

Imagine Monash in 2040

What do you want Monash to be in 2040?



Imagine Monash in 2040: Deliberative Engagement

Summary Report

13 July 2021

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Background

The Local Government Act 2020 sets out the requirement for Council to use deliberative engagement for the ‘development and review’ of the Community Vision (S88), Council Plan (S90), Financial Plan (S91) and Asset Plan (S92).

Council’s Community Engagement Policy must set out how Council would apply this approach to these four Plans (S55). The Policy describes this approach:

“The key features of a deliberative process are to come to a decision after considering all information and prioritising and weighing solutions. By its very name, it requires a level of engagement that is measured, considered and has the involvement of others.”

This is quite different to consultation that is ‘blue-sky thinking’ (assumes there are no limitations to what people can have) or ‘top of the head’ responses (people are asked to provide responses with no time for consideration).

Officers sought to run a process that would allow the participants the opportunity to consider a range of information in providing considered feedback and recommendations to Council.

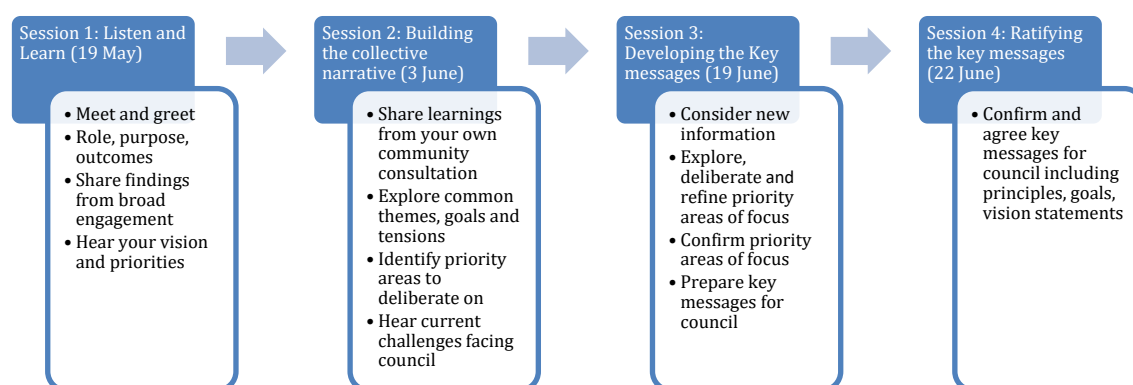
Process

Capire Consulting were engaged to support officers undertake the deliberative engagement having run similar processes at other Councils, including Monash, over many years.

Through an Expression of Interest process, 33 members of the Imagine Monash Panel were recruited from the over 200 members of the [Monash Community Panel](#).

The Imagine Panel met four times between May and June, all online. Initially the Panel was to meet in person however COVID-19 restrictions, and then a lockdown, required meeting online instead.

Figure 1: Imagine Monash Panel activities



The first panel session was a meet and greet, an introduction to the process and an opportunity for members to share their personal vision for Monash in 2040. For the second session members had collected stories from friends, family and neighbours sharing these online

Feedback

Capire Consulting have prepared a comprehensive report on the deliberative engagement process and the Panel's contributions. This Summary provides a quick snapshot to be read in conjunction with the other Summaries on the engagement.

Narratives

Panel members were asked to do some 'homework' in preparation for the second session by speaking to family, friends and neighbours what they want Monash to be like in 20 years. A quick thematic analysis of the 65 contributions (some combined multiple people's comments) is summarised in the table below:

Themes	#	%
Open space	29	21%
Sustainability	24	18%
Transport	22	16%
Services	19	14%
Development	18	13%
Governance	9	7%
Safety	7	5%
Miscellaneous	8	6%
Topics	136	

Example comments of the top three themes are:

"I spoke to a few people regarding their needs for the future. A common theme that came up was the theme of bike and walking paths! Most people I spoke to love using the Scotchman's creek trail and the path that follows the train line from Holmesglen. They would like the accessibility to be extended by adding extra lighting along these paths so that they can be used comfortably at night (especially in winter)."

"Talking to younger residents of Mount Waverley, their view is that Monash should be an example of thought leadership at the local government level in driving change in sustainability and transitioning to renewable energy such as solar-powered Council office buildings or Council owned infrastructure (swimming pools, libraries, etc)."

"Her vision for 2040 is for a greener, well-connected and modernised Monash. By 2040, she'd like the rail system to be a state-of-the-art operation, connected to the suburban rail loop. Transport should be easily accessible to all commuters, with regular and reliable connections to local amenities, schools and universities. She also wants to see investments in infrastructure that support increased electric vehicle use - incl electric-powered local bus services, electric car charging stations, e-bike charging stations and more bike lanes to make the Monash environment greener, and more sustainable."

Principles

In the third Imagine Monash Panel session members broke up into small groups to discuss principles that could guide Council's decision making when implementing the Plans. In the final session

members reviewed and refined the nine principles and added a further two (see below). The original nine principles are included in the draft Community Vision.

Principles	
1.	Council should prioritise environmentally responsible sustainable outcomes and projects for example, resilience, local production, energy; and respond to climate change impacts.
2.	Focus on being a thought leader in sustainability and environmental concerns, technology (e.g. blockchain and microgrids), and urban planning. Don't be afraid to set ambitious targets. Benchmark and learn from other councils to adopt best practice.
3.	When making planning decisions, Council considers and protects long-term social impacts of development and population growth on the local area (communities, people who live and those who use the area).
4.	Go beyond requirements and ensure community involvement and communication is transparent, active, innovative, accessible for all people, and closes the loop on delivery of plans (e.g. contact person in Monash Bulletin, digitisation, consider audience needs).
5.	Focus on working with neighbouring councils on joint initiatives, build a broader sense of community, consider cost-benefits, leverage and combine other Councils' services to assist people on the edge of Monash. Consider the risk of centralising Council services.
6.	When making decisions, be transparent, inclusive, democratic, equitable and reflective of the community's diversity (e.g. age, gender, sexuality, income level, language and ethnicity) ensuring decentralised and wide distribution of decision making amongst the Monash community.
7.	Council must balance the community's needs, principles of equity, and ensure long-term financial sustainability when making financial and development decisions. Principles of equity include social housing, opportunities for young people including training, community services, diversity. For example, consider increasing rates or user-pay services to balance community needs.
8.	Council should plan for publicly accessible, active, and sustainable transport within local communities.
9.	Prioritise assets which support community relationships, promote regeneration, are convenient, and are accessible, for example, a range of local urban green spaces and multi-use facilities such as libraries.
10.	Council should identify, advocate for, and provide for unmet needs.
11.	Council should facilitate community action where possible or required for example, opening homes to welcome new migrants.

The Panel also drafted 13 Goals to underpin the Principles. Unfortunately the Goals lacked sufficient time to refine them and ensure there was a good spread across the Principles. As such, the Goals do not feature in the Community Vision however the sentiment has been picked up where appropriate.

Vision Statement

In the final session Panel members broke up into small groups and drafted some Vision Statements, and then moved into different groups to consider and refine the final 13 Statements (see below). Statements 1 & 13 have been incorporated into the draft Community Vision.

Vision Statements	
1	<p>A Monash that gives more than it takes.</p> <p>A city that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shares its surplus • thrives through its rich diversity • empowers its citizens to live healthy, connected lives • nurtures innovation and prioritises sustainability • is a liveable place where we all belong.
2	<p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents have no need to lock doors and have a strong sense of security both physical and mental. • Residents of Monash look after each other, creating a broader sense of community, with shared responsibilities and resources, resulting in a range of positive impacts.
3	<p>Inclusive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We genuinely/heartfelt embrace each other
4	<p>Liveability (maybe use a different word!)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People want to live in Monash and participate in the community. • The community's needs and requirements are met locally within the municipality.
5	<p>Progressive mindset/Leadership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivated to improve and care for our neighbourhoods • Everyone in Monash looks after the natural and surrounding environment • Monash leads the world in liveability and sustainability.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking, learning languages • Love of learning • Community sharing their knowledge • An education Council.
7	<p>Happy, connected, and resilient residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We feel safe and trust each other • We are included and have a sense of belonging, familiarity • We have a "can do"/ambitious/leading Council.
8	<p>Monash is a progressive, vibrant, inclusive, and diverse community that cares for all residents, young and old.</p>
9	<p>We embrace and harness technological change for the benefit of residents and businesses.</p>
10	<p>Monash protects and extends its green open spaces and mitigates climate change in all dealings. Spaces are provided for community connection where people can meet, play board games and with plenty of seating.</p>
11	<p>Monash will have well-planned high density and low-density communities and is responsive to residents' needs.</p> <p>The community feel is retained and extended.</p>
12	<p>The rail loop, active transport and public transport is well integrated and seamless. Bike transport is well catered for.</p>
13	<p>Monash is the most liveable city in Victoria.</p>

Pre & Post-Panel surveys

Capire surveyed members after the 1st session and 4th sessions, to test how the deliberative engagement worked for members. As seen in the Chart below, on average members all felt more positive about Council, their fellow Panel members and their own involvement than at the beginning.

