

Media release

New group aims to give voice to the Hepburn Shire community

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The launch of *Community Voice* on Thursday 13 August marks a new era of community democracy in Hepburn Shire.

Community Voice is a non-political grassroots movement that aims to shift the process of local government in Hepburn Shire towards participatory democracy by encouraging continual community participation.

When the results of the 2020 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey came out in June 2020, it only confirmed what many members of the Hepburn Shire community had been feeling for some time.

Council wasn't listening.

According to the survey *'Perceptions of Hepburn Shire Council's overall performance (fell) to an all time low in 2020. This is reflected in most service areas, where performance ratings have declined significantly over the past year.*

*'Performance is significantly lower by the widest margin (in) Community decisions and Consultation & engagement'*¹

Community Voice was born out of this frustration at the lack of genuine consultation and council's failure to listen to the concerns and aspirations of local people on matters of public interest.

'The overall objective of Community Voice is to be a conduit between the Hepburn Shire community and its Council, to help build a highly valued and collaborative relationship – to be a bridge to democratic renewal in the Shire', spokesperson Jen Bray said.

Its immediate objective is to support the election of councillors in the October 2020 election, who align themselves *with Community Voice's* Charter – which sets out the core values, principles and processes necessary to build inclusive and participatory democracy in Hepburn Shire.

After the October election, *Community Voice* will monitor each councillor's commitment to community engagement, push for better models of community participation and hold them to account in their decision making.

Community Voice believes that in the complex and challenging times we now face, participatory democracy is essential to informed and inclusive policies and decisions, to build a healthier, more resilient community in the Hepburn Shire.

'We're encouraging all Shire citizens to use their community voice' and participate in our local democracy,' Jen said.

community voice

Democratic renewal in the Hepburn Shire

ENDS.

For more information and media interviews, contact Jen Bray on 0428 330 64 or email hello@communityvoice.group

Reference: ¹ <https://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/hepburn/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Attachment-3-2020-Hepburn-Shire-Community-Satisfaction-Survey-separate.pdf>

Community Voice is a non-political grassroots movement that aims to strengthen the Hepburn Shire community by facilitating its active participation in local government community engagement, policy development and decision making.

<https://communityvoice.group/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2052262768251480>



Video link
<https://youtu.be/EzVMA-ZRfXE>

Filename
Community Voice_Tammi.mp4

Video quality
SD HD



Video link
<https://youtu.be/7Tkdw8r44NM>

Filename
Community Voice_Ross.mp4

Video quality
SD HD



Video link
<https://youtu.be/3ydo52m3oIA>

Filename
Community Voice_Jen 1.mp4

Video quality
SD HD

Video link (Tammi's community voice)

<https://youtu.be/EzVMA-ZRfXE>

Video link (Ross' community voice)

<https://youtu.be/7Tkdw8r44NM>

Video link (Jen's community voice)

<https://youtu.be/3ydo52m3oIA>