagement is to be carried out with specific statutory requirements (e.g. planning, traffic and transport related consultations) engagement will be informed by those statutory requirements and timeframes.

This policy does not apply to routine statutory planning applications for residential developments on private land. Statutory planning matters are controlled by separate legislative requirements and regulations set by the Victorian Government.

This policy does not apply where Section 223 of the 1989 Local Government Act still applies.

6. Policy statement

Engagement practice

Community engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working with individuals and groups to encourage active involvement in decisions that affect them.

We plan engagement based on:

- the decision's importance and complexity
- who is affected or interested
- what can be influenced or changed
- which communication and engagement methods will support participation and gather the information needed
- the resourcing and budget available.

We will publish an overview of the Engagement Plan on Have Your Say for each project to provide transparency of the engagement process.

Principles for engagement

Bayside City Council commits to the five principles noted in Section 56 of the Local Government Act 2020 and an additional principle to support equity in engagement processes. The statements below explain how we will deliver on each principle and guide our community engagement practice.

Principle 1: A community engagement process must have a clearly defined objective and scope

We will plan and resource engagement relative to the scope, complexity and impact of the project and/or decision(s) to be made.

When engagement is launched, we will explain:

- Why the project is needed and the purpose of the engagement
- What the community can influence and what they can't
- The level of influence the community can have on the outcome
- What information we need from the community
- How we will gather feedback from the community
- The expected timeline for the project
- When the community can provide feedback and decisions are expected to be made.

Principle 2: Participants in community engagement must have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation

We will provide engagement participants with timely access to factual and accessible information on the project, including:

- A summary of known impacts, risks and benefits including social, natural and built environment, and financial
- Relevant background information, technical and research reports, related strategies and policies, budget estimate and funding source.

We will carry out research, technical studies or assessments prior to seeking community feedback if this information is required to provide feedback.

Information will be provided in plain language and using a range of accessible communication channels and formats, including digital, printed, verbal, and audiovisual.

We will facilitate opportunities for community members to ask questions and receive a response, either individually or via shared communications.

Principle 3: Participants in community engagement must be representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of the community engagement

Our engagement plans will identify members of the community that have a connection to the project, and include an assessment of the level of:

- Impact: what level of change could the community member experience because of the project
- Interest: what level of interest has been expressed or is anticipated
- Influence: the level of influence participants can expect over an outcome or decision (refer to appendix 1), using the IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement.

We use this information to determine the methods, tools and techniques that will be most effective for engagement and communication (refer to Appendix 3).

Community members who are identified as likely to experience a significant impact from a change or decision, may be offered a higher level of engagement and influence on the decision than others.

Principle 4: Participants in community engagement are entitled to reasonable support to enable meaningful and informed engagement

We will aim to remove any barriers to participation that our community members might face.

We will design engagement including the methods, activities and schedule to meet the needs and requirements of identified community members. This will consider:

- Multiple ways to participate, including written, visual, online and verbal
- Appropriate time for participants to be informed about the project and provide a response.

Engagement methods and tools selected will relate to the type and scale of project and level of influence relative to the IAP2 Spectrum and the project budget. See Appendix 1 to 3 for more detail.

For community members who may experience barriers to participation, additional resources may be considered such as:

- Information and feedback processes in alternative formats
- Support to participate, including personal care and/or support, or transport
- Incentives such as an expense allowance or prize draws.
- Translations and/or interpreters when required.

Typically, opportunities to give feedback will be provided in multiple methods and be open for at least four weeks. Shorter timeframes may be appropriate for some low impact projects.

Principle 5: Participants in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will influence Council decision making

When we launch an engagement, we will explain how and when decisions will be made, including:

- Who will make the final decision[1]
- The level of influence community feedback will have, referencing the IAP2 Spectrum of Participation
- Other information that will inform decision making, including demographic and/or service data, technical information, research, policies, legislation, Council priorities, commitments and available budget.

Engagement processes may occur once or multiple times relative to the scale, complexity or impact of a project or decision.

Keeping participants informed of how their feedback has been considered is crucial in respecting our relationship and partnership with our community. We will:

- Provide updates to participants at key progress points, including when the project will be discussed at a Council meeting
- Publish a summary of the engagement process, participants and results within two months of the close of engagement, or when the outcome of engagement is referenced in a report to Council or will inform a Council decision before this deadline.
- Provide updates to participants within one week of key decisions and milestones.
- Inform participants and the community of the final decision, how it was made, and how community input has influenced outcomes.

Principle 6: A community engagement process must be designed to promote fairness and equality

Traditional engagement activities can be biased towards the participation of those who are easy to communicate with, have a pre-existing relationship with Council, and are vocal and reasonably comfortable in a public setting.

We will plan and deliver engagement programs to encourage fairness, equality and the participation of marginalised or harder to reach groups through:

- Selection of methods and tools, including one to one and small group discussion
- The ability to participate in a private or closed forum and/or anonymously
- Monitoring participation of harder to reach groups and adapting activities to promote increased participation, if required
- Moderation and management of public forums to enable respectful and equitable sharing of ideas.
- Working with stakeholder groups to ensure that the views of a particular demographic or interest are represented.

When a matter is complex, affecting multiple people with competing needs or interests, we will report on all viewpoints, with the aim to represent competing voices.

[1] Most decisions will be made by Council. Some operational or lower-impact decisions may be made by the Chief Executive Officer or responsible Director.

7. Monitoring, evaluation & review

Implementation of the policy and principles will be published and available to the community, including an annual summary of:

- Publication of Engagement Plan overviews
- Engagement reports and key project updates published within stated timeframes.
- Data relating to participation and engagement with Council's online engagement platform
- Customer satisfaction with the community engagement experience (project specific)

The effectiveness of the Policy will be assessed by longer-term outcome measures[2] including:

- Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement (overall)
- Satisfaction with opportunities offered to engage or be consulted on Council decisions
- Community trust and confidence in Council
- Community recognising Council as a respected information source.

The next Policy review is scheduled for July 2029.

8. Roles & Responsibilities

Community engagement is part of Council's core business and is the responsibility of all Council service areas, teams and employees.

The specific roles and responsibilities related to engagement will be confirmed within a project's engagement plan, and are broadly outlined below:

Mayor and Councillors

- Consider community engagement data to inform decision making
- Attend to observe community engagement activities
- Share community engagement information to encourage participation
- Support the Council to develop respectful relationships and partnerships with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal community controlled organisations and the Aboriginal community3.

Directors

When acting as an executive project sponsor:

- Approve engagement plans for complex projects to ensure reputational and other risks of community engagement are managed.
- Ensure that good quality and timely reporting is provided to Councillors on community engagement processes and outcomes.

Department Managers

When acting as a project sponsor:

- Accountable for determining the need to undertake community engagement
- Responsible for the development, approval, implementation, data analysis, reporting and evaluation of engagement and communication plans and programs
- Responsible for resourcing community engagement activities, including engaging with Council's Committees.

Officer/Coordinator

When delivering a project:

- Prepare and implement engagement plans and engagement summary reports

[2] Through data gathered in the Annual Community Satisfaction Survey

[3] Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Amendment Regulations 2024

- Resource and deliver engagement activities, including in-person methods
- Manage all correspondence related to an engagement program
- Ensure accurate and up-to-date information on Council's digital engagement platform.

Engagement Team

- Responsible for providing advice in relation to this Policy and engagement resources.
- Support the planning and delivery of community engagement projects, including the external communications. The level of support provided will vary according to available resources, the complexity of the matter and impacts on the community.
- Coordinates the development, implementation and evaluation of this Policy.

Other departments and/or Committees of Council

- Provide support/advice and subject matter expertise, including stakeholder identification and governance/legislative requirements.
- May lead communication and/or engagement with stakeholders, especially marginalised and/or harder to reach communities.

9. Privacy and data protection

The implications of this policy have been assessed and are considered to be compatible with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.

Through the implementation of this policy, Council will collect personal information that could include your name, email address, phone number, street address, demographic information such as age, gender, languages spoken, disability status, etc., IP address and other unique ID numbers. We could also be asking for your ideas, thoughts and opinions.

The purpose of Council collecting this information is to:

- gather insight and understanding of community needs and sentiment around Council services and projects, and other activities impacting daily life in Bayside
- IP addresses are recorded to analyse trends, administer the website, track user's movement, and gather broad demographic information for aggregate use
- Demographic information to further understanding of segments of the community and to assess level of community representation in the feedback received.

Council will use this information to:

- conduct de-identified research and analytics to inform Council decisions on plans, policies and projects
- send updates and information where you have consented or would reasonably expect to receive them
- respond to enquiries

Except when required by legislation, alternate or anonymous methods of participation that do not require use of the Have Your Say Website or provision of person information, will be offered.

Council will take reasonable steps in managing this information to prevent breach of personal privacy by restricting access to only Bayside City Council employees who need the information to perform a specific task.

Consultants supplying digital community engagement software have access to data only in order to perform necessary maintenance to the software and are subject to the Australian Privacy Act 1988, Australian Privacy Principles and the Victorian Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.

Consultants contracted to assist with the collection and analysis of the information are supplied with deidentified information where possible.

Every precaution is taken to protect maintain website security and online users' information. Data collected via the Have Your Say website is hosted at an Australian Amazon Web Services centre. Downloaded data is saved in Council's records management system.

We will only retain your personal information for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes we collected it for, including for the purposes of satisfying any legal, accounting, or reporting requirements.

10. Related documents

Legislation	Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 Defamation Act 2005 (Victoria) Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Victoria) Gender Equality Act 2020 Local Government Act 2020 (Victoria) Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic) Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Victoria) Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Victoria) Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Victoria) Roads Act (2004) Wrongs Act 1958 (Victoria)
Policies	Complaint Handling Policy 2024 Customer Experience Policy 2024 Election Period Policy 2024 Governance Rules 2022 Bayside City Council Media Policy 2024 Privacy and Data Protection Policy Records and Information Management Policy Social Media Policy 2024 Transparency Policy 2020 Staff Code of Conduct
Strategies / Plans	Bayside 2050 Community Vision Bayside City Council, Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Bayside City Council Gender Equity Plan 2021- 2025
Procedures / Processes	Community Engagement and Research process (Promapp) Bayside City Council, Engagement Tool Kit (intranet)
Other	Councillor Code of Conduct Employment contracts

Please note: This policy is current as at the date of approval. Refer to Council's website (https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/council/plans-strategies-and-policies) to ensure this is the latest version.

Compliance Considerations

Human Rights Charter

This Policy has been assessed against the principles of the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (the Charter) and is considered to be compatible with the Charter. In assessing the proposed changes, consideration has also been given to the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010.*

Equity Impact Statement

The implications of this policy have been assessed and are compliant with the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*. The EIA is in progress.

Governance Principles
In the development of this Policy, the requirements of the Governance Principles as per the *Local Government Act 2020* have been considered and are summarised below:

LGA S 9.1	Governance Principle	Consideration
a)	Compliance with the law	This Policy delivers on requirements defined in the Local Government Act 2020, Sections 55 and 56.
b)	Achieve best outcomes for the community	Community participation in engagement and feedback to Council helps to inform decision making to achieve best outcomes.
c)	Promote the sustainability of the municipality	This policy supports engagement with the community on actions Council is undertaking to address the Climate Emergency.
d)	Engage the community in strategic planning and decision making	This policy outlines our commitments for how , when and why we'll genuinely include our community in decision making through transparent and consistent engagement processes.
e)	Strive for innovation and continuous improvement	This policy promotes continuous improvement through regular review and clear guidance on best practice engagement.
f)	Collaborate with all other levels of government and government agencies	This policy outlines how we will consider stakeholders, including other levels of government and government agencies, in our engagement plans and processes.
g)	Secure the ongoing financial viability of Council	This policy does not have an impact on the ongoing financial viability of Council.
h)	Strategic planning and decision making must take into account plans and policies in operation at all levels.	This policy supports informed decision-making for strategic planning at all levels.
i)	Council decisions, actions and information must be transparent.	This policy facilitates the transparency of Council decision-making, including informing how community feedback can and has influenced Council decisions. It aids transparency through the provision of clear, accessible information about projects, plans, and strategies which may affect members of the community.

11. Glossary - Definitions and Abbreviations

Term	Definition
Advisory Committees	Advisory Committees are a coordinated group of community members who represent the views of a particular demographic, interest, or project. The role and function of Advisory Committees is guided by the Local Government Act 2020.
Communication	Communication is about providing information to build a shared understanding between Council and the community. It refers to the many ways Council keeps the community up to date with news, projects and opportunities.
Community engagement	For the purposes of this policy, community engagement is defined as the formal process to gather information from the community to inform a decision.
Community/ municipal community	'Community' is used to describe people of a municipality, or Council area, generally, including individuals or groups who live, work, play, study, visit, invest in or pass through the municipality. The Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) defines the term "municipal community" as: (a) people who live in the municipal district of the Council; and (b) people and bodies who are ratepayers of the Council; and (c) traditional owners of land in the municipal district of the Council; and (d) people and bodies who conduct activities in the municipal district of the Council.
Deliberative practices	A fair and transparent process by which we provide the relevant representative people/group with the practical information, forums and resources they need to reach a considered conclusion and provide recommendations on a defined issue. This may occur in combination with other formats of research or engagement.
Engagement	Getting community and/or stakeholder input or feedback to inform a Council decision. Can also be referred to as 'consultation', however engagement is the preferred term to avoid confusion with the Consult level of the IAP2 Spectrum.
Equity Impact Assessment	An Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) is a planning tool used to assess the impact of an initiative on different groups and ensure policies, strategies, plans, programs, and services we provide will meet the diverse needs of our community. The purpose of EIAs is to make sure all people have equitable access to opportunities and resources so as to create better and fairer outcomes for the Bayside community. EIAs also support Council to meet its legislative requirements under the Gender Equality Act 2020.
Harder to reach / marginalised stakeholders	There are groups or sections of our community who may find it more difficult to participate in community engagement activities and therefore be under-represented. These groups can be considered 'harder to reach' because of the barriers to engagement that they experience. Council will use engagement methods and tools that are accessible, inclusive, and culturally safe for key groups including: • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people • Children, young and older people • Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

	• Lesbian, gay, bi, trans, intersex and queer (LGBTIQA+) people • New and established migrant communities • New residents to the municipality • People experiencing homelessness • People with health issues • People with limited literacy • People with limited access to and/or skill in digital technologies • People with lived experience of disability • People with lower discretionary income • People with non-standard work patterns/schedules • Residents in public housing. We will adapt engagement tools and processes to ensure fair, inclusive and accessible representation for these sections of the community and support their participation. We also recognise the requirement to align with the Gender Equality Act and the importance of capturing intersectional data to ensure plans, projects and strategies are fair and equitable for all members of the community.
IAP2 and Public Participation Spectrum	The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) provides sector leadership, resources and development. Many of its tools are central to Council's Policy and process. "The IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum is designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any community engagement program. The Spectrum shows that differing levels of participation are legitimate depending on the goals, time frames, resources and levels of concern in the decision to be made. However, and most importantly, the Spectrum sets out the promise being made to the public at each participation level." The Spectrum is illustrated in Appendix 1, with the Bayside application explained in Appendix 2 and 3.
Public engagement	Refers specifically to engagement that will be open to participation for all members of Bayside City Council's municipal community.
Publication	For projects involving public engagement, information will be published on Council's website and/or Bayside's Have Your Say website and available in print or other formats.
Representative participation	For some matters, especially those with deliberative characteristics, participation may be designed or selected to align with the demographic features of the impacted community using data published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The measure, relevance and emphasis on representative participation may vary between projects.
Research	The systematic collection, collation, analysis and interpretation of data relevant to policy or practice, or to understand future trends, local needs and good practice.[3] Research is included within the definition of engagement, noting it is primarily at the Consult level of the IAP2 Spectrum.
Stakeholder	An organisation or defined group of people who are interested, affected by or contribute to an outcome. Often these individuals or

	groups have a defined intent or 'stake' in the project or matter. A stakeholder group may have a single or shared perspective on an issue or may have different views. A delegate may represent a shared view on behalf of a group. Some examples are government departments and public services, traders/business operators, and community organisations such as sports clubs, environmental groups, and service clubs. Stakeholders can also be Council-facilitated groups or Committees that represent hard to reach sections of the community.
Subscription	During engagement individuals can subscribe to receive updates by providing email or postal addresses or 'subscribing' to pages on Bayside's Have Your Say website.

12. How was the policy developed?

This policy was created in consultation with our community, Council and our employees and is supported by strong public participation in Bayside.

Each year, we typically engage on around 30 significant projects, reaching over 50,000 community members through our online engagement website, Have Your Say, and our face-to-face activities.

The policy was informed by an internal review, sector examples of best practice community engagement, previous community feedback, and data and results from our annual representative Community Satisfaction Survey.

Community engagement was undertaken on the draft policy between 8 May – 9 June 2025, and found a strong level of support for proposed changes (70% - 80%).

The policy is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020. It is supported by a toolkit and resources to enable the organisation to deliver best-practice and meaningful engagement programs.

This policy is reviewed every four years to ensure it continues to meet the needs and expectation of our community, Council and employees.

Appendix 1: IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement

Bayside City Council's engagement process is based on the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Spectrum of Engagement. The IAP2 is a recognised leader in community engagement and has developed tools that are widely used by governments, institutions and other entities that affect the public interest.

The IAP2 Spectrum identifies five levels of engagement. At each level the public can expect to have a different amount of influence over the end outcome or decision.

As shown in the table below, the level of engagement with the lowest opportunity to influence is 'Inform', while 'Empower' provides the greatest level of influence, putting the decision completely in the hands of the community.

In the context of Bayside City Council, when a project or matter will not extend beyond the 'Inform' level on the IAP2 spectrum, it will be considered 'communication' and not referred to as 'engagement'. This is done to prevent confusion and manage expectations.

The level of engagement may also vary for different stakeholders and/or stages of a project.

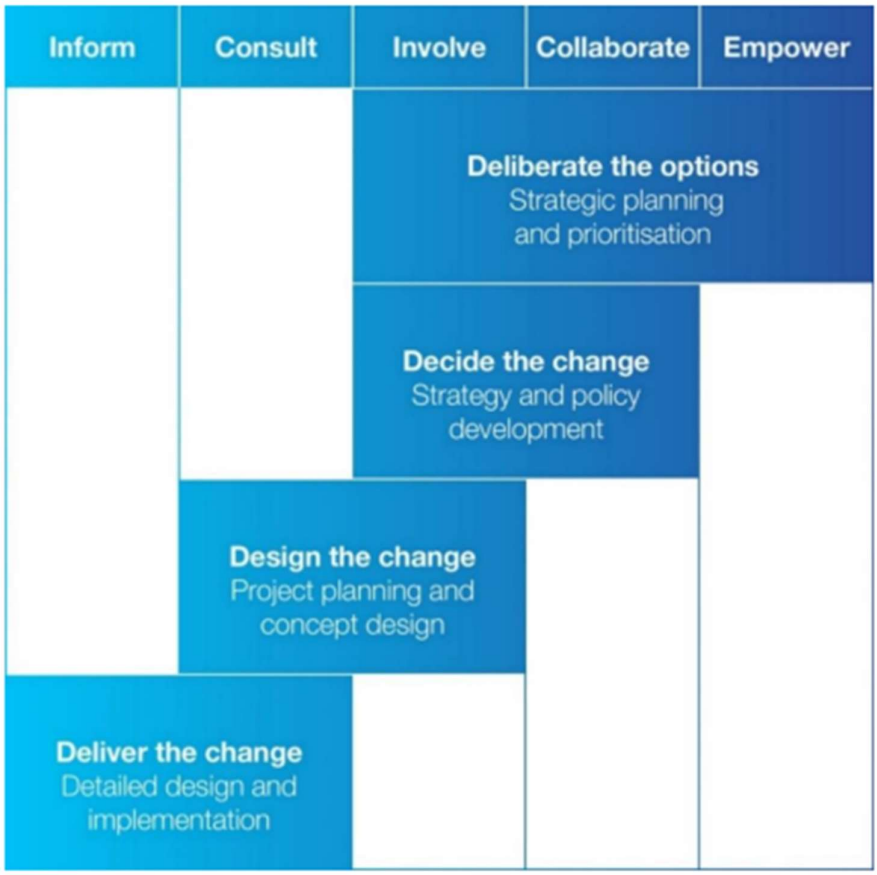
Table 1: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

Level	Public participation goal	Promise to the public
Inform	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	We will keep you informed.
Consult	To obtain public feedback for analysis, alternatives, or decisions.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
Involve	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
Collaborate*	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
Empower	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.	We will implement what you decide.

Appendix 2: Alignment of the IAP2 Spectrum with Bayside City Council project type

Figure 1 indicates where Council anticipates alignment of different projects or matters against the IAP2 spectrum based on the stage of planning. The selection of level of engagement is made for each project individually in response to scope and complexity.

Figure 1: Indicative alignment of project type with the IAP2 Spectrum



We deliberate the options for the development of long-term strategic plans, such as the Council Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan[4]. We will use deliberative engagement practices to develop these plans, working with the community at moderate to high (involve, collaborate and empower) levels of influence and engagement.

Decide the change is the big picture; developing the strategies that focus and prioritise our resources. Here, we'll work with (involve) or partner with the community (collaborate) to achieve consensus and create solutions. This is when the community can expect to have a moderate to high level of influence on ideas, initiatives and decisions.

Design the change is when we begin planning what an idea or project could look like. Here, we'll seek feedback (consult) and work with people (involve) who are directly affected by the change. The community can expect to have a moderate level of influence.

When it comes time to deliver the change, there may not be much that the community

[4] Under Local Government Act 2020 engagement for these strategic plans must include deliberative practices.

can influence as many decisions have been made through earlier strategy, policy, or planning decisions. Engagement is mostly seeking feedback (consult) from those most affected or providing information (inform) to our community.

Appendix 3: Level of influence and selection of tools

The below table provides an overview of the standard tools and techniques used for community engagement activities. Tools are selected to ensure we can capture relevant feedback, meet the needs of participants, and are appropriate to the level of engagement and influence. A range of engagement tools may be used for a project to meet specific stakeholder needs. Communication tools will be used to support all levels of engagement and encourage participation.

For example, if the level of engagement is 'collaborate' where participants have a high level of influence, we may run working groups and deliberative panels. These types of tools would not be appropriate at an 'consult' level where participants have limited ability to influence the decision.

Within a single project, different parts of the community or specific stakeholder groups may have different levels of influence and therefore be offered specific opportunities to participate.

Table 2: Level of influence and tool selection

IAP2 Spectrum	Level of influence	Example tools and techniques
Inform	No ability to influence the decision.	• Letter • Newsletter • Flyer, poster • Signage • Social media • Website
Consult	Low level of influence. Usually a requirement for feedback or more information by Council.	• Survey • Submission • Poll • Drop in / pop up
Involve	Moderate level of influence. Council and community benefit from an exchange in information.	• Interviews • Workshops • Focus groups • Community forum • Site visit
Collaborate	Moderate to high level of influence, decision making still lies with Council. Greater opportunities to influence the project through a planned and longer consultation process.	• Advisory groups • Working group • Deliberative panel
Empower	High level of influence. Decision making is placed in the hands of the public.	• Working group • Delegated Committees • Citizens Juries • Democratic voting