

Stage 1 - Community engagement report

Purpose

To understand the drivers and barriers of participation in Council engagement, how the community prioritises engaging with different areas of Council planning and decision making and the best methods of connecting with different segments of the Yarra community.

Figure one: stages and influence

Internal early 2019	External stage 1, (input to inform draft), mid to late 2019	External Stage 2, (feedback on draft), TBD
Involve	Consult/involve	Consult

Objectives - Stage 1 external engagement

- ensure traditionally underrepresented groups in Yarra are represented
- include methods specific to children and young people participation
- use a variety of outreach methods
- include methods specific to a range of dwelling types including public housing, private renting and multiunit developments

What did we ask?

Participants were asked:

‘What areas of Council decision making are most important to you?’

‘What would encourage you to have your say?’

‘What might stop you from having your say?’

‘What’s the best way to let you know about opportunities to have your say?’

Different surveying methods, including ranking and open ended responses were included.

Who did we hear from?

365 contributions were received through the general survey both online and via outreach activities. This data is supplemented with input gathered through workshops and direct outreach community service providers and Council advisory committees.

Figure two: engagement methods

Community stakeholders	Methods
Broad range of ages groups	Surveying achieved a good spread of ages from 19 to 80+ years (majority 26-65 year olds)

Community stakeholders	Methods
Children 0-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years engagement facilitated by Richmond Kindergarten • Trialing of methods to engage children, including activities during the Brunswick Street streetscape master plan, Carlton North LAPMS and Arts Strategy consultations • Working closely with the Family and Children's Services team to identify opportunities to leverage the skill and resources of our child service providers and educators
Young people 12-25 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop with 14-25 year olds through the Youth Services team (report provided to Council 14 October)
Residents of a range of dwelling types including public housing, private renting and multiunit developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey participants identified as multiunit apartment, stand-alone dwelling or share house renters. • Direct promotion to multiunit developments correlated with increased participation sufficient to show priorities and promotion preferences differed between owners and renters of multiunit developments
Public housing residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach at Harvest festival on Collingwood housing estate • Meetings with public housing tenants association and relevant neighbourhood houses
Homeless or at risk of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Marks outreach to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness showed a surprising level of email access and confirmed the positive role of our libraries and neighbourhood houses.
CALD communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 40 responses received through interpreters and/or translated surveys including Turkish, Chinese and Vietnamese. • Advice sought from Carringbush and Fitzroy Learning Network English as Second Language providers • Multicultural advisory committee • In person lunch consultation at Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House with interpreters
Advisory committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All advisory committees received invitation to participate • Direct meetings included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ arts and culture ○ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ○ bicycle/sustainable transport users

Community stakeholders	Methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ people with disability and carers ○ early years reference ○ environment and sustainability ○ heritage ○ multicultural ○ older persons reference group

What did we hear?

A total of 18 data sets and detailed input from targeted outreach provide a strong foundation for our policy focus and action plan. Below summarises the main themes and how we will respond through the draft policy and action plan.

Figure three: response themes

What we heard	Our response Community engagement action plan 2020-2024	Our response Community engagement policy 2020
1. How does it impact me? – making engagement approachable and accessible		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘How it impacts me or my family’ and ‘Knowing it will have a positive impact on my community’ were consistently, and significantly the main drivers of participation • CALD participants, however, identified ‘having enough information’ as the major factor in participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore place-based online engagement methods and tools where appropriate to facilitate a neighbourhood approach. 	<p>Policy principles: Representative, meaningful and accessible</p> <p>Policy sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who we engage with ○ Our tools and methods ○ Transparent and accountable ○ Understanding our community
2. Transparency as a driver of participation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency issues; knowing the impact and level of influence, as well as feeling heard consistently rate as high drivers of participation across all demographics • These factors measure far higher in value than the survey being quick and easy <p>Note: a previous poor experience of participation rated extremely low as a barrier for all demographics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting back model and procedure is included in Community Engagement Process Guide and planning and evaluation templates and a consistent model of reporting back to the community is reflected on the Your Say Yarra Website. • A range of engagement methods for different levels of engagement and their appropriate usage are embedded in our process guide and templates. 	<p>Policy principles: Meaningful, transparent and accountable</p> <p>Policy sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When we engage ○ How we engage ○ Our tools and methods ○ Transparent and accountable

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the community's time and resources are respected by selecting engagement methods, (including deliberative processes where necessary), that are appropriate to the project scope, purpose and the level of influence available to the community. 	
3. Informed engagement		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information was a key driver for the CALD participants (more than double personal impact) • Information was a consistent theme for public housing residents (data showed the need to communicate the role of Council and the issues that can be influenced beyond DHHS functions) • Making information accessible and through the right channels is also a key driver for 12 to 25 year olds and renters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help the community engage meaningfully with complex or technical content explore the use of different online methods and tools to present complex information in an accessible, relatable and interactive way. 	<p>Policy principles: Representative, accessible and meaningful</p> <p>Policy sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How we engage ○ Our tools and methods
4. Understanding and mapping community outreach		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach through community groups and organisations was consistently highlighted in our targeted outreach as a valid promotional tool for our CALD communities • The neighbourhood/community first approach requires better mapping of local organisations and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help proactive outreach, create a centralised and regularly updated database of community contacts, including; multicultural community groups, public housing representative organisations, local sporting groups, business associations, resident groups and other relevant community based, peak body or advocacy groups. 	<p>Policy principles: Representative, accessible, respectful, and flexible</p> <p>Policy sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who we engage with ○ Understanding our community

5. Engaging our renter population

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yarra News and Yarra Life rate consistently high as preferred promotion, but for renters social media by far the most preferred medium • Changes in priority areas show libraries are top ranking priority for renters moving from mid-range for all other demographics. • Multi-unit development renters rate open space higher than MUD owners who rate urban planning higher (subtle differences potentially brought about by age and financial investment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop creative social media campaigns to support informed and meaningful engagement that encourages the participation of a broader audience, particularly renters and young people • Upcoming examples will be the Yarra Planning Scheme exhibition and Open Space Strategy 	<p>Policy principles: Representative, meaningful and respectful</p> <p>Policy sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who we engage with ○ Our tools and methods ○ Understanding our community
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6. Children and young people

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 to 25 year olds want to be better informed on the role of Council, how to influence decisions and highlighted the need for accessible locations and times • Working with schools and early learning centres highlighted different perspectives children bring and the benefits of working with our experienced teachers who have direct relationships with the children • Early years participants in the consultation wanted to highlight the importance of hearing back from the engagement practitioners on what was heard and/or the outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to trial creative and age-appropriate approaches to deliver meaningful engagement with children and young people. • Guide with tips, principles, statutory obligations, useful case studies and reference to available resources is launched and available on intranet. This is supported by library of physical, age appropriate engagement resources and professional development delivered to teams routinely engaging children in their practice. • Develop an effective, youth-led approach to engaging young people aged 12 to 25. 	<p>Policy principles: Representative, accessible, meaningful and flexible</p> <p>Policy sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who we engage with ○ Our tools and methods ○ Understanding our community
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