



Community Engagement Policy

Policy Statement

The Shire of Denmark is committed to inclusive, transparent, and responsive engagement with its community. This policy provides a framework for consistent, high-quality engagement practices that ensure community input informs Council decision-making and strengthens public trust.

This policy establishes a consistent framework for high-quality community engagement across the Shire. It aligns with the *Community Engagement Operational Standard*, *Social Media Operational Standard*, and the best practice principles of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

Council supports community engagement that is:

- Inclusive – Actively seeks diverse perspectives, including those of underrepresented groups.
- Transparent – Communicates openly about decisions, processes, and outcomes.
- Responsive – Values community input and integrates it into decision-making.
- Accountable – Commits to regular review and public reporting of engagement outcomes.

Scope

This policy applies to all Shire employees and contractors involved in planning, delivering, or evaluating community engagement.

Policy Commitment

Council commits to implementing this policy through:

Strategic Oversight

Council designates the CEO to develop a *Community Engagement Operational Standard* as the guiding framework for all engagement activities across the Shire.

Digital and Social Media Engagement

Council supports the use of digital platforms—such as *Your Denmark*—and social media to expand access, encourage participation, and enhance transparency in engagement processes.

Community Survey

The Shire will conduct the *Community Satisfaction Survey*, conducted on a biennial basis or as otherwise determined by Council. This survey will capture community priorities, perceptions, and satisfaction with services. The results will inform strategic planning and support continuous improvement. The survey will be sent to community members listed across any Shire databases, including the Rates, Library and Recreation Centre databases.

Key Projects

Council will receive a written report on the engagement plans for major projects—those with significant community impact, strategic importance, or substantial investment. These plans will outline key engagement activities, timelines, and methods to ensure meaningful community input and participation.

Community-Council Relationship

Council is committed to building trust through respectful dialogue, active listening, and transparent decision-making.

Responsibilities

Effective community engagement is a shared responsibility across the organisation and its partners.

The Council provides strategic oversight and leadership, setting budgets, endorsing key engagement plans, and utilising community input to inform decision-making.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for day-to-day management and ensures organisational alignment with this policy, and oversees the implementation of engagement strategies.

Contractors and consultants engaged by the Shire to undertake community engagement are expected to adhere to this policy and relevant operational standards when undertaking engagement activities. They must ensure that their methods reflect best practice principles and contribute to the Shire’s commitment to meaningful and respectful community engagement.

Policy Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of engagement practices and this policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure continuous improvement, relevance, and alignment with best practice standards. Any updates to the policy will be informed by evaluation findings and community feedback.

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