



GANNAWARRA
Shire Council

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2020-2025



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Interaction with our community happens daily and in various ways, therefore it is essential that Council communicates and engages with its community effectively. Effective engagement with the Gannawarra community, decision makers, partners and Council's own staff regarding Council's vision, plans and processes, is key to building a strong, informed, transparent and inclusive society.

Council's role is to represent and serve its community. This can only be achieved if it enables effective communication and engagement and by listening and responding to the needs of our community and other stakeholders.

Effective engagement enables Council to collect valuable information from our community and to consider that information in future decision-making. Engagement also means the community is involved in Council decisions and processes, which offers residents ownership of projects and services.

This strategy seeks to ensure timely, effective, dependable and targeted communication and engagement ensuring the community has access to information that is relevant, clear and transparent. This will be delivered through the alignment of this strategy to the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum, as it applies to Local Government identified in the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The strategy incorporates goals, builds upon and further improves communication and engagement with all Council stakeholders, including the local community, Councillors and Council staff, that are achievable and measurable for a small rural Council.

Importantly, the strategy encourages a whole of Council philosophy to engagement, ensuring consistency in messaging and frameworks to guide decision making, whilst exploring interactive engagement tools to further increase opportunities for participation in decision making by the community.

This document also aims to assist Council to share its story with the community to celebrate successes and build community pride.

The strategy will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis to ensure the actions outlined are being addressed and the goals and actions set out in this document are being achieved.



PURPOSE

The *Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025* outlines Council’s commitment to provide our Gannawarra community with genuine opportunities to contribute to and inform strategies, projects, services and decisions that affect them.

The strategy guides the delivery of community engagement processes across the organisation to better inform decisions in the planning of services, setting budgets, identifying and planning projects and developing policies and strategies.

Council acknowledges that engagement should be a planned process that aims to work with our community and stakeholders to shape decisions and actions in the delivery of Council’s services.

Strategic goals will be informed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum:



This strategy has been developed considering the IAP2 spectrum and community consultation, ensuring Council’s engagement with the community is committed to these principles, being transparent and deliberative.

BACKGROUND

Gannawarra Shire Council aims to communicate and engage with stakeholders to improve our service delivery, to build community capacity and ensure our community feels connected and involved in the Gannawarra's future. We will strive to be transparent in our actions and to fulfil our responsibilities to our community and partners.



COUNCIL'S ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Advocacy is a process that challenges inequities by collaboratively and actively working with communities and key stakeholders to bring about changes in policy, process, practice and attitudes in order to ensure communities' rights are upheld.

Advocacy is also about working in partnership. We have key partnerships with other local government authorities, State and Federal Governments, community and health organisations, and most critically we advocate to empower our communities.

REFERENCES

There are a number of references that should be considered as a part of the strategy development, one of these being the *Local Government Act 2020*. This legislation requires Council to undertake deliberative engagement, which can be broadly considered as authentic engagement with the community; good representation of the community in engagement activities; clear demonstration of how all views have been considered; accessible and relevant information available to the community to ensure the decision-making process and the community's level of influence is clear in each instance and that participants are fully informed. Council, under this legislation is also required to have a Community Engagement Policy which outlines the principles of engagement for the organisation.

The Victorian Auditor General's report "Public Participation and Community Engagement: Local Government Sector" (May 2017) utilised the IAP2 spectrum to analyse community engagement at a number of Councils in Victoria. The report found that many Councils have strong community engagement frameworks or plans, but these should be aligned with best practice and provide practical guidance to staff on the implementation. Additionally, a more robust evaluation of engagement measures would establish opportunities to improve the practices moving forward.

Gannawarra Shire Council's Council Plan 2017-2021 and Advocacy Strategy, both articulate support for community engagement:

Council Plan - Good Governance and Healthy Organisation – Engagement:

Strategies – Strategic Indicators:

- 1. Our community is consulted on issues that will affect them**
 - Council's performance with community consultation and engagement above industry benchmarks
- 2. Improve the community's ability to self-access information on Council's services and programs**
 - Increased traffic through Council's website
 - Increase in the number of online transactions

ORGANISATIONAL DEFINITION OF ENGAGEMENT

Council has adopted a definition of engagement for the purposes of this strategy, being;

“Engagement is the processes by which Council provides deliberate opportunities for the community to participate in and influence Council decision making. Effective community engagement results from a strong partnership between Council and the community, in shaping the future together.”

WHO IS THIS STRATEGY FOR?

Council's key stakeholders can be broadly categorised into the following four groups:

COMMUNITY

Council is elected by and responsible to its community, this includes:

- Residents
- Community groups
- Service users
- Businesses
- Tourists/Visitors

INFLUENCERS

Influence the ability of Council to gain funding and benefit from policy decisions:

- State and Federal Government representatives
- Media
- Local business and community leaders
- Leadership organisations such as the Murray Tourism Board or Council cluster organisations
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Focus groups

PARTNERS:

Ensure Council is able to offer its range of services to the community:

- Organisations and businesses which partner with Council to deliver services
- State and Federal Government agencies
- Neighbouring councils
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Local health services

ORGANISATION

Responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Council and the ability of Council to serve its community:

- Councillors
- Council staff
- Volunteers
- Contractors



HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE AND ENGAGE

Council undertakes various forms of engagement with the community which include media releases, newspaper advertising, newsletters, social media content and radio advertising.

Community engagement at Gannawarra Shire Council is a purposeful and planned process.

Council has open and respectful relationships with local media outlets, community groups, organisations and politicians.

Existing communication and engagement methods (excluding phone calls, emails, meetings and face-to-face communication that occurs on a day-to-day basis) consist of:

- **Media releases** – A number of releases are distributed to local media outlets (print, radio and television) as well as local community newsletters and neighbourhood houses.
- **Gannawarra News** – Fortnightly advertorial in the *Koondrook-Barham Bridge*, *Gannawarra Times* and on Council’s website and emailed via MailChimp to community development committees and progress associations, that covers works updates, events and new plans, projects, Mayor’s message and opportunities for consultation.
- **Gannawarra Connect** – A hard copy community newsletter written and distributed by Council at least six times per year, which provides updates on Council services and projects.
- **3SH/MIXX FM contract** – Two radio interviews with the Mayor each month and advertising used for a range of Council services and events.
- **Councillor in the Loop** – Weekly newsletter of works and internal news. Distributed to Councillors, senior staff and management team.



COMMUNICATION

- **Facebook** – Regular posts about events, projects and services on Council’s four pages:
 - Gannawarra Shire Council’s Facebook page: approximately 3,169 followers.
 - Gannawarra Library Services Facebook page: approximately 500 followers.
 - Gannawarra Healthy Lifestyles Facebook page: approximately 322 followers.
 - Gannawarra Children’s Centre Facebook page: approximately 565 followers.
- **Twitter** – Regular posts about events, services and projects: approximately 866 followers.
- **LinkedIn** – Regular posts about projects and services.
- **YouTube** – Regular posts about projects and services.
- **Staff newsletter** – Monthly all staff newsletter, which covers human resources and payroll messages, as well as events, project updates, Council news and social/personal achievements.
- **Website** – Publishes news, *Gannawarra News*, grants information and events for residents, visitors and media outlets.
- **Public notices** – As required by the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- **Intranet** – To communicate with staff about operational issues.
- **Posters, brochures and flyers** – Distributed in hard copy and electronic form to various community organisations and businesses e.g. Art & Culture yearly brochure.
- **Noticeboards** – Display of posters, service information and tourism information across various noticeboards within our communities.

ENGAGEMENT

- **Seniors Advisory Group** – Group of local senior residents who meet four times a year to discuss issues affecting older people in the community.
- **Partnership meetings** – Such as Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting, Murray River Group of Councils and resource and emergency management forums.
- **Face-to-Face Engagement** – Council officers and Councillors regularly meet with community members and community groups regarding different Council services and projects.
- **Community development and progress groups in each town** – Council officers and Councillors regularly attend to provide information on current projects and services and to collect feedback from members of the group.
- **Kerang Elders Group** – Councillors and staff work with the Kerang Elders Group on local issues



CONSULTATION OUTCOMES – WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

In the development of this strategy, Council released a survey to gain feedback on our current engagement practices and opportunities for improvement. Stakeholders – including residents, business owners, community group representatives, media outlets and political representatives – had the opportunity to complete the Community Engagement Survey, which was open for submissions between 14 February 2020 and 13 March 2020.

The survey was able to be completed using the following methods:

- Online via SurveyMonkey; and
- In hard copy, with copies available for collection at Council’s Customer Service Centres, Gannawarra Library Service branches, at the Quambatook Store, and via Council’s Community Care employees.

As part of the survey process, four listening post sessions were held throughout the Gannawarra:

- Cohuna on 27 February (12 noon-1pm);
- Kerang on 5 March (10am-11am) and 12 March (12 noon-1pm); and
- Koondrook on 12 March (8.30am-9.30am).



329

people completed the survey, either online or in hard copy

80%

of the 329 people who completed the survey used Social Media more than once a day



63%

received information from Council via Social Media



51%

of respondents said they engage with Council via phone



35%

said they engaged with Council in person



60%

of respondents did not engage with Council using Social Media



67%

of respondents said they accessed Council’s website in the past six months



59%

of respondents indicated they did not feel they were able to contribute to Council’s decision making process







50% of respondents stated they would prefer Council connects with them to provide a flow of information back and forth through community forums and meetings.

The survey made it clear that many community members who are not linked to the internet, would prefer Council connected with them via a letter and posters put up in local shops.



57% of respondents felt they could not influence Council's decisions.



17% thought they could influence Council's decisions.



67% of respondents said they understand the role of Local Government.



50% said they understand the information provided to them by Council.

From this we learn that we need to be clearer and more concise in the information we provide our community.



61% of respondents agreed that the community needs to contribute to have ownership of Council projects and plans.

The top three types of information the respondents would like to receive from Council are as follows:



1. Council grants and projects
66%



2. Major projects and advocacy
65%



3. Events
63%

The top five preferred methods of receiving information from Council were ranked as follows:



1. Social media



2. *Gannawarra News*



3. News articles in local newspapers and community newsletters



4. Council meetings, community consultation sessions, forums or meetings



5. Council website

We asked our community how Council could better engage and this is what they said

Improve the website and develop an app.

More regular face-to-face updates on larger projects that are outside the control of the community and Council support to plan out future strategic projects.

Decision makers need to go to community group meetings.

Provide Council Minutes and upcoming projects in the newspaper and on social media on a daily/weekly basis.

More face-to-face communication between Council and the community.

Use local papers.

Consult each community before you do something like remove trees, so many programs are carried out without any prior knowledge of the people whose lifestyle is affected.

Community forums sound like a way to invite the wider community to participate. Responsibility for being informed should also fall on to community members.

Ask the community what we want (said many times over).

Livestream announcements, online polling for community feedback, more visual forms of information such as videos on YouTube. Screens in prominent areas of our towns easily updated with visual information.

Explain how consultation works, not every idea is a good idea and not everyone can get what they want. Decisions should be made on facts and data not what Mavis down the street thinks is best for her and her cats.

We asked our community how Council could better engage and this is what they said

Do a mail out with a reply-paid postcard asking each resident how they would prefer to be involved in news/decision making (make sure it asks for their email address)

Councillors need to get out and about more and talk to the members of the Gannawarra Shire.

Listen to what the community are saying and what they want. E.g. If someone says, "What about a new pool", instead of saying, "Oh, that will cost millions", show the community a copy of the quotes and what is being quoted on and let the community see if that is what they want.

More meetings in the street.

More interactive engagement. Have Council thought about using better forms of digital engagement?

Social media polls.

Public Q&A sessions.

OPPORTUNITIES

Although residents are largely happy with their involvement with Council and how much information they receive, the results of the February/March 2020 Community Engagement Survey indicate that there is scope for Council to improve the engagement process overall. This would ensure residents know how their feedback influenced decisions and that it was considered in Council's decision-making.

Council has made constructive improvements in its community engagement through implementation of actions from the previous *Communications and Engagement Strategy 2016-2020* which is indicated in the results from Council's February/March 2020 Community Engagement Survey. The focus will continue to be improved on engagement with our community by continually monitoring our strategy and ensuring we implement the actions outlined.

There are areas where improvements can be made to create a better understanding of Council's goals and functions with staff and the community, and to move from informing our community to engagement. For Council to get their messages and information out to the community, we need to broaden and deepen our reach by providing more diverse ways of communicating, through more two-way dialogue with our partners and our residents and more interactive opportunities.

REACHING A BROADER SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY

Through feedback, and anecdotally, Council utilises many of its communication and engagement channels effectively. Although it appears that the same groups of residents are being consulted regularly, while others are not. This strategy aims to increase Council's ability to communicate with a wider variety of residents and stakeholders to ensure all residents have the opportunity to provide input to Council and/or participate in the decision making process.

Key items identified as part of the Strategy's Action Plan that will address this include:

- Investigate holding community Q&A forums with Councillors and staff either physically or online
- Mailing a regular newsletter to residents homes
- Investigate the viability of holding regular 'street talk' and 'listening post' sessions with Councillors and staff
- Explore further opportunities to engage with Gannawarra's young people
- Make greater, more meaningful use of online, written and verbal feedback from our residents

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION FLOW

While some stakeholders are kept up-to-date, we need to continue to ensure information flows smoothly internally and externally. There are multiple ways that information flows into Council and out to stakeholders and residents, which sometimes means people are not kept informed of important information where they aren't connected with a certain method of communication.

Key ways to address this include:

- Establishment of a Community Engagement Framework to guide engagement on all community projects and services which can be utilised across all departments.
- Undertake a review of all Council written and electronic communication materials.
- Determine whether Council staff are receiving all the messages that the community receives and identify gaps in messaging.
- Improving internal communication so community receives consistent response.

IMPROVING THE WAY WE ENGAGE

While Council does conduct community engagement sessions, there are always opportunities to improve how this is done to ensure maximum community collaboration. Engagement around specific projects can sometimes be better planned, implemented and communicated back to those involved'. This will ensure community ownership of projects.

Some of the key items that will address this concern include:

- Develop a standard process to incorporate community consultation and engagement into project development. This will include a specific communication and engagement plan for each major project and review of consultation at the end of a project.
- Consult regularly with partners and stakeholder groups such as the Seniors Advisory Group, Kerang Elders and Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting (GLAM) on key issues around service delivery and strategic priorities.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIONS



1. INFORM

We will inform and engage by maintaining an honest dialogue with our community

	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
1.	<p>Uphold standards set out in the Customer Charter</p> <p>We will ensure staff are informed about the Customer Charter.</p>	Ongoing	Community members are responded to promptly and thoroughly	Customer service team, relevant managers and directors, Community Engagement Team
2.	<p>Continue to promote Council activities through media releases</p> <p>Regular media releases sent to local media, and (where relevant) a wider media audience.</p>	Ongoing	Send at least 15 media releases per month, sharing online and through Council's email database	Communications Coordinator
3.	<p>Publish the <i>Gannawarra News</i> fortnightly</p> <p>Coordinate content and liaise with the <i>Koondrook-Barham Bridge</i> and <i>Gannawarra Times</i> to ensure <i>Gannawarra News</i> is published every fortnight in accordance with deadlines.</p>	Ongoing	Information about Council's services, current events and projects is published in the <i>Koondrook-Barham Bridge</i> and <i>Gannawarra Times</i>	Communications Coordinator
4.	<p>Promote Council news and events through local radio</p> <p>Liaise and coordinate with local radio and the Mayor for regular interview spots.</p> <p>Media releases and other information is sent to local radio, including community service announcements.</p> <p>Continue to organise advertisements for broadcast on commercial radio to inform the community of Council activities.</p>	Ongoing	Information about Council's events and projects is aired on local radio stations	Communications Coordinator Communications Coordinator Relevant directors and managers
5.	<p>Continue daily engagement on social media</p> <p>Regularly post updates on social media channels, including media releases, relevant advertisements, community notices, opportunities for community members to have their say and other information as required.</p>	Ongoing	Page likes and followers continue to grow, positive interactions with people are occurring online, residents are sharing information via social media Provide reports on 'analytics' and adjust posts based on results	Communications Coordinator
6.	<p>Publish a clear and engaging Annual Report and find new ways to promote its content to stakeholders</p> <p>Provide online links to the Annual Report through Council's website and social media channels.</p>	Annually	Annual Report is clear, simple and accessible to most readers. Copies are distributed in hard copy and online	Community Engagement Manager, Communications Coordinator
7.	<p>Maintain branding/style guidelines to ensure all Council communication is presented clearly and consistently</p> <p>Maintain and update the branding and style guide document that incorporates Council templates for staff use.</p>	June 2021	All of Council's documents are presented consistently clearly and in an engaging way	Communications Coordinator

	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
8.	<p>Continue to broadcast Council meetings ‘live’ online</p> <p>‘Live’ streaming of Council meetings provides more opportunity to communicate with residents, and the wider community.</p>	Ongoing	Feedback from Councillors and the community is constructive and positive	Community Engagement Manager, Communications Coordinator
9.	<p>Promote services provided on Council’s website</p>	Ongoing	Regularly promote elements of the website, advising the community of the resource	Communications Coordinator
10.	<p>Continue to publish information about community projects through a range of channels including social media, online and hard copy</p>	Ongoing	Project updates are shared via media releases, social media, on the website, through paid advertising and shared directly with through flyers community members	Community Engagement Team, Executive Leadership Team
11.	<p>Continue to produce <i>Councillor in the Loop</i> for Councillors, management and executive staff</p>	Ongoing	All Councillors and senior staff are aware of achievements in all areas of the organisation and are up to date on all current events and projects	Communications Coordinator, All departments
12.	<p>Continue to publish <i>Gannawarra Connect</i>, Council’s newsletter, to provide hard copy updates about Council services and projects</p>	Ongoing	Publish and distribute <i>Gannawarra Connect</i> at least six times a year to the Gannawarra community	Communications Coordinator

2. CONSULT

We commit to sharing information about Council’s projects and services with our community, giving them a reasonable opportunity to express their views, and taking those views into account in decision making

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>13. Develop a standard communication plan for staff to undertake community consultation and use to assist in project development at a local level</p> <p>Incorporate opportunities for community to be more involved at the planning stage.</p>	December 2020	Community Engagement Plan established for each project	Community Engagement Manager, Coordinator Community Partnerships, Project Managers
<p>14. Undertake regular consultation with the community on Major Projects, including an undertaking of needs analysis</p>	Ongoing	Public consultation sessions are conducted as required, with adequate notice provided to the community	Executive Leadership Team, relevant directors and managers
<p>15. Prepare a template community communication and engagement plan for major infrastructure projects</p>	December 2021	Communication Plan completed for each project	Community Engagement Team
<p>16. Consult regularly with Community Progress Groups and Township Forums on key issues around project delivery and strategic priorities</p> <p>Where appropriate, include engagement with groups as part of the community consultation process for major projects and other Council activities.</p>	Ongoing	Dates of all community group meetings are shared to all relevant Managers and topics for consultation are prepared before each meeting	Relevant directors and Managers, Community Engagement Team
<p>17. Undertake a review of all Council written and electronic communication material and develop ways to better utilise these methods in a coordinated, branded way (i.e. Department newsletters, radio advertisements, social media)</p>	June 2023	Review undertaken and proposal developed	Communications Coordinator
<p>18. Investigate the development of a community feedback process for Gannawarra libraries and Customer Service Offices, either utilising a physical or digital method</p>	June 2021	Feedback process developed at Kerang and Cohuna libraries and Customer Service Offices	Library Manager and Community Engagement team.
<p>19. Continue Mayoral Listening Posts</p> <p>Consider a mix of physical and virtual listening posts to enable greater access to this process</p>	Ongoing	Mayoral listening posts conducted annually across the shire	Mayor and Community Engagement Team

3. INVOLVE

We will work with our community to ensure they are included in the process of Council decision making that affects their community

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>20. Investigate and develop Council's current website to provide more interactive engagement e.g. online forms, booking events and making payments</p>	June 2022	Website redeveloped to include online payments and more interactivity with Council services	Executive Leadership Team, ICT and Managers
<p>21. Make greater use of online surveys and feedback forms so Council can collect useful information on specific issues</p> <p>Incorporate online feedback forms onto Council's website via the 'Have your Say' page.</p> <p>Where appropriate, provide and promote links to online surveys (using platforms such as Survey Monkey) to collect feedback on issues and Council activities.</p>	Ongoing	Residents can have their say about a specific project or service	Community Engagement Team
<p>22. Expand the current live streaming of Council meetings to other civic events to enable more community participation</p>	December 2020	Live streams successfully undertaken	Communications Coordinator
<p>23. Continue to develop video content for social media campaigns</p> <p>Investigate the viability and value-add in developing a regular YouTube community message.</p>	Ongoing	More content to be shared across social media and through Council's website	Communications Coordinator
<p>24. Explore the development of regular Council e-newsletter using existing email lists (such as planning groups, schools and businesses).</p>	June 2021	Fortnightly e-newsletter established	Communications Coordinator
<p>25. Investigate the development of regular online Q&A sessions or Forum with Councillors, Executive Team and the community</p> <p>Our community have indicated they would like the opportunity to provide questions to Councillors and staff.</p>	January 2021	Plan and implement a regular Q&A session	Executive Leadership Team, Community Engagement Team
<p>26. Explore the feasibility of an annual community forum, bringing together key community groups in a large scale community planning exercise</p>	December 2021	Establish feasibility study and expected outcomes	Community Engagement Manager
<p>27. Ensure all communication methods and materials are accessible for residents of all abilities</p> <p>Continue Council's subscription to 'ReadSpeaker' - online content can be instantly converted to audio</p> <p>Provide training for frontline staff in accessing language and accessibility aides.</p> <p>Review existing documents and, where required, have alternative documents available that meet the needs of people with vision impairment or limited English proficiency.</p> <p>Regularly review and update Council's website to ensure it meets W3C web accessibility standards.</p>	June 2022	'ReadSpeaker' subscription ongoing	Community Engagement Team
<p>28. Explore the application of 'augmented reality' (AR) for marketing and promotions within the Gannawarra. These opportunities may include Arts and Culture, Libraries, Tourism, Economic Development and Customer Service.</p>	June 2024	Investigation completed and key services and applications identified	Community Engagement Team, Manager, Executive Leadership Team

4. COLLABORATE

We will ensure the community is enabled to participate in the decisions that affect them

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>29. Respond to community queries and feedback – ‘Close the Loop’</p> <p>When Councillors, Executive staff or managers attend community meetings, workshops or consultations, any feedback from the participants/ community, should be responded to.</p>	Ongoing	Email, written or verbal communication is made to participants in consultation sessions, community development committee and progress association meetings attended by Councillors or executive staff	Coordinator Community Partnerships and Executive Leadership Team
<p>30. Explore including a section in the Annual Report (where possible) or another key document about key engagement processes through the year, feedback received and what consequent changes were made.</p>	Annually	Engagement	Community Engagement Team
<p>31. Work with each community to develop and maintain community plans (Community Profiles) that guide Council decision making for each area.</p>	Annually	Community profiles updated and presented to Council	Community Engagement Manager
<p>32. Appropriate officers to regularly attend community planning/progress association meetings to inform and update community members, receive feedback and provide information on Council outcomes.</p>	Ongoing	Community groups are involved in projects, events and initiatives	Executive Leadership Team and Managers
<p>33. Investigate developing online engagement capacity through services such as OurSay or Social Pinpoint to assist with in-depth community consultation around key community projects or service planning.</p>	June 2022	Residents are engaged in future Budget development, projects and service planning	Coordinator Community Partnerships and Manager Community Engagement
<p>34. Explore the use of Council GIS mapping to enable community-led planning of future projects.</p>	June 2021	Utilise GIS mapping in future engagement plans for key projects	Community Engagement Manager
<p>35. Develop Council’s Community Engagement Policy.</p>	February 2021	Council’s Community Engagement Policy developed	Governance Manager, Community Engagement Manager
<p>36. Explore opportunities to bring ‘like’ community groups together on a regular basis to share ideas and build capacity. i.e. Mens sheds from different communities.</p>	June 2023	Target groups meeting twice yearly with specific outcomes generated	Community Engagement Team

5. EMPOWER

We will build understanding of Council’s goals and priorities and work to empower our organisation and our community to achieve community-led initiatives

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>37. Continue to improve centralisation of information and messages for distribution from all sections of Council</p> <p>Remind staff to consider the Community Engagement team when considering community engagement and media processes.</p>	Ongoing	Staff regularly utilise the engagement team for support	Community Engagement Team
<p>38. Develop a Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit to guide Council staff on community engagement.</p>	December 2021	Framework and Toolkit established. Staff training undertaken	Community Engagement Team
<p>39. Explore ways to effectively support and upskill Progress Groups and town forums, enabling more capacity for community led initiatives.</p>	June 2023	Training identified and implemented with community	Community Engagement Team
<p>40. Provide Councillors and relevant staff (i.e. those who regularly engage with the media) with media training.</p>	December 2021	Identified staff and Councillors have received training	Communications Coordinator, Human Resources Manager Governance CEO Office
<p>41. Develop regular communication with local political representatives and government agencies to ensure Council’s priorities, projects and concerns are clearly conveyed in a timely manner</p> <p>Update Council’s <i>Advocacy Strategy</i> referencing Council’s priorities, projects and concerns, and relevant methods of engagement.</p> <p>Through wider regional council membership groups (i.e. Murray River Group of Councils), continue to advocate political representatives and agencies regarding regional priorities, projects and concerns.</p>	<p>September 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p><i>Advocacy Strategy</i> is updated and adopted by Council</p> <p>Wider concerns of the region are recognised and addressed, resulting in community benefits</p>	<p>Executive Leadership Team, Community Engagement Manager</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and Councillors</p>



GANNAWARRA
Shire Council



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