

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATION POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Colac Otway Shire believes that community consultation is of fundamental importance in ensuring that it involves its community early in the assessment and implementation of delivery options for specific services provided by Council. The Council will work with its communities, embracing Best Value Principles, to deliver services that are needed, affordable and accessible to its community. This policy outlines a number of methods Council will use to gain community input into its service delivery decision making processes.

### 2. RELATIONSHIP TO CORPORATE PLAN

One of the Colac Otway Shire's values is to undertake genuine consultation on key issues as part of decision making to improve the quality and accountability of decisions. This policy has been developed to ensure that the community is provided with the opportunity to have input into Council's decision making process.

### 3. AIM

The aim of this policy is to provide a proactive and consistent approach throughout the Colac Otway Shire in consulting with the community. The policy also reflects the importance of communicating Council ideas in a consistent and effective manner.

### 4. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to ensure that the community have the opportunity to make comment on draft documentation that is equitably distributed at locations throughout the Shire.

### 5. POLICY

Council will ensure that public documents are displayed at its Service Centres Colac and Apollo Bay and that draft documents are well advertised and easily accessible to ensure that the community have the opportunity to make comment. This will occur in the following way:

#### **Duration of Consultation**

All draft policies, strategies and other documents as determined by the Council or Chief Executive Officer will be placed on public display seeking comment on their content from the community for a 6 week period from the date of advertising in the Colac Herald. A further 2 week period be allowed where this consultation is conducted over a school holiday period.

#### **Consultation Process**

Notification of draft documents on public exhibition will be submitted for advertising in the following publications at least once:

- Apollo Bay News
- Beeac Country News
- Birregurra Mail
- Colac Herald
- Cressy Newsletter
- Echo
- Otway Light

A poster advertising that the documents are on exhibition for public comment is sent to Post Offices for display on notice boards.

- Apollo Bay, 1/155 Great Ocean Road
- Beeac, 65 Main Street

- Birregurra, 65 Main Street
- Colac, 162 Murray Street
- Cororooke, 540 Corangamite Lake Road
- Forrest, 33 Grant Street
- Gellibrand, 16 Colac-Lavers Hill Road
- Lavers Hill, 4715 Great Ocean Road
- Wye River (General Store), 35 Great Ocean Road
- Cressy (Frenchmans Hotel), 5 Hall Street

Copies of draft Local Laws, Council policies, Council strategies and other draft documents will generally be made available at the Colac Regional Library and on the Mobile library Service.

Council's Internet web site, [www.colacotway.vic.gov.au](http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au), will include all draft proposals and documents that will be subject to this process, as well as details of other communication processes for strategy development of longer duration and individual Best Value service review community consultation processes.

Council may use Colac Otway FM Community Radio and Mixx FM 1134 3CS to inform the community about its projects and proposals, including when public documents are on display.

The community will be invited to attend public forums, relating to draft documents, where determined in a project communication plan by Council or the Chief Executive Officer.

Council newsletters will be utilised to promote of public documents on display and public exhibition places and periods.

#### **Accessing Council Information**

Copies of draft documents where comments have been invited will be displayed at Council Service Centres in Colac and Apollo Bay and also on Council's web site. Due to technology difficulties it may not be possible to put diagrams or maps on the website. Documents that are less than 50 pages will be provided to customers free of charge. Where a draft document exceeds 50 pages in length, Council will make available six copies of the document that may be borrowed by a community member for up to five days from either Service Centre.

Copies of Agendas of Council Meetings will be displayed from Monday prior on Council's website at Council Service Centres in Colac and Apollo Bay. Copies of the Agenda can be obtained free of charge.

Copies of all draft Council documents where comments are invited, and the Agendas of Council Meetings will be sent to the Associations listed below.

- Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce and Tourism
- Beeac Progress Association
- Beech Forest Progress Association
- Birregurra Action Group
- Colac Otway Ratepayers & Residents Association
- Gellibrand/Kawarren Progress Association
- Kennett River Association Inc.
- Lavers Hill Progress Association
- Otway Forum
- Wye River and Separation Creek Progress Association
- Skenes Creek Advancement Association

Minutes of Council Meetings are distributed to the above Associations and placed on the website after confirmation at the following Ordinary Council Meeting.

### **Other consultation commitments**

For many projects or strategies being developed by Council, a separate communication plan will be prepared that will encourage community and other stakeholder engagement through:

- Community representation on project reference groups
- Community forums in relevant Shire townships and in Melbourne where absentee landowners will be affected by a Shire proposal.

Best Value review of Council services – as reviews are undertaken by Business Unit’s consultative groups will be established with community representation. This consultation will be undertaken in a number of ways – postal, personal and telephone surveys, community forums, advisory committees and reference groups.

Council will continue to acknowledge its obligations under Section 222 of the Local Government Act 1989 (availability of prescribed registers) and Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 (right to make a submission).

All submissions received pursuant to Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 or under this community consultation policy will be acknowledged prior to consideration by Council and subsequently submitters will be advised of Council’s decision.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW**

The Communications Officer coordinates the implementation of this policy and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the policy.

This policy will be subject to periodic review.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF DRAFT DOCUMENTS ON PUBLIC EXHIBITION  
TO BE DISPLAYED AT ALL POST OFFICERS



**Colac Otway**  
S H I R E

*'Naturally Progressive'*

## EXHIBITION OF

TITLE OF DOCUMENT

Copies of this document may be inspected at the

**Colac Otway Shire Service Centres in Colac and Apollo Bay**

Colac, 2 Rae Street (8.30am-5.00pm weekdays)

Apollo Bay Nelson Street (8.30am-1pm weekdays)

Written submissions can be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer, PO Box 283, Colac 3250 prior to ... *closing date*....

**Glenn Patterson**  
**Chief Executive Officer**