

Public Transparency Policy - Feedback

Policy section	Comment/suggestion	Officer response
<b>Part 2 – Principle 1</b>	Point c) – further clarification suggested; question: – “does [this point] mean “information that has guided the Officer Recommendation in Council Reports to a Council meeting”	No change proposed. This point refers specifically to the relevant power, duty or function delegated to decision-makers. Council’s instruments of delegation are publicly available at <a href="http://mrsc.vic.gov.au">mrsc.vic.gov.au</a>
	Point d) – suggested rewording to refer to decisions <i>debated</i> in an open meeting instead of <i>made</i> in an open meeting.  Suggested additional wording to also refer to viewing livestream of meetings	Word <i>debated</i> added, but word <i>made</i> retained. Transparency of decision-making includes the <i>making</i> of decisions in an open forum.  No change proposed. For virtual Council meetings, a meeting viewed via livestream <i>is</i> a meeting “open to the public” as outlined in the Ministerial Guideline for Virtual Meetings.
	Suggestion to re-order points regarding transparency of decision-making process [to move point f) to point a)]	No change proposed. Foremost principles of transparency are that all decisions are compliant with the relevant law and Council policy, and that they specify (where applicable) the delegation a decision-maker is empowered to follow. Other principles, including community engagement, will be relevant to the majority of (though not <i>all</i> ) Council decisions.
<b>Part 2 – Principle 2</b>	Suggested additional section (7.2) to include reference to Council performance data (Local Government Performance Reporting – LGPRF) and service delivery data) to be made available on Council’s website	No change proposed – suggest covered by Schedule 2. Council performance is reported quarterly to Council via a Council Report and annually via the Annual Report – all of which are made available on Council’s website; and annually via the LGPRF process to Local Government Victoria, which is then publicly available via the Know Your Council website.
<b>Part 2 – Principle 4</b>	Suggestion to add specific names of Council’s social media handles	No change proposed. Social media handles are easily found. If included, any changes to specific social media handles would necessitate policy change and will not reflect any new channels created.
<b>Schedule 2</b>	Suggested additional wording to refer to location of information (“Council’s website and in hard copies at libraries and Council offices”)	No change proposed. Wording is too broad. All records specified will be made available; however, the form of access will depend on access required generally by community or on a case by case basis, e.g. not all records listed would habitually or automatically made available in hard copy.

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<b>General comment</b>	Policy “useless” without means of reporting non-compliance and way to rectify breaches.	Sections 12, 13, 14 and 15 outline how the policy will be reviewed, monitored and reported; roles and responsibilities for policy implementation and compliance; how feedback can be provided on its operation and the process for reporting non-compliance with the policy. No change proposed.
<b>Part 2 – Principle 3 – section 9</b>	Suggestion to include reference to use of email in clause 9.2 to strengthen availability of information from Council. Comment: email is still an effective communication tool with some significant advantages over social media in some circumstances.	Changes made. Suggestions incorporated – section 9.1(d) – email included in list of tools for the provision of information – section 10.5 – reference added to provision of information in preferred formats where practicable (including email)
<b>Part 2 – Principle 2 – Clause 7</b> <i>[relevant clause is clause 8.1]</i>  <b>Principle 2 – Clause 8</b>	<p>Noted that this clause refers to Schedule 2 – list of information to be made available. Suggestion that Schedule 2 include additional statement that listed material relates back to earlier clause.</p> <p>Minor typographical error (missing word) noted; and suggestion that Table 1 include word “below” to clarify table below text is Table 1.</p>	<p>Change made. Additional wording included in Schedule 2.</p> <p>Both changes made. Error corrected in clause 8.3 and word “below” added prior to Table 1.</p>