

Darebin City Council Community Governance Charter



2013-2017

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Preamble

“As a newly elected Council, we reaffirm our commitment to the Darebin citizens that our decisions will be transparent and in the best interest of our diverse community.”

This Charter has been developed to express Council’s commitment to better inform the community of what it can expect from Council.

The Charter outlines a number of principles that characterise good governance and will be used to inform and guide Council’s actions and decision-making.

Good Governance

Good Governance in Darebin is a community expectation and Council’s commitment and promise to the community.

Good governance is determined by the principles and process a council uses to make and implement decisions. It is about balancing the often competing and complex expectations of a diverse and evolving community by considering a range of objectives and values openly and equitably.

Objectives

The objectives of this Charter are to:

- Formally enshrine the mandate entrusted to Council to govern the city
- Clearly define Council’s commitment to the principles and practice of good governance
- Promote this commitment to the Darebin community
- Provide a set of standards that can be used by the community to evaluate Council performance
- Strengthen Council’s engagement with and accountability to the community

Term and Scope of the Charter

- The Charter is subject to review and evaluation every four years, in line with the Council Plan
- The Charter is deemed a public document
- The Charter sets out the way and approach Council will take in governing the City
- The Charter underpins the development and implementation of the Council Plan 2013-2017

Benefits

- Greater levels of transparency, trust, respect and understanding between Council and the community
- Enhanced governance practices across Darebin Council
- Improved community engagement processes and decision-making outcomes
- Increased access to information in formats that meet community needs
- Improved understanding of Council direction leading to greater understanding and realistic expectations of Council's performance
- Strengthened focus on localism and place-based decision-making

Principles

The Charter is based on the following Good Governance principles:

1. **Transparency**
2. **Accountability**
3. **Equity and inclusion**
4. **Effectiveness and efficiency**
5. **Community engagement**
6. **Ethical decision making**

1. TRANSPARENCY

Information relating to Council decisions and actions is freely available, easily understood and accessible, especially to those who are most affected by such decisions and is respectful of privacy principles

2. ACCOUNTABILITY

Council takes responsibility for the outcomes of the decisions it makes and actions it takes

3. EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Council's actions and decision-making are proactively responsive to and inclusive of Darebin's diverse community needs and aspirations.

Council's services and resources are equitably distributed and accessed by those that need them the most

4. EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

Council plans and delivers services that achieve their intended outcomes, are sustainable and make the most of available resources.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council meaningfully involves the community in its decision-making processes and in shaping the future vision and aspirations of the city.

6. ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

Decisions made by Council are based on clearly defined rules and regulations, with consideration of community impact and feedback and in the best interest of Darebin community

Actions

This Charter is implemented through a combination of specific actions outlined in an action plan attached as an Appendix to this document as well as through actions and commitments in the Council Plan, Councillors' Code of Conduct, Local Laws and other policies and strategies planned during the Council term of 2012-2016.

Evaluation

Council Performance will be evaluated on annual basis against the principles of this Charter. This will be done by consulting the Darebin community.

Endorsement

The Charter was endorsed by Darebin City Council at its meeting on 15 April 2013