Community Engagement Policy

Engagement Summary Report

February 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

Postal Address

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Introduction

Project background

City of Port Phillip's Community Engagement Policy (Policy) is ready for a review and refresh. Our current Policy was created in 2021, after the Victorian Government changed the Local Government Act (2020) and required all Councils to have a Community Engagement Policy.

Community Engagement Policies must apply five principles of community engagement, as well as give guidance on how Council will conduct deliberative engagement.

To help inform our review and refresh of the Policy, we are:

- Comparing our current Policy to other Victorian council's Community Engagement Policies
- Undertaking a review of best practice community engagement
- Reviewing our current community engagement practice and data to see where we have gaps and what we can improve
- Gathering feedback from our community to see where we have gaps and what we can improve

All this input will help create an updated Policy.

What we set out to achieve

During November – December 2024, we undertook a broad round of community engagement to seek community input that would help us shape a draft Community Engagement Policy.

The purpose of the engagement project was to:

- Find out what would make it easier for the community to give feedback on Council projects

- Identify gaps in our current engagement practice

- Identify barriers to engagement

- Apply the five principles of community engagement in the Local Government Act 2020 to our local context.

About this report

The purpose of this report is to summarise the key themes in the feedback we heard from the community during this engagement.

Before reading this report

The following should be considered in reading this report:

- The information in this report is based on qualitative research and does not necessarily reflect the views of a statistically representative sample of the community.

- Participants attending the community events were self-selecting. As such, the key themes of conversations at these events may reflect only a limited proportion of the local community.

- City of Port Phillip strives to include diverse voices in our engagement activities. We acknowledge, however, that some people are likely to have experienced barriers to participation in the activities that are outlined in this report – including

people with disability, multicultural communities, older people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and others.

- The word '**participants'** is used to describe the total group of community members and stakeholders who contributed to this engagement process. The terms '**respondents'** is used to talk about the sub-group of total participants who responded to a specific question or engagement activity.

- The information and views presented in this report are a summary of the opinions, perceptions and feedback heard from across all the engagement activities. The feedback has not been independently validated. As such, some information maybe factually incorrect, unfeasible or outside of the scope of this project.

- This report summarises key feedback from participants and does not preclude the project team from considering community feedback in its original format.

- The report summarises the feedback from engagement activities. While every effort is made to include the full breadth of feedback provided, not all comments, views or advice are shown in the findings of this report. Where appropriate, a mix of quotes, themes and metrics are used to convey community feedback.

- We acknowledge that, while efforts are taken to manage duplication, there is potential for double-counting where participants have attended multiple events, and/or completed online activities via the *Have Your Say* website.

- Detailed participant demographic data was not collected or mandatory across all engagement events and activities. This may affect the weight of findings about community participation. Where appropriate, response numbers for each question are displayed or acknowledged.

- This report focuses on the communication and engagement activities delivered by Council in a planned engagement process. It does not necessarily include events, meetings, surveys, petitions, or communications organised by the community or third parties.

What we did

Between Saturday 16 November to Monday 18 December 2024, we delivered a range of communication activities to let the community know about the Community Engagement Policy review and collected feedback through a mix of engagement activities.

Note that one earlier engagement activity was conducted in August 2024, at Council's Youth Summit. The data collected from this activity has been included the engagement findings in this report.

Communications activities

To increase awareness of the engagement process, we did the following:

	Newsletters x 6	Project information and an invitation to engage was included in the following Council newsletters during the engagement period: • 19 November & 10 December – Help Shape Our City community engagement newsletter • 10 December – Community Sector Newsletter • 16 December 2024 – Divercity • 10 December - What's on at the Library
	Social media posts x 1	A social media story was included Instagram to promote the engagement process.
	'Have your say' website	Council's dedicated engagement website, 'Have your say' included a page for this project, with information on the process, a timeline, contact details, and opportunities to engage.

Engagement activities

To collect feedback from the community we did the following activities:

**Survey
(Available online
and printed)**

This survey collected demographic details about participants, and asked for community feedback on:

- What would make it easier to give feedback on Council projects?
- Open feedback on how Council applies the 5 principles of community engagement
- Individual engagement preferences (optional)

The survey was available in English and hard copies were provided at face-to-face activities.

**Neighbourhood
Pop-ups x 8**

This project delivered a series of 8 x 2-hour pop-ups in neighbourhoods around Port Phillip. These are designed to engage community members who may not otherwise participate. The pop-ups were delivered in the following locations:

- 16 November, Middle Park, Armstrong St
- 16 November, Elwood, Ormond Rd
- 20 November, South Melbourne, South Melbourne Central
- 23 November, St Kilda, Acland St
- 28 November, Balaclava, Carlisle St
- 29 November, Ripponlea, Glen Eira Rd
- 30 November, Melbourne, St Kilda Rd
- 20 November, Port Melbourne, Bay St

Participants were invited to hear about the project, discuss with a staff member, add a comment to an activity board and jump online to complete the longer survey if they wanted to.

**Library pop-in
sessions x 4**

3 x 2-hour drop-in events at local libraries to talk with community members about what would make it easier for them to share feedback on Council projects. Participants were able to talk to the project team and add their feedback to an activity board. Drop-in sessions were held at the following locations:

- 4 December, Tiny Tots Storytime, Port Melbourne Library
- 6 December, Baby Rhyme Time, St Kilda Library
- 9 December, Tiny Tots Storytime, Albert Park Library
- 10 December, Conversation Class, St Kilda Library

**Community group/event
pop-in sessions
x 5**

Members of the project team reached out to community groups and attended existing programs and events to collect feedback. Staff popped into existing community group events to ask 1-3 broad questions, collected via activity board and written notes from staff. Staff notes from these discussions have been integrated into the findings, along with participant feedback collected on activity boards. Group and event pop-ins included:

- 1 August, Youth Summit, St Kilda
- 3 December, International Day of People with Disability event, St Kilda Library, St Kilda
- 6 December, Park Towers Breakfast Club, South Melbourne
- 14 December, Park Towers Christmas Party, South Melbourne
- 17 December, Linking Neighbours program, Elwood

Workshops x 5

Workshops were conducted where possible with Council's Advisory Committees and some targeted cohorts. These included small group discussions with

Council staff scribing notes, and/or participants writing individual feedback.

Workshops conducted included:

- 3 December, Youth Advisory Committee Workshop, St Kilda
- 4 December, Advisory Committee Workshop, St Kilda Town Hall, St Kilda
- 6 December, St Kilda Park Primary School, St Kilda West
- 13 December, Alma Road Neighbourhood House, St Kilda East
- 14 December, Port Melbourne Men's Shed, South Melbourne

Interviews x 2

1:1 interviews with interpreters were conducted with two multicultural community organisations. Community organisations were invited to give feedback and two responded. These involved a 1:1 discussion with Council staff scribing notes.

Interviews conducted included:

- 18 December, Association of Former Inmates of the Nazi Concentration Camps and Ghettos from the Former Soviet Union
- 18 December, Yachad Senior Citizens Club

Reach and participation

Reach through communications activities

Activity	Reach	Insights
Newsletters	**17,234 subscribers**	• 19 November, Help Shape Our City (3,195 recipients), 63.47% open rate • 10 December, Help Shape Our City (3362 recipients) • 10 December, Community Sector Newsletter (1303 recipients), 49.04 open rate • 16 December, Divercity (12,569 recipients), 41.79% open rate
'Have your say' website	**167 views**	• Most visitors came to the website directly (141 visitors) • Peak visitation and contribution occurred after the Divercity newsletter was sent.

Participation by engagement activity

Approximately **290** community members were engaged in this process, generating **388** contributions to this project.

This was spread across the engagement activities below:

Activity	Number of participants	Number of contributions	Insights
Survey	16	19	• Low participation in the online survey. • End of the year and other engagement activities may have contributed to a lower response rate.
Neighbourhood pop-ups	78	72	• Pop-ups were an effective method of getting rapid

|			
			• feedback on the one main question we were asking. • Opportunity to hear from a broad range of people who don't usually engage with Council.
Library pop-in sessions	15	15	• Reached a diverse group of community members who use Council's libraries. • Reached carers of young children due to coinciding with story time sessions. • Also reached people who speak multiple languages who were attending an English Conversation class.
Community group/event pop-in sessions	102	168	• These sessions tried to reach community members who may face barriers to participating by conducting these in familiar environments and through existing programs and activities. • Includes the Youth Summit from August 2024.
Workshops	77	112	• Mix of community groups inviting Council to attend an existing program to deliver a workshop (in response to a call-out from Council), and Council inviting members of existing Advisory Committees to attend a large workshop on the Council Plan and Community Engagement Policy.
1:1 interviews	2	2	• Offered to multicultural community groups, with the option for an interpreter.

Who we heard from

Demographics

Through our online surveys, as well as the neighbourhood pop-ups and some of our community pop-ins and workshops, we asked questions about participants' demographic details.

Of the total 290 participants, 94 people chose to share comprehensive demographic information with us. With approximately one in three participants providing their demographics, we know that there was significantly higher representation from certain cohorts than outlined below.

The following explores the demographics collected.
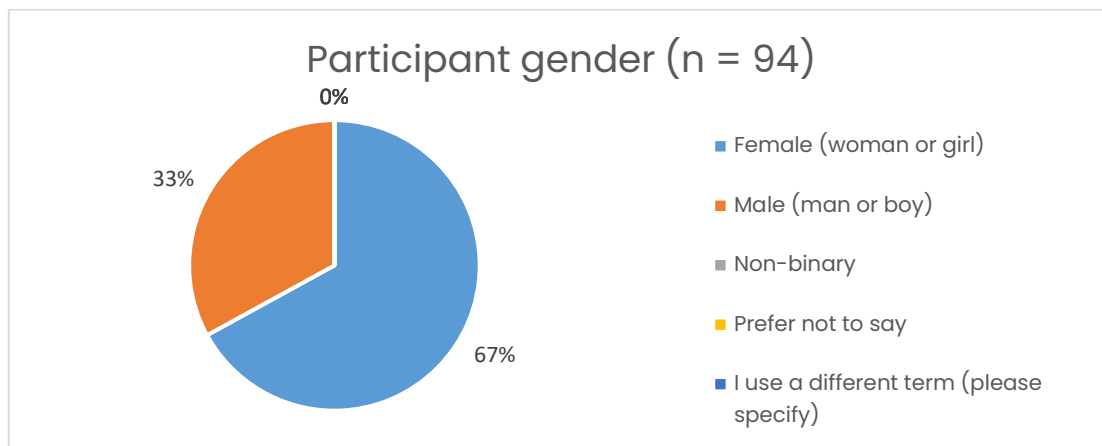
Age range

Participant age range (n =165)
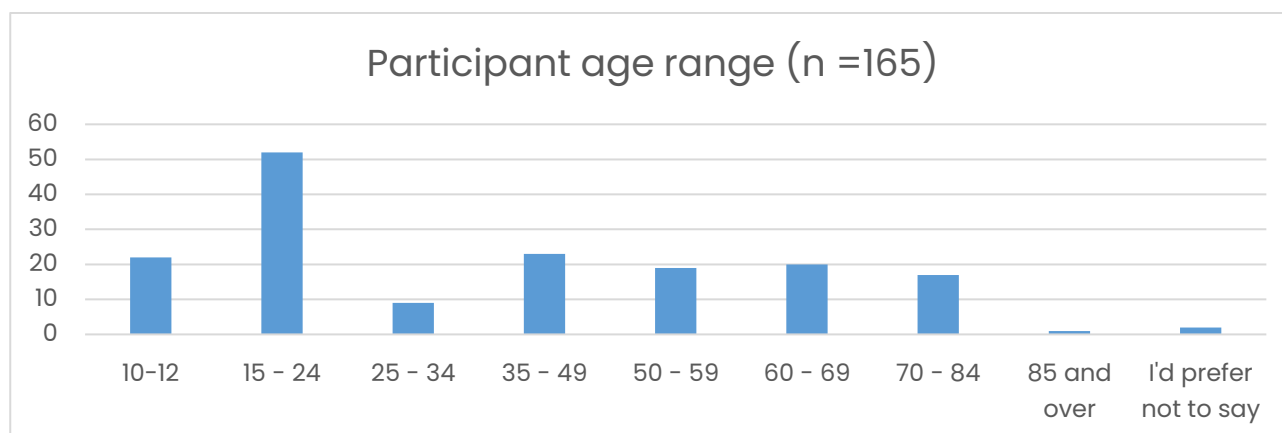
While the graph shows high youth participation (under 24), primarily from the Youth Forum, it likely underrepresents seniors (over 60). This is because age wasn't recorded at events like Men's Shed and library talks, where many older people likely attended.

Gender

Of the 94 participants that responded to the question of gender, most (67 per cent) identify as female (woman or girl). Approximately, one third of participants (33 per cent) identified as male (man or boy), and non as non-binary or using a different term.

Greater representation from females may be due to the many face-to-face activities that were held at family-focused events (e.g., library events, breakfast/homework clubs) where women were often present with young children.

Suburb of residence
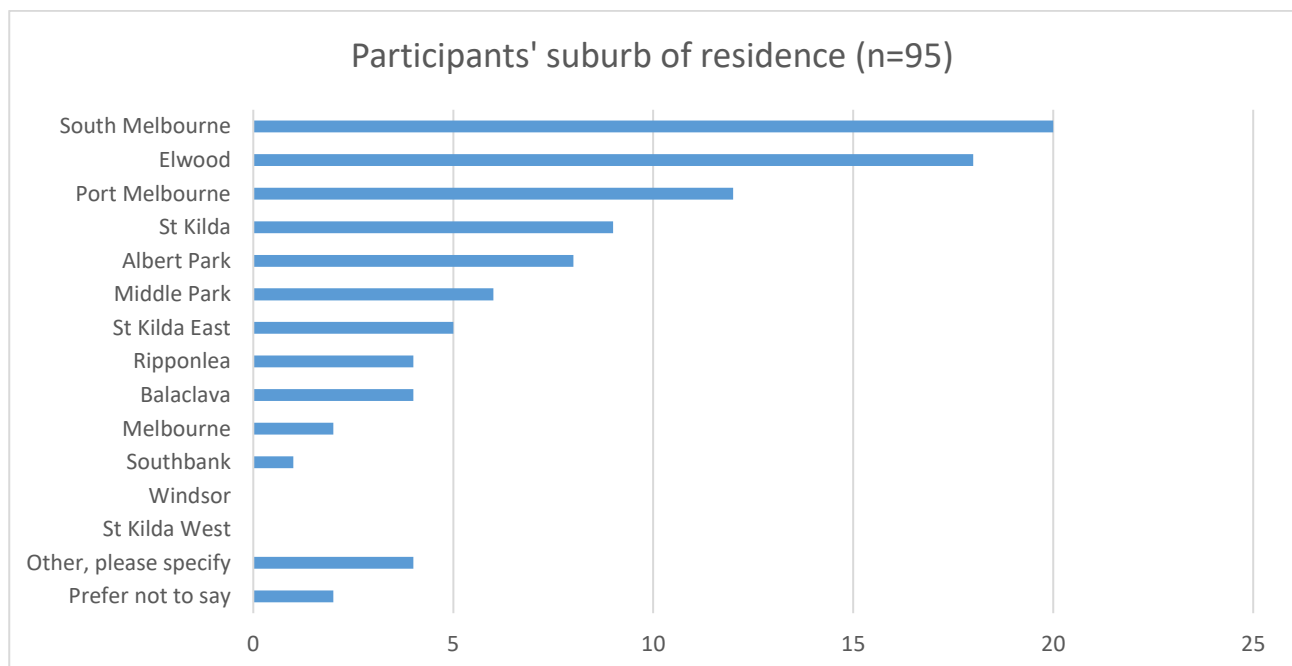
Diversity and inclusion

We asked people if they identified with any of the following statements, 94 participants responded. The statements included:

- 'I speak a language other than English at home' (10 responses).
- 'I am a person with disability' (5 responses).
- 'I identify as LGBTIQA+' (4 responses).
- 'I am from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background' (1 response).

Anecdotal evidence suggests significantly higher participation from non-English speakers and people with disability than reflected in the responses. This discrepancy arises because demographic data was not collected at events specifically targeting these groups, such as the Disability Forum, Park Towers end-of-year event, and English Conversation Club.

Previous engagement with Council
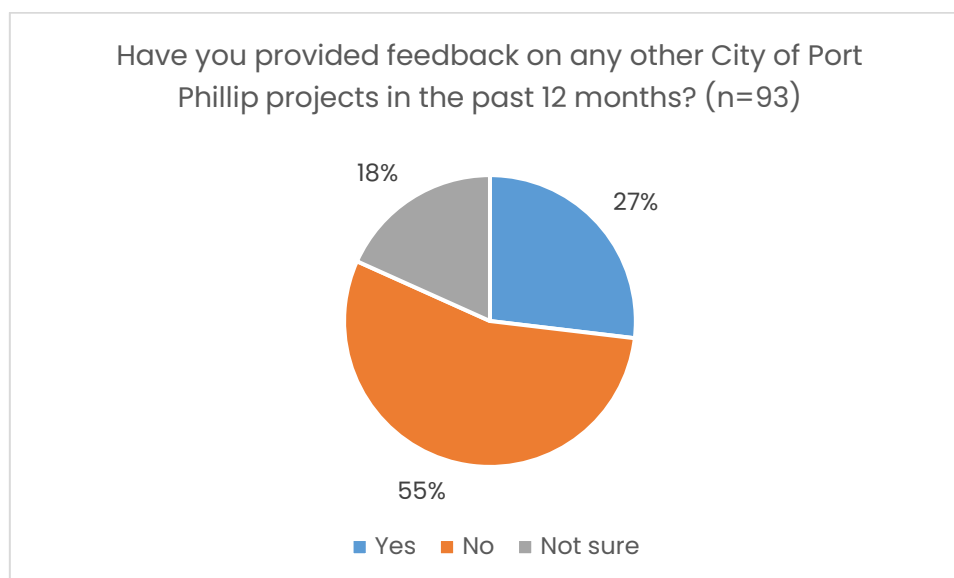
To help us understand if we were engaging with new community members, we asked participants had provided feedback on any other Council projects in the past 12 months. In total, 27 per cent of participants said they had provided feedback to Council in the past 12 months; 55 per cent of participants said they had not, and 18 per cent were unsure.

Target groups

We reached out directly with tailored activities to several groups who we know are usually under-represented in our current community engagement (compared to the demographic breakdown in the ABS census data on our local government area). This was to make sure we gathered insights on practical ways we could make it easier for these groups of people to share feedback on Council projects.

Council Advisory Committees

All Council's Advisory Committees were invited to attend a workshop to share their feedback:

- o Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC)
- o Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC)
- o Port Phillip Multi-faith Network
- o Business Advisory Group (BAG)
- o Art Acquisition Reference Committee
- o Rupert Bunny Foundation Visual Arts Fellowship Committee
- o The LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee (Rainbow AC) and Cultural Heritage Reference Committee were invited by didn't attend.

Children

We heard from children aged 6 – 12 years old (approximately) through:

- A dedicated interactive workshop at St Kilda Park Primary School
- A pop-in session with informal discussions with children and carers at the Park Towers Breakfast Club

Young people

We heard from young people aged 15-18 years old through:

- A pop-up stall with quick poll questions at the Youth Summit in August 2024
- A dedicated workshop with Council's Youth Advisory Committee

People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

We heard from people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds through:

- Council's English Conversation Class at St Kilda Library
- Park Towers Breakfast Club
- Park Towers end of year Christmas celebration.
- 1:1 interview with two multicultural community organisations

Men

We heard from men through:

- A workshop at Port Melbourne's Men's Shed

What we heard

Summary

Overall, five major themes emerged from this community consultation.

1. **Offer a range of engagement methods:** Respondents said that it is important for Council to provide a mix of ways people can share their feedback on projects. This response was consistently found across all diverse groups of people we heard from. This included a mix of face to face, online and written ways to share feedback. This also involved suggestions of outreach into groups, places and spaces where the community already connects. Council staff who are accessible and approachable, including staff who speak different community languages, were also identified as an important part of delivering these activities.

2. **Offer a range of communication methods:** Using a mix of ways to communicate was identified by respondents as important to helping the community find out about opportunities to share their feedback. A mix of online and physical communication methods were highlighted, including e-newsletters, posters, notices in the post and printed newsletters. Council does already use a mix of methods to communicate, although it varies from project to project, so this feedback may also point to a gap in respondent connection to Council's communication channels.

3. **Improve promotion (reach):** Respondents emphasised the need for broader promotion of opportunities to share feedback on Council projects. This involved strategies to reach people who are not already connected to Council's communication channels, such as posters in locations which have high foot traffic, better search functions on Council's websites, inclusion in rates notices and promotion through resident groups (face to face and online).

4. **Connect via existing networks, groups and events:** Many respondents thought that Council could connect more with existing community groups, networks, and

local events to make the community aware of opportunities to share their feedback on Council projects. These outreach suggestions included through schools, sporting groups, community organisations and services, volunteer groups, businesses, markets and social media groups.

5. **Address barriers to participation:** Many respondents identified that there are people in our community who face challenges to sharing their feedback. This included language barriers, lack of time, digital literacy, lack of transport, not being able to join things during work hours and low or no literacy. Lots of practical suggestions were given of ways that Council could address these barriers.

We also provided the opportunity for the community to share feedback on how Council could apply the five principles of community engagement outlined in the Local Government Act (2020) in our own Community Engagement Policy. The feedback on these largely reiterated the feedback received above, and additionally highlighted:

- The need for Council to listen to people who are impacted by decisions, not just a small number of interest groups with an agenda.
- The importance of reporting back on how community feedback has been considered in making decisions.
- Communicating the role of Councillors and staff in community engagement.

Further detail and analysis of these themes and other smaller themes are explored in following sections.

What would make it easier to give feedback on Council projects?

We collected broad community feedback on this key question and received 347 responses. Responses have been summarised into the key themes below, ranked by most to least mentioned.
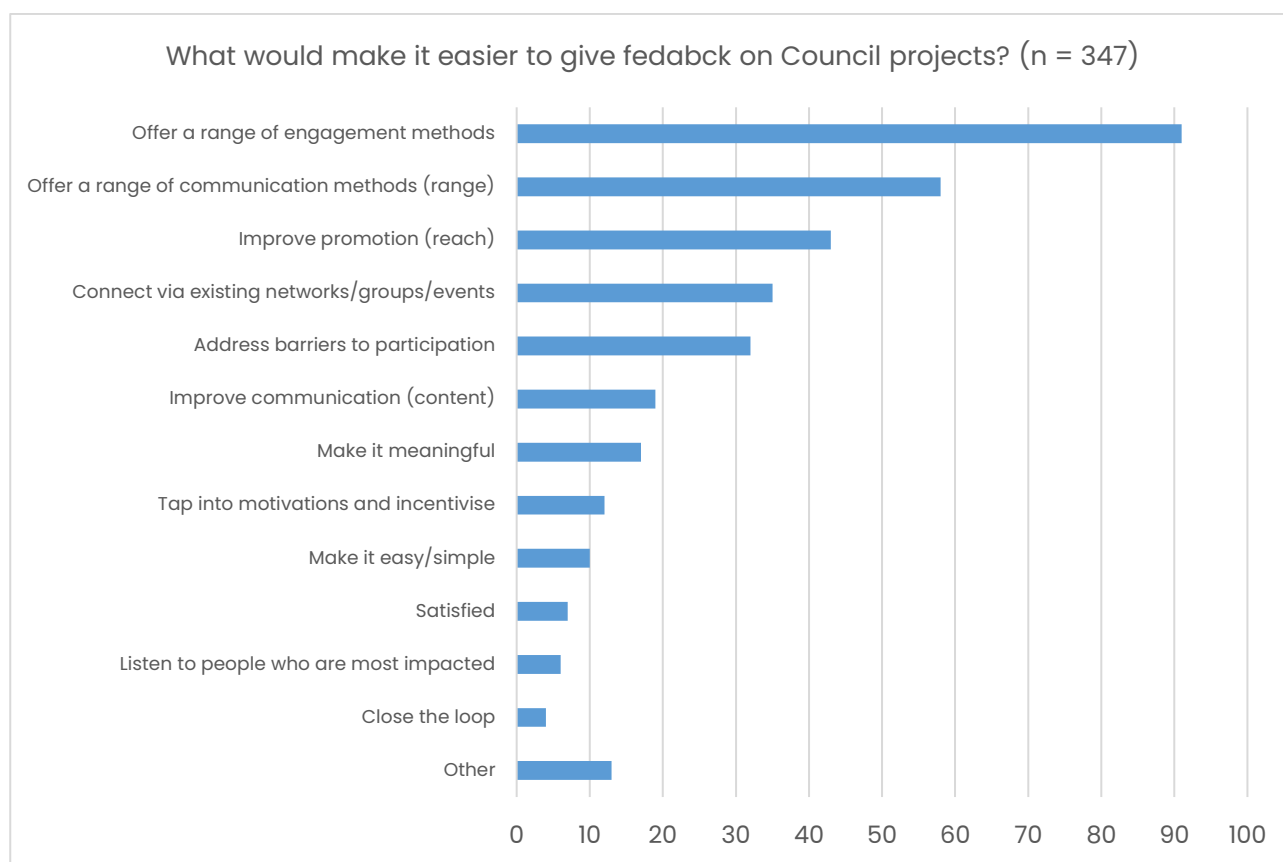
Offer a range of engagement methods

Twenty-six per cent of responses (91 contributions) suggested that offering a range of engagement methods would make it easier to give feedback on Council projects.

Overwhelmingly, most methods described were in person (or face to face). This could have been influenced by the fact that most methods we used to collect this feedback were in person.

Suggested engagement methods
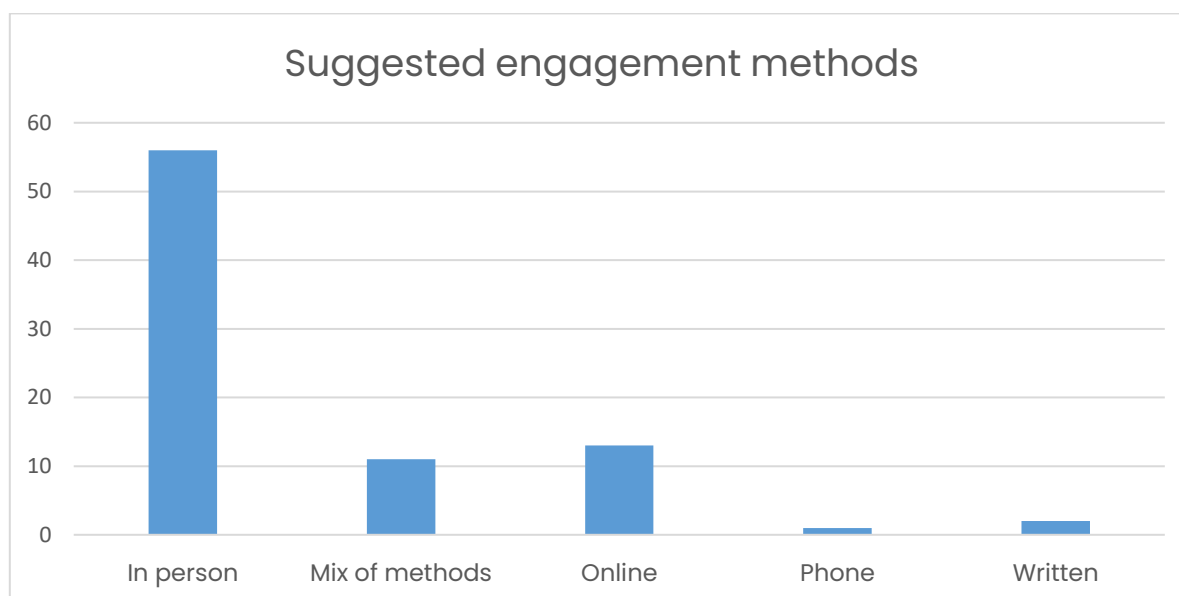
In person methods suggested included:

- At community spaces such as libraries, community centres, and close to where people gather
- Stalls or pop-ups for consultations in easy to access places such as shopping centres and markets
- Outreach through existing community groups, programs and events
- Groups where people could share ideas (including advisory groups, representative groups and citizen assemblies)
- Having staff or community connectors, including people who speak community languages or have the time to build relationships which support engagement

Other suggestions included:

- Mix of options: making sure there are a range of ways to provide feedback on a project
- Online: online surveys, quick polls and via email
- Written: postcards, letters and paper surveys
- Phone: phone surveys

Offer a range of communication methods

Seventeen percent of responses (58 contributions) suggested that a range of communication methods would make it easier for people to find out about opportunities to give their feedback on Council projects.

These were varied, with a mix of online, hard copy and other methods.

Council does currently communicate opportunities for community feedback using many of these methods. This could mean that there is a gap in awareness or reach, rather than communication methods.

Suggested communication methods
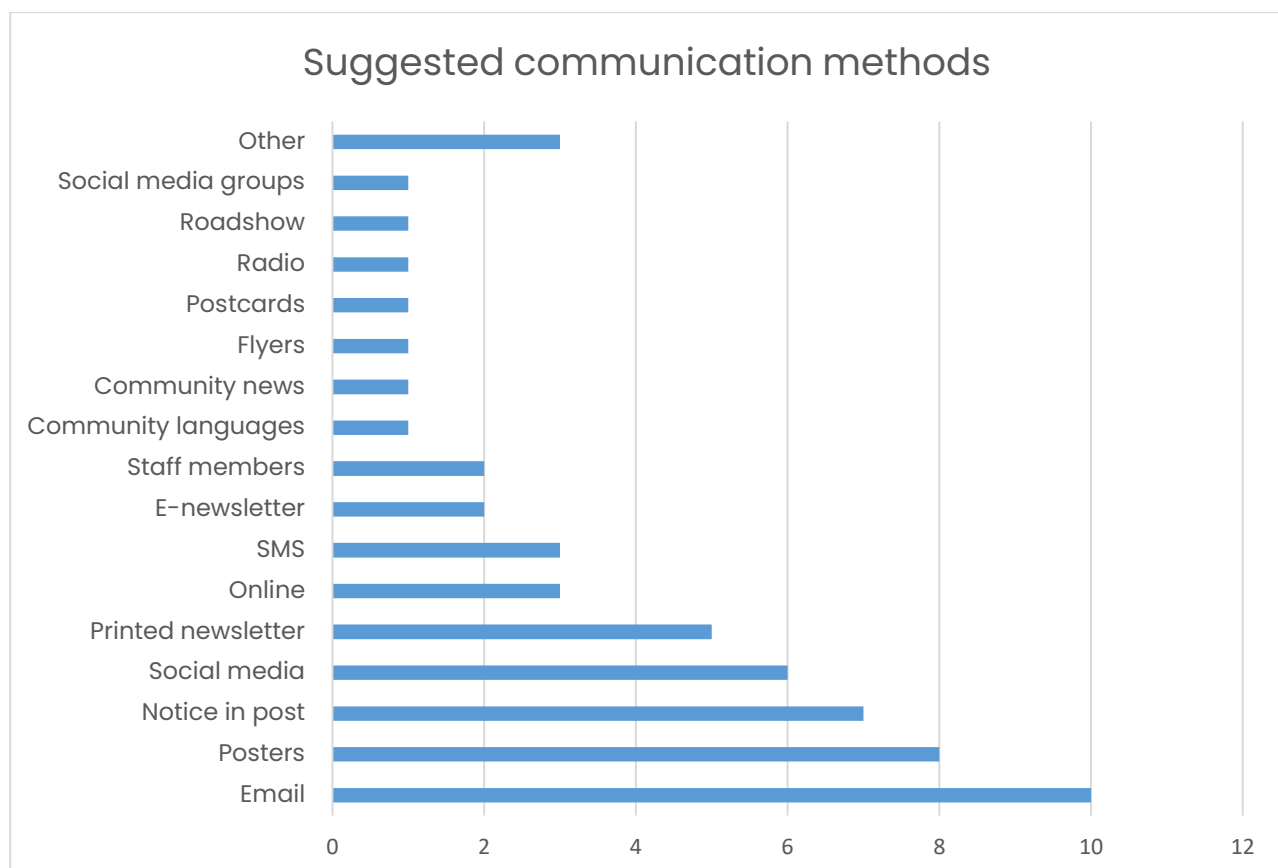
Improve promotion (reach)

Twelve percent of responses (43 contributions) suggested ways that Council could improve promotion of opportunities for the community to give feedback on Council projects.

This included:

- Posters in libraries, shopping centres, community centres and other high foot traffic locations or on-site
- Better SEO and search functions for the Have Your Say and Council websites
- Mailbox drops
- Promoting or distributing newsletters
- Inclusion in rates notices
- Promotion through resident groups
- Paid advertising

Connect via existing networks, groups and events

Ten percent of responses (35 contributions) suggested that Council could connect through existing networks, groups and events to reach the community with opportunities to give feedback.

This included through:

- Schools and kindergartens
- Sporting grounds or groups
- Community organisations and services
- Unfunded community groups
- Local businesses
- Resident social media groups
- Markets and festivals
- Local community leaders

Address barriers to participation

Nine percent of responses (32 contributions) identified that some people face challenges to giving feedback on Council projects.

Barriers included:

- Lack of awareness of the opportunity to give feedback
- Language barriers
- Lack of time
- Digital literacy
- Lack of transport
- Not being able to join in things during work hours
- Low or no literacy

Things that would overcome some of these barriers included:

- Face to face locations close to where people gather
- Having people who speak community languages delivering engagement activities, or arranging an interpreter when attending multicultural community groups
- Giving enough time for people to consider and give feedback
- Offering flexible options for people to give feedback
- Simple ways for people to give feedback
- Outreach to diverse groups of people in the community
- Community liaison staff at Council to connect with and support local groups to participate
- Out of hours support
- Transport assistance
- Information in accessible formats (e.g. for people who are vision impaired)
- Printed communication and information sessions for older people
- Ways for people with no literacy to give feedback

Improve communication (content)

Six percent of responses (19 contributions) suggested that improving the content of communication would make it easier for them to give feedback on Council projects.

This included:

- Making Council's website more user-friendly
- Communicate how feedback will be used

- Short summary one-pagers to report back on what feedback was received
- Better design of Have Your Say pages – it's not always easy to find information
- Better calls to action
- Make sure information is accurate, or Council staff/people working on behalf of Council have accurate information
- Make things clearer and simple – don't use acronyms of jargon
- Notify project participants when a project is updated on Have Your Say

Make it meaningful

Five percent of responses (17 contributions) suggested that knowing how their feedback would be used was important.

This included:

- Only asking for feedback when it can genuinely change something
- Not doing tokenistic or 'tick box' engagement
- Involving the community as much as possible
- Really considering and listening to community input
- Making it clear how feedback has influence decision-making
- Acting, not just consulting
- Knowing why Council needs to hear the community's feedback
- Knowing who and how this project will impact

Tap into motivations and incentivise

Three percent of responses (12 contributions) suggested that tapping into the motivations of participants or incentivising people to give feedback would make it easier.

This included:

- Making it relevant to the people Council is seeking feedback from
- Offering incentives or prizes
- Using food to bring people together
- Making engagement activities fun
- Paying people for their time when we are asking for more of their time

- Providing skill and experience development for young people

Make it simple and easy

Three percent of responses (10 contributions) suggested that making it simple and easy for people to give their feedback would help.

This included:

- Keep questions simple, short and relevant (e.g. 3 question poll)
- Use simple language so everyone can understand

Satisfied

Two percent of responses (7 contributions) stated that they were satisfied with the way Council currently engages, and had no further suggestions on what would make it easier for them to give feedback.

Listen to people who are most impacted

Two percent of responses (6 contributions) suggested the Council should focus on the people who are most impacted by a decision. This included residents, renters and "hard to reach" groups.

Close the loop

One percent of responses (4 contributions) suggested that Council needs to improve reporting back to participants on how their feedback has been used.

Other

Four percent (13 contributions) made other suggestions.

Feedback from young people at the Youth Summit

On 1 August 2024, City of Port Phillip hosted a Youth Summit for 70 young people, aged 15 to 18 years, from six local high schools and alternative education centres.
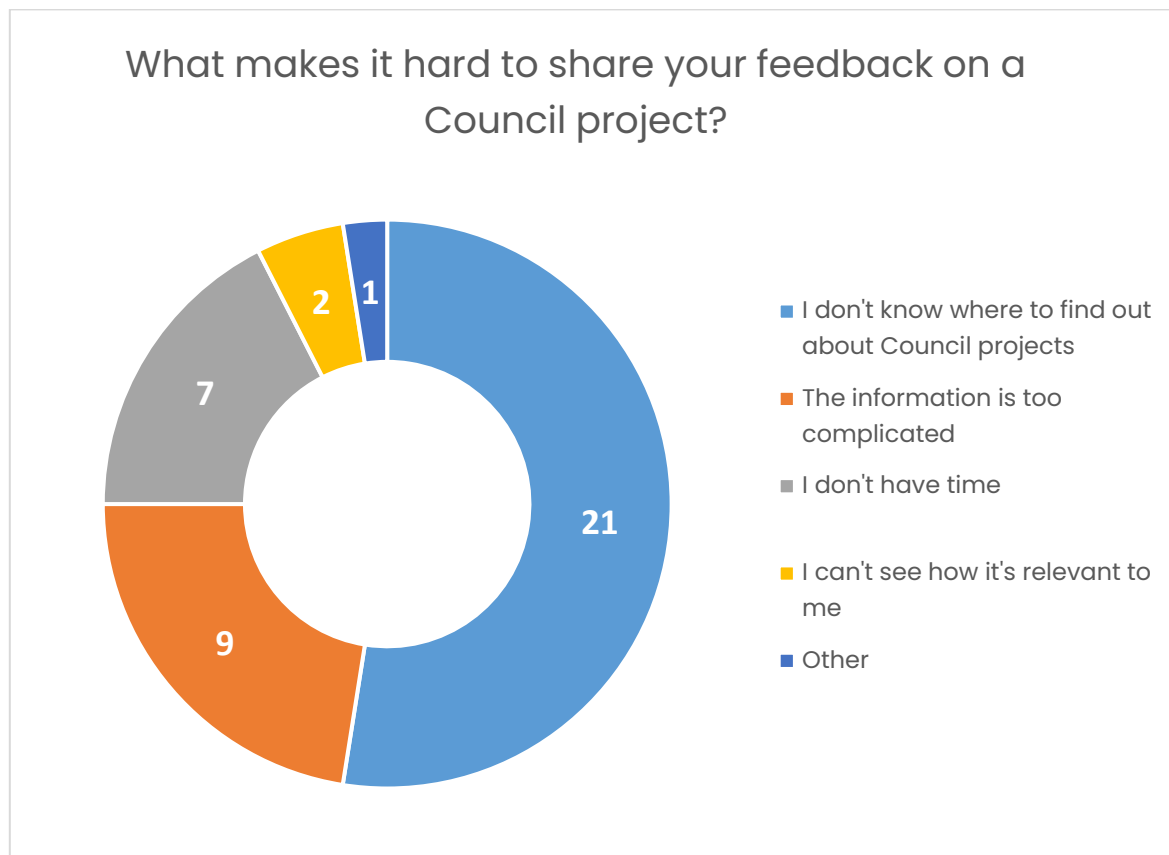
We conducted a rapid survey, incentivised with a gift voucher draw, to gather input form young people on how they would like to give feedback on Council projects.

49 young people participated in sharing their feedback in a rapid poll activity, where they could vote on pre-determined responses and share an "other" response if they wanted to.

Findings

What would motivate you to share your feedback on a Council project?

- I'm Interested in the topic — 13
- It gives me an opportunity to learn new skills and get experience — 10
- I'm rewarded for my feedback — 8
- It's happening in my neighbourhood — 7
- It's fun — 6
- I can meet new people — 7

(Additional segment: 7)

Young people polled chose being interested in the topic (13 contributions) and being provided with an opportunity to learn new skills and experience (10 contributions) as the key motivators for sharing feedback on a Council project.

What makes it hard to share your feedback on a Council project?

Legend:
- I don't know where to find out about Council projects
- The information is too complicated
- I don't have time
- I can't see how it's relevant to me
- Other

The biggest barrier to sharing feedbcak on Council projects for respondents was not knowing were to find out about Council projects (21 contributions). This was followed by information being too complicated (9 ccontributions) and not having enough time (7 contributions).

What ways do you like to share your feedback?
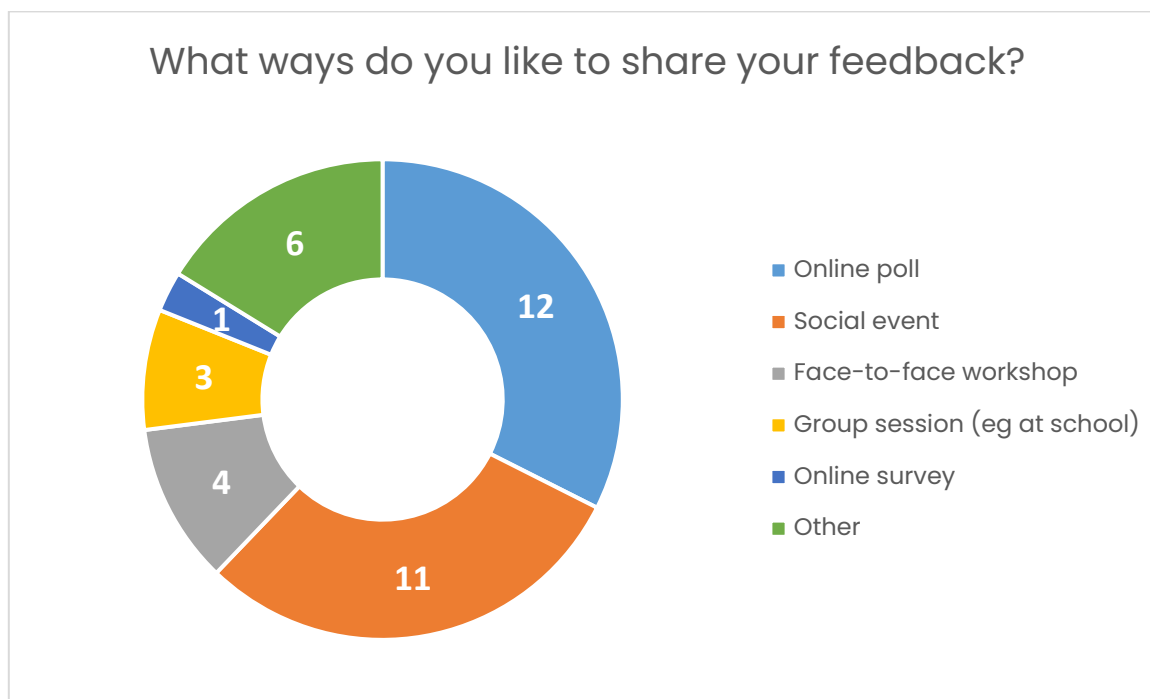
Overall, young people polled preferred to share their feedback face to face via a range of methods (18 contributions). Other ideas for how Council could hear from young people (6 contributions) included:

- Instagram poll
- More socials which are engaging
- Social media
- CoPP Youth Services Instagram account
- QR code posters linked to online forms
- Social media marketing

Feedback on applying the five principles of community engagement

Via the online survey, we asked for feedback on how we put the five principles of community engagement required by the Local Government Act 2020 into practice in our own Community Engagement Policy. The principles and examples of policy statements were provided for feedback.

16 respondents to the online survey provided feedback.

Responses are summarised below:

Principle 1
A community engagement process must have a clearly defined objective and scope. For example, we will: • Tell you why we want your feedback. • Tell you what your feedback can change, and what can't be changed. • Reduce consultation fatigue by scaling engagement project appropriately and combining engagement activities where possible. • Plan effective and efficient engagement processes.
Feedback summary
• Give dates in advance of when the community can give feedback. • Make sure community engagement is genuine: don't ask for feedback if it's not possible to influence anything. • Have a timeline and publishing policy. • People may not participate because they think it is a "tick-box" exercise. Show how the feedback has been consolidated and used. • Agree with this principle and suggested policies. • Make it clear who to contact at Council for feedback and who is responsible for what.

- Make it easy for people to find the information they need without being referred from one department to another.

Principle 2

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

For example, we will:

- Give you information so that you can share meaningful feedback with us.

- Give you enough time to share your feedback.

- Find creative and accessible ways which make it easy for everyone to give feedback.

Feedback summary

- Give people enough time to have the option of being involved.
- Email people to notify them of key dates for involvement.
- Send project-specific emails.
- Provide hard copy and electronic notifications of how to engage with Council to every home with the rates notices.
- Promote through TV advertising.
- Publish the feedback and the action that is being taken to address it/discuss it.
- More public forums to provide feedback.
- Council is already doing a good job of making background information available.
- The timing and detail of information provided is good currently.
- Attend family friendly festivals.
- Remind people through phone calls.

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.

For example, we will:

- Make sure we are not just hearing from the same people.

- Make sure people who are most impacted by a Council decision have the chance to share their views and feedback.
- Reach out to people who may not know about or usually hear from us.
- Understand who we are hearing from and who we need to work harder to hear from.

Feedback summary

- People in my community are not aware that they can get involved.
- Reach people through community groups.
- Agree with this principle: Council must listen to the right people and not just small interest groups with an agenda, especially if people don't live in an area/won't be impacted by changes being proposed.
- More mail-outs on projects in Port Phillip, especially face to face opportunities.
- More people would participate if they felt the feedback was transparent and being actioned. Council might need to reach out to specific groups they want to engage: seniors, young people, people experiencing disadvantage etc.
- Current feedback summaries, including demographics, are detailed. Support ongoing efforts to engage members of the community that need the most help are less likely to engage.
- It's good for Council to work to reach people, but the community also has a role to play in taking responsibility to share views and get their voices heard.
- Outreach to engage with people who are in public spaces.

Principle 4

Participants in community engagement are entitled to reasonable support to enable meaningful and informed engagement.

For example, we will:

- Find out what makes it hard for people to share feedback with us and take steps to make it easier.

- Plan and resource ways to gather feedback from our community which are easy, safe, welcoming, and accessible.

- Respect your time and contributions by planning engagement processes that build on previous conversations with community.

- Apply the *Child Safe Standards* to engagement with children and young people under 18 years old.

- Consider gender equality in how we plan, deliver and report on engagement.

- Make it easy for you to access interpreters, translated information and/or the National Relay Service if you need this.

Feedback summary

- Encourage participation with case studies.
- Open and not biased questions.
- Friendly and approachable staff.
- Seating and free cups of coffee.
- Overcoming cultural and language barriers.

Principle 5

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

- Be upfront and clear about how community feedback can influence a Council decision from the start.

- Summarise and share what we've heard from our community.

- Let you know how your input and feedback has been used.

- Present decision-makers, such as councillors, with the results of community engagement to inform their decision-making.

Feedback summary

- Did not realise that this was an option.
- Case studies on what previous engagements have achieved.
- If Council follows this principle and suggested policies here, it will build trust. This hasn't been happening and the community is jaded.
- Use all feedback to create good decisions.

- Explain how residents can attend Council meetings to present their views.
- This is the key missing step. Making the results of engagement public on Council's website and in the media. Councillors and staff should refer to this feedback in the discussions to reassure participants that their views are being heard.
- Transparent management of expectations

Other feedback

- Make it easier for people to find opportunities to be involved.
- Pop-ups on the weekends or after work are good.
- Be honest with the community who have the right to proper outcomes.
- Make sure feedback collation is unbiased by fringe groups or vested interests.
- Contact community groups.
- Communicate the role of Council employees and role of Councillors.
- Address the gap in reporting back to the community on the outcomes of their involvement.

Next steps

The draft Community Engagement Policy will be shared and for community feedback in mid-2025, with the aim of the Policy being presented to Council for endorsement in September 2025.

How this report will be used

This report will be used to inform the review and updating of City of Port Phillip's Community Engagement Policy, together with:

- Benchmarking against other Victorian Councils' Community Engagement Policies.
- Data on community engagement participation at City of Port Phillip.
- Community engagement preferences survey findings.
- Staff input and learnings from engagement on past projects.

How to stay in the loop

You can stay in the loop with the next phases of this project by:

- Following the project page on Council's Have Your Say website
- Subscribing to City of Port Phillip's community engagement newsletter: *Help Shape Our City*.