



## CITY OF PORT PHILLIP – OUR GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Council of the City of Port Phillip is committed to high standards of democratic and corporate governance.

This Governance Statement of the local government of the City of Port Phillip promotes accountable and responsive government on behalf of the Port Phillip community. It aims to strengthen active citizenship and participation in Council's decision-making processes.

Sound principles of governance guide the quality of decision making by Council and its organisation. Sound principles determine all systems and structures of authority, accountability, control and reporting practices through which Council ensures proper pursuit of its mission. These governance principles encompass the means of direction and control, and ensure accountability and performance. They ensure good decision-making.

### **Our Principles of Good Governance**

The Port Phillip local government accepts its responsibility for, and is committed to fulfilling its duty of, elected leadership of the community. To that end, Council has adopted the following principles of democratic and corporate governance:

1. Good democratic and corporate governance requires publicly accountable decision making in the interests of our community
2. Council is committed to continuous improvement and to seeking higher standards and better practices in the processes and culture of corporate governance
3. All Council decisions, whether by Council or by officers under delegation, will be informed by the diversity of community views.
4. Council supports the right of the community to have high expectations of its local government
5. The community is entitled to high standards of both citizen responsiveness and customer service from Council and its officers
6. Council undertakes to keep citizens well informed of its decision-making processes, and encourages all contributions from the community
7. Councillors, while representing the interests of their respective wards, will ensure that all Council decisions are made in the best interests of the whole community
8. Council decision-making by Council and officers under delegation will exhibit transparency, honesty and high ethical standards. Delegated decision making must always be exercised within the bounds of the policies and directions of the elected Council.

9. Council is ultimately responsible for all decisions and actions of the City of Port Phillip. Council officers are accountable to Council through the Chief Executive Officer for effective and responsive service to the community in accordance with Council directions.
10. Council will ensure that its decisions, services, programs and processes are consistent with its vision and values.
11. Council is committed to avoiding conflicts between private interests and public duty by Councillors and officers.
12. Council will ensure that its services are accessible to all, including people with a disability and people from a non-English speaking background
13. Council will accept full responsibility for its decisions while ensuring that those decisions are informed by effective engagement with the community
14. Decisions will be taken as close as practicable to the people affected to ensure that decisions are fully informed by local knowledge and needs.
15. Decision making and service provision by Council will be guided by specific policy commitments to community consultation and service standards. These commitments will be recorded in the Council Plan and supporting policies. Service Charters will provide for complaints and review mechanisms
16. The Council Plan is Council's overall statement of its vision, strategic objectives, priorities and values, aspiring to serve the best interests of the Port Phillip community. The Council Plan will go beyond statutory requirements as the major governance document for the City of Port Phillip and will be maintained as a rolling forward plan to be reviewed annually in consultation with the community.

### **Our Governance Culture**

Council is committed to high standards of governance as:

- a pre-requisite to public accountability and high performance
- dynamic, not static – 'best practice' will vary with circumstances and must address local needs and continuously evolve and adapt
- critical to responsive performance in governing and servicing communities

and Council will provide leadership at the political and administrative levels to these ends.

Good governance requires continuous sensitivity to the tensions between:

- Openness ~ confidentiality
- Private interests/personal benefit ~ public duty
- Council responsibility ~ contractor accountability.

Council will apply its principles of good governance to:

- drive the continuous improvement of its governance standards and practices
- help resolve governance dilemmas, and

assess the performance of Council and its organisation