



Council Policy Manual

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY	
CORPORATE CREDIT & PURCHASE CARDS POLICY	Policy No:
	Adopted by Council: 16 May 2018 December 2020
	Next review date: May 2024 December 2023
Senior Manager:	Director Corporate & Community Services
Responsible Officer:	Finance Manager Coordinator
Functional Area:	Finance
Introduction & Background	<p>The usage of Corporate Credit/Purchase Cards (the card) is an alternative method of payment intended for purchases for which the use of Council's regular purchasing and creditor payment system is not appropriate.</p> <p>All purchases are to be in accordance with these guidelines. \</p> <p><u>Credit cards can provide a convenient and efficient means of expediting the purchase process and reducing the internal costs involved to process a transaction. Credit cards are not a convenient alternative to seek reimbursement.</u></p>
Purpose & Objectives	<p>The purpose of the policy is to provide clear guidance on the use of all West Wimmera Shire Council Corporate Credit and Purchase Cards.</p> <p>The objectives of this Policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have clear guidelines for usage of West Wimmera Shire Council Corporate Credit/Purchase Cards; To provide guidance on how a breach of the policy will be managed; and To ensure purchases made via the card have appropriate internal controls and comply with the Council's Procurement Policy.
Definitions	<p>Corporate Card: A Corporate Card includes a credit or debit card issued by Council's banker and specific supplier purchase cards.</p> <p>Cardholder: Refers to the Officer or Mayor whose name appears on the Corporate Credit/Purchase Card and is responsible for providing a clear audit trail.</p> <p><u>Authorising Signatory: In most circumstances, the authorising signatory will be the direct supervisor of the cardholder as per the</u></p>

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financial delegations within Council's Instrument of Delegation. If the direct supervisor does not have the financial delegation, the next supervisor up line with the necessary delegation will be the authorising signatory.

Program Administrator: The person assigned by the CEO under to be responsible for the administration of purchasing and credit cards within Council, typically the Finance Coordinator.

Tax Invoice: Proof of payment containing the following information:

- The supplier's ABN
- The name of the supplier
- GST Inclusive price of the taxable supply
- The words 'Tax Invoice'
- The date of issue, and
- A brief description of each item supplied

Personal use: Any purchase intended for personal use and any items not normally provided to an Officer or Mayor in the course of their daily functions with Council.

Unauthorised use: Any instance of non-compliance with Councils policy or procedure by the cardholder or as a result of the card being lost or stolen or because of fraud.

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Policy Details

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1. Scope of the Policy

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This policy applies to all West Wimmera Shire Council Officers and Mayor who have been issued with a West Wimmera Shire Council Corporate Credit/Purchase Card.

Cardholders and their Managers are responsible for adherence to this policy, ensuring internal control procedures are followed in order to reduce the risk of fraudulent or inappropriate use of Corporate Credit/Purchase Cards.

2. Relationship with other Council Policies

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All purchases made on Council Credit/Purchase Cards shall comply with the following Council policies:

- Procurement Policy
- Fraud & Corruption Control Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct (West Wimmera Shire Council Officers)
- Councillor Code of Conduct (Mayor)

~~All purchases made on Council Credit/Purchase Cards shall comply with the requirements of Council's Procurement Policy and the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy, along with any other policy relevant to the expenditure.~~

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3. Inappropriate transactions ~~Limitations of Card Use~~



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- Expenditure of a personal or private nature
- Cash advances of any nature
- Purchase of fuels for vehicles where the fuel card should be used, except for emergency situations
- Payment of a monthly statement or invoice received from a supplier where the transactions are usually paid by accounts payable
- Any item classified as a capital purchase
- Payment of personal fines and penalties
- Payment for any personal subscriptions or memberships to associations, unless authorised by an appropriate manager, director or CEO.
- Payment for travel, training, conferences or courses unless authorised by an appropriate manager, director or CEO.
- Incidental costs such as meals and drinks unless the officer is engaged in Council duties such as meetings or workshops
- Alcoholic beverages
- Splitting purchases to avoid the Procurement policy requirements
- Tips and gratuities
- Transactions when on leave
- Purchase of gifts and/or gift cards
- Medical costs related to employment i.e. doctors, physiotherapists, ambulance etc.

Pay for an expense when reimbursement has been made (or will be made) to the cardholder for that same expense (for example, travel expenses) Use of the Corporate Card is limited as follows:

- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to a card total value per month of \$8,000;
- Directors to a card total value per month of \$3,000;
- Mayor to a card total value per month of \$1,000;
- Other WWSC Officers as approved by CEO in consultation with the Finance Manager to a card total value per month of \$1,000, or as deemed appropriate for specific roles within West Wimmera Shire.

Corporate Cards may be used by permanent and fixed term staff for goods and services including authorised travel costs, provided the use is for Council purposes. Cash advances and EFTPOS are not permitted.

The Corporate Card shall be used in accordance with "Conditions of Use" issued by the bank/card issuer.

4.

Card Usage and Limits Training Requirements

As a guide, credit cards should be used:

- When a purchase order will not be accepted by a supplier
- When immediate payment is required to secure the goods/services
- When it is a one-off purchase from a supplier
- Where alternative payment options (ie. bank transfer, cheque or BPay) are not offered by the supplier
- For small value transactions where the cost of processing through Accounts Payable is likely to exceed the cost of the original transaction.



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	<p><u>Credit/purchase cards are not to be used by persons other than the cardholder. It should never be handed to another staff member to use on your behalf, and if this occurs, it may result in disciplinary action including suspension and or cancellation of the card.</u></p> <p><u>Each cardholder is assigned an individual monthly credit limit based on their purchasing needs. A credit limit can be re-evaluated by written request submitted to the program administrator and CEO. Cardholders and card limits are to be reviewed annually by the senior management team and approved by the CEO.</u></p> <p><u>A register of credit cards issued and returned is to be kept and regularly maintained by the finance team. This register shall, at a minimum, include details of limits, issuance date, authorised signatory, and date their cardholder agreement was last signed/re-signed.</u></p> <p><u>Each card has a maximum transaction limit of \$1,000 per supplier, per day, unless a different limit is approved by the CEO. All other purchases over \$1,000 should be processed on a Purchase Order through Authority.</u></p> <p><u>Each cardholder is authorised to use no more than one card for each facility type (i.e. AMEX, Mastercard/Visa etc).The Officer/Mayor will be trained in this policy upon issue of a Corporate Credit/Purchase Card.</u></p>
5.	<p><u>Authorisation and Issue of Credit/Purchase Cards</u></p> <p><u>The initial application for a credit/purchase card is to be approved by the Director of the employee and the CEO. The application request must be in writing, then forwarded to the program administrator for action.</u></p> <p><u>Only employees and Councillors are eligible to be issued a credit/purchasing card. To be eligible, an employee must:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><u>• Occupy a position that has a regular and demonstrated need to purchase goods and services for use; and/or</u><u>• Hold the Employee Procurement Authorisation level to commit or incur expenditure; and</u><u>• Be able to satisfy a card provider “100 Point” identification check; and</u><u>• Be willing to accept and abide by the conditions of use and comply with relevant City governing documents; and</u><u>• Complete Corporate Purchasing Card training.</u> <p><u>Upon issuance of a credit/purchase card, the employee must immediately sign the back of the card.</u>Issue, Amendment & Withdrawal of Credit/Purchase Cards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Card Issue: Cards are to be issued to Cardholders at the discretion of the Finance Manager in consultation with the CEO.



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- ~~Amendments to Limits: The Finance Manager may elect at their discretion to set a lower limit for any individual card. Any increase to a card limit must be approved by the CEO.~~
- ~~Withdrawal of Cards:~~
 - ~~Cards are not to be retained by the Officer or Mayor during periods of leave greater than two weeks. During these periods the cards must be returned to the Finance Department where they will be kept in a secure environment.~~
 - ~~Cards are not to be retained by the Officer and will be withdrawn where the Cardholder is re-assigned to another position where card use is not authorised. During these periods the cards must be returned to the Finance Department where they will be kept in a secure environment.~~
 - ~~When the Officer or Mayor ceases Council duties the card is to be withdrawn.~~
 - ~~When cards are withdrawn, they must be immediately returned to the Finance Manager or Assistant Finance Manager who will be responsible for destroying the card, closing the account and reconciled to point of withdrawal.~~
- ~~Lost or Stolen Cards: Cardholders must immediately notify the bank of a lost/stolen card then notify the Finance Manager or Assistant Finance Manager.~~

6. **Withdrawal of Credit/Purchase Cards** Breaches of Policy

Credit/purchase cards are cancelled at the discretion of the relevant director, Program Administrator or the CEO.

Credit/purchase cards are not to be retained by cardholders:

- during periods leave for periods of greater than two weeks;
- upon termination or resignation of employment;
- if the cardholder is reassigned to a position where the use is not warranted/approved;
- the card is insufficiently utilised (less than one transaction per week);
- failure to reconcile the statements within the required timeframe;
- failure to return the completed statement to the finance team within the required timeframe;
- significant or systemic non-compliance with the policy; or
- any other reason as determined by the senior management team.

The cards must be returned to the finance coordinator for safekeeping or cancellation.

• ~~Inappropriate Transactions~~

~~Under no circumstances is a Corporate Credit/Purchase Card to be used to obtain a cash advance or for any expense of a private or personal nature.~~



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~~A Corporate Credit/Purchase Card must not be used to purchase goods or services where Council has an existing account with the provider. If unsure contact the Finance Department to check if the supplier is an existing provider.~~

~~A Corporate Credit/Purchase card should not be used to purchase fuel unless in exceptional circumstances where the provided Council Fuel Card cannot be used.~~

~~Under no circumstances is a Corporate Credit/Purchase Card to be used for any capital asset purchases.~~

~~Consequences of Misuse~~

~~Any expenditure that cannot be shown to be related to the business of the West Wimmera Shire Council will result in the Cardholder being personally liable and must be reimbursed to Council immediately, unless:~~

- ~~The unauthorised use is due to a Corporate Credit/Purchase Card being lost/stolen (provided the cardholder to adequate measures to prevent the card from being lost or stolen); or~~
- ~~The use is the result of fraud on the part of a third party (such as a merchant).~~

- ~~The card is to be used in accordance with Council Policies and any deliberate misuse of the card will be considered a breach of Council responsibilities and will result in disciplinary action or Police involvement as appropriate, to be determined by the CEO.~~

- ~~Minor breaches of Council policies (such as not providing documentation) may result in a warning. Any further breach may result in suspension or cancellation of the card, as determined by the Finance Manager.~~

~~Rewards Programs~~

~~Personal reward programs (e.g. Flybuys etc.) are not to be used in conjunction with Corporate Credit/Purchase Cards when making purchases.~~

~~Return of Statements~~

~~Statements not returned within the 10 working day period will attract a warning. This will remind the Cardholder of their signed agreement to comply with the requirements of this policy and advise them they are in breach of that agreement.~~

~~Statements still outstanding after 5 working days from the time of the above warning may result in the suspension of the Corporate Credit/Purchase Card in question.~~

~~If a Cardholder continues to fail to meet the requirements of the statement reconciliation process, recommendation will be made to withdraw/cancel their card.~~

7.

Roles and Responsibilities Policy Implementation and Review



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7.1 Mayor and Councillors

The mayor and/or Councillors are responsible for reviewing the credit card transactions, typically via the audit committee. The Mayor may review the CEO's credit card transactions on a monthly basis.

7.2 Audit Committee

The audit committee are responsible for reviewing the credit/purchase card transactions of all cardholders, in particular the transactions of any Councillor and the CEO, on a quarterly basis.

7.3 Chief Executive Officer

The CEO is responsible for reviewing and approving the credit/purchasing card transactions of the Mayor (and other Councillors where applicable). The CEO is also responsible for the following:

- Ensure cardholders and authorised signatories are aware cards are to be used for official business purposes only
- Assign a program administrator to manage the credit/purchase card program
- Assign authorised signatories to review and approve transactions and payments
- Ensure the efficient, effective and appropriate use of the credit/purchase card facility
- Ensure internal controls are maintained for the issue, use and acquittal of the purchase cards to prevent unauthorised use and non-compliance
- Set individual transaction limits and overall cardholder limits
- Review all instances of unauthorised use and non-compliance. They must also report any significant or systemic non-compliance to the audit committee, police and/or IBAC as applicable
- Determine the appropriate disciplinary action for non-compliance
- Approve the issuance and/or withdrawals of credit/purchase cards.

7.4 Program Administrator

The Program Administrator is responsible for:

- Issuing of Corporate Purchasing Cards and maintaining a register of all cards
- Conducting "100 Point Identification check" as required
- Assisting Cardholders with disputed transactions
- Forwarding appropriate documentation to the Bank
- Investigating reports of suspected or known breaches of procedures
- Arranging prompt cancellation or suspension of credit cards as applicable
- Ensuring cardholders and authorised signatories are provided the appropriate training, and agreements are updated as applicable, and ensuring cardholders acknowledge and agree with the responsibilities, liabilities and consequences of unauthorised use, and understand the policies and procedures established for card use
- Reviewing and updating the credit card policy and procedures as applicable
- Ensure cardholders have the appropriate financial delegation prior to issuance of the card



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- Ensuring monthly reconciliations and reviews are completed in a timely manner
- Investigating all instances of unauthorised use and non-compliance, and reporting such instances to the CEO
- Issuing non-compliance notices to cardholders in regard to unacceptable use or non-compliance
- Reporting on credit card data to the audit committee on a quarterly basis
- Ensuring all records are available for audit
- Maintain a register of cardholders, limits etc
- Annually assess the requirement for ongoing issue of the card to current cardholders including limits and types of expenses

7.5 Authorised Signatories

When approving purchases, authorised signatories should scrutinise the purchases as if they were made through the mainstream procurement and payment systems. For example, are they for official purposes, appropriate for business use, have goods and services been received and is there sufficient supporting documentation. Authorised signatories are responsible for:

- Completing a detailed monthly review of cardholder transactions within 5 days of receiving a reconciled credit card statement from a cardholder, to ensure the expenditure is in accordance with the policy and account coding for the financial reporting is appropriate
- Reporting any potential non-compliance with the policy to the program administrator

7.6 Cardholders

Cardholders must always act in the best interest of Council (as opposed to personal interests of convenience), and perform their duties honestly and with skill and care. Where cardholders are unsure about a potential conflict of interest, the cardholder should refer to Council's relevant policies and discuss the purchase with the CEO. When it is unclear whether a purchase is for official/acceptable purposes, for example the purchase of gifts or flowers for staff who are leaving the organisation or are ill, they must take advice from their authorised signatory before incurring the expenditure. Cardholders are responsible for:

- Safe keeping of the credit/purchase card, including card details and security PIN
- Promptly informing the program administrator if the card is lost or stolen, or if the cardholder suspects any unauthorised use or transactions
- Ensuring they are present for all purchases on their credit/purchase card
- Reporting any disputed transactions to the program administrator and the bank immediately and ensure prompt resolution
- Signing the card immediately upon receiving it
- Ensuring the card is used only by the cardholder, and within the approved limits
- Returning the card to the finance team as required by section 6.
- Maintaining appropriate supporting documentation to verify the nature and amount of each transaction
- Where supporting documentation is lost, the cardholder must complete a statutory declaration confirming the nature and amount of the transaction



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ensure month end reconciliations are completed and passed onto their authorised signatory within 5 business days of receiving the statement from the finance team. Refer to the Credit Card Procedure for further information on the monthly reconciliation procedures</u> • <u>Ensuring there is adequate description on the monthly reconciliation to support the purpose of the transaction, particularly with regards to any travel or entertainment related expenses (i.e. meals, accommodation etc)</u> • <u>Ensure account coding for input into the finance system</u> <p><u>Sign the credit/purchase card upon receiving it, and signing the monthly statement and reconciliation to verify the expenses are for business purposes only. The Finance Manager and Assistant Finance Manager are responsible for implementing this policy by ensuring all Cardholders are aware of the policy and their obligations.</u></p> <p><u>Staff must sign the Statement of Compliance before being issued with a Corporate Credit/Purchase Card.</u></p>
<p><u>8-9.8</u></p>	<p><u>Training Requirements</u> <u>Cardholder Agreement</u></p> <p><u>Each cardholder and authorised signatory will be trained in this policy and the related procedure upon issue of the corporate credit card. Each cardholder will be required to acknowledge their understanding of the policy and responsibilities by way of a formal credit card agreement. Each authorised signatory will acknowledge their responsibilities by way of a formal authorised signatory agreement.</u></p> <p><u>When the policy is reviewed and updated, each cardholder and authorised signatory is required to be provided training on the updated policy, and must re-sign their cardholder/signatory agreement.</u></p> <p><u>All cardholders are required to sign a Cardholder Agreement on receipt of their Credit /Purchase Card (see attached example).</u></p>
<p><u>9.</u></p>	<p><u>Breaches of Policy</u></p>
	<p><u>The card is to be used in accordance with Council Policies and any deliberate misuse of the card will be considered a breach of Council responsibilities and will result in disciplinary action:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The first non-compliance notice will result in a suspension of the card for one week</u> • <u>The second non-compliance notice will result in a suspension of the card for one month</u> • <u>The third, and final, non-compliance will result in cancellation of the card.</u> <p><u>Further disciplinary action may also be taken as determined by the CEO.</u></p> <p><u>If a cardholder inadvertently incurs private expenses, for example, as part of a larger official business purpose transaction, the cardholder must notify the administrators and reimburse Council for all such private expenses as soon as practicable, unless:</u></p>



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- The unauthorised use is due to a Corporate Credit/Purchase Card being lost/stolen (provided the cardholder to adequate measures to prevent the card from being lost or stolen); or
- The use is the result of fraud on the part of a third party (such as a merchant).

In all cases of misuse, the Council reserves the right to recover any money from the cardholder by whatever legal means are available.

Any deliberate misuse of the card, or systemic non-compliance, may also result in termination of employment. Additionally, any breaches may be reported to the Police or to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) as necessary.

10.

Other Matters – Security

The security of credit cards is paramount. Cardholders must take all due care to ensure safe keeping of the credit/purchase card, including card details and security PIN. Cardholders must ensure there are adequate procedures in place for the storage and use of their card. Under no circumstance shall the cardholder allow the credit card to be photocopied.

Cardholders must not provide the card, or a copy of the card, or the credit card details to someone other than the cardholder to allow purchases to be made without the cardholder present.

Review and Update

The credit and procurement card policy is to be reviewed at least every four years, unless circumstances are identified requiring a review and update to the policy.

Emergency Details

Should a card be lost, the cardholder is responsible for informing the program administrator to allow the card to be cancelled or suspended. Contact details are below:

Program Administrator: Finance Coordinator
Emergency Phone Number: (03) 5585 9927

The Program Administrator is responsible for contacting the bank to organise suspension and/or cancellation of the card

Bank: National Australia Bank – Commercial Cards Centre
Emergency Phone Number: 1800 033 103 (24 hours, 7 days a week)

Significant Losses



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For the purposes of this policy, the value threshold above which an actual or suspected fraud, corruption or other loss in relation to credit cards is significant and reportable is \$500.

Auditing

Each month the Cardholder will submit their Corporate Credit Card monthly statement to their authorised signatory who will review their purchases prior to submitting the statement to the finance team for processing. The Council's internal and external auditors may audit credit/purchasing card transactions at any time.

Personal Rewards

Cardholders are not permitted to tender personal rewards cards (e.g. "Fly Buys" cards) to accumulate points for personal use.

Records Management

The Records Management team is responsible for retaining all documentation associated with assigned credit/purchase cards including but not limited to applications and receipts for all transactions.

Emergency Management

Circumstances sometimes arise that require Council to invoke its Business Continuity Management Plan. In these instances, Council officers need to offer responsive support to the community and special provisions will apply. In order to assist officers in an emergency management situation, the Chief Executive Officer has the discretion to increase cardholder's credit limits should this be considered necessary. The program administrator will increase the credit limit on individual cardholders within the limits of Council's overall facility limit and the cardholder's financial delegation.

11. Supporting Documentation

All expenditure incurred on Credit/Purchasing Cards shall be supported by a tax invoice or receipt in compliance with the requirements of the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999*. If the tax invoice or receipt is lost or otherwise unobtainable, then a Statutory Declaration must be completed and signed by the cardholder. A legible copy of the Supporting Documentation must be scanned and attached to the expense as part of the monthly reconciliation process.

A tax invoice must be requested for every purchase; an EFTPOS receipt is not a tax invoice & is not sufficient supporting documentation.

When completing the monthly reconciliations, where a transaction has been made from a restaurant, hotel, motel or any other food and beverage providing business, cardholders must provide appropriate information to allow the finance team to split



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	<u>expenditure as required for Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) purposes. Limits are reviewed and set by the ATO each year.</u>
12.	<u>Human Rights Statement</u>
	<u>It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights Act. WWSC is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees. The Council will formally involve elected employee Health and Safety Representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health and safety of any of its employees.</u>



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CREDIT/PURCHASE CARD – CARDHOLDER AGREEMENT

Cardholder Name:

Cardholder Position:

I acknowledge that I am to be issued a National Australia Bank Corporate Card ("the Card") for use on the West Wimmera Shire Council's National Australia Bank Corporate Card account. I:

1. Am aware of my responsibilities and duties as a Corporate Card Cardholder under the West Wimmera Shire operating procedures

2. Acknowledge that my use of the Card must be:

a) within the financial delegations given to me

b) for business use only

3. Am aware that transactions made with the card are subject to authorisation and auditing

4. Undertake to keep the card and PIN safe from unauthorised use at all times

5. Undertake to return the Corporate Card to the Finance Department on request:

a) Prior to my assuming duties in another position that does not require the use of the Card;

b) On my resignation; or

c) On my retirement.

6. Undertake to advise the National Australia Bank Customer Card Services immediately when I am aware that the Card has been lost or stolen or that it has been misused. I will also advise the Finance Manager.

7. Acknowledge that my monthly credit limit is: \$.....

Cardholder's Signature:

Date:

CEO/Director's Signature:

CEO/Director's Name: (Please Print)

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Date:

Issuing Officer:

Issuing Officer Signature:

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1.0 Appendix B – Cardholder Agreement

Credit Card Cardholder Agreement

Cardholder name:

Position:

Accountable Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Authorised Signatory: <Position title of supervisor/reviewer>

Administrator: Finance Coordinator

I understand and agree that the Purchasing Card is issued to me on the express understanding that I will, at all times, comply with the following conditions:

Use

- 1) The purchasing card is the property of West Wimmera Shire Council and is in my possession and under my strict control.
- 2) I will not permit the purchasing card to be used by any person other than myself.
- 3) I will only use the purchasing card for official purposes.
- 4) I will immediately report any suspected or known unauthorised use of the purchasing card to the card provider and the program administrator.
- 5) I will not use the purchasing card to pay for expenses that have already been claimed (or will be claimed) by any form of allowance or reimbursement.
- 6) I will not use the purchasing card to pay for tips or gratuities, except in countries other than Australia, to the minimum extent expected in accordance with common practice in the country.
- 7) I will not use the purchasing card to obtain cash, except for prepaid debit cards, where cash may only be obtained if the CEO has authorised the use of the card for this purpose.
- 8) I can use the purchasing card to a maximum limit of \$1,000 in any one transaction and to a maximum monthly limit of \$ <Card Limit>.
- 9) My use of the purchasing card is subject to the following restrictions on transaction types (specify):
 - <Complete as applicable for individual cardholder>
- 10) I will not split transactions on the purchasing card to avoid exceeding purchasing card transaction limits.
- 11) I hold a financial authorisation that is at least equivalent in value to the transaction limit in 8 above. For any transactions exceeding my level of financial authorisation, I will obtain approval from the appropriate officer as per the Procurement policy requirements prior to making the purchase.



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12) I understand that purchasing information may be periodically reviewed by management, the audit committee, internal audit and/or Council.

Transaction/monthly reconciliation

13) I will be issued with a monthly statement by the card provider. I will ensure that all transactions that appear on the monthly statement are verified by me and that a tax invoice/receipt is attached to the monthly statement when it is submitted for approval. In the absence of a tax invoice/receipt, I will complete and sign a Statutory Declaration to verify the transaction. I will ensure that goods or services paid for using the purchasing card are actually delivered or provided. I will ensure that each transaction appearing on the card provider's statement is appropriately coded for accounting purposes.

14) I will sign the monthly statement provided by the card provider to indicate that the transactions being paid by the Council have been made only for official purposes and return to the finance department for processing within the requested timeframe.

15) I will ensure that credits are requested in relation to transactions made using the purchasing card as soon as I become aware of the need for a credit, for example, where a good or service is not delivered or not provided in accordance with original expectations.

Change in cardholder details

16) I will immediately advise the program administrator of any change in my name or contact details.

Upon resignation or transfer

17) I will immediately return my purchasing card to the program administrator if I resign or retire, or if my services as an employee of the Council are otherwise terminated, or if I am instructed to do so by the Accountable Officer or the program administrator.

Lost or stolen cards

18) I will immediately report the loss or theft of my purchasing card to the card provider and the program administrator.

Declaration

19) I confirm that I have access to only one purchasing card.

20) I acknowledge reading and understanding the WWSC Credit Card Policy and Procedure.

21) I have been briefed on all aspects of the operation and use of the purchasing card.

Cardholder Signature _____

Date _____

Accountable Officer Signature _____

Date _____

Authorised Signatory Signature _____

Date _____



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Policy Adopted:	Ordinary Meeting 18/06/15	Minute Book Page 30667	RecFind 15/002612
Policy Reviewed:	Ordinary Meeting 16/05/18	Minute Book Page 37956	RecFind 18/001838
	<u>Council Meeting 16/12/20</u>	Minute Book Page <number>	RecFind <number>



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Next review date:							
Senior Manager:	Director Corporate and Community Services						
Responsible Officer:	Business Performance Manager						
Functional Area:	Corporate Services						
Introduction & Background	<p>West Wimmera Shire Council recognises that the involvement of the community in making decisions and plans is fundamental to good governance. Council values the experience and expertise of members of our community and recognises the value of that experience and expertise in decision making.</p> <p>This policy establishes a clear standard of engagement, having regard to the significance, complexity and anticipated level of impact associated with decisions made regarding major projects, policies, strategies and service planning.</p> <p>Council is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offering opportunities for the community to contribute to the decisions made by Council • effective communication of information between Council and the community • ensuring effective community representation in the decision making process • decision making that is transparent and works in the interest of the community, considering our diverse stakeholders • ensuring effective community engagement planning. 						
Purpose & Objectives	<p>The objectives of the policy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate Council's commitment to engage with our community on decisions and development of plans and policies that affect them 						



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve understanding of community and stakeholder engagement within Council and the community • Outline how community engagement is integrated into Council activities in order to support decision making and strengthen relationships and partnerships. 								
<p>Scope</p>	<p>This policy applies to the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of community engagement activities as directed by Council, recommended by staff, or legislated by the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>.</p> <p>Community engagement is the responsibility of all Council service areas, teams and employees. It also applies to contractors and consultants undertaking work on behalf of Council.</p> <p>The policy does not apply to community engagement processes that are subject to prescribed processes imposed by other Victorian legislation such as land-use planning applications or other Council processes such as service requests or complaints.</p>								
<p>Definitions</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 1055 954 1592"> <p>Community</p> </td> <td data-bbox="954 1055 1453 1592"> <p>Refers to the people who have a stake and interest in the West Wimmera and includes people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live, work, study or conduct business or are involved in local community groups or organisations in the municipality • Visit, use or enjoy the services, facilities and public places located within the municipality </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 1592 954 1839"> <p>Community engagement</p> </td> <td data-bbox="954 1592 1453 1839"> <p>Community engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working with individuals and groups to encourage active involvement in decisions that affect them or are of interest to them.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 1839 954 1917"> <p>Consultation</p> </td> <td data-bbox="954 1839 1453 1917"> <p>The activity of seeking input on a matter.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 1917 954 1995"> <p>Deliberation</p> </td> <td data-bbox="954 1917 1453 1995"> <p>Deliberation is an approach to decision-making in which</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Community</p>	<p>Refers to the people who have a stake and interest in the West Wimmera and includes people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live, work, study or conduct business or are involved in local community groups or organisations in the municipality • Visit, use or enjoy the services, facilities and public places located within the municipality 	<p>Community engagement</p>	<p>Community engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working with individuals and groups to encourage active involvement in decisions that affect them or are of interest to them.</p>	<p>Consultation</p>	<p>The activity of seeking input on a matter.</p>	<p>Deliberation</p>	<p>Deliberation is an approach to decision-making in which</p>
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		stakeholders consider relevant facts from multiple points of view, converse with one another to think critically about options before them and enlarge their perspectives, opinions, and understandings.
	Process	A relationship between key steps, activities, tasks, policies and / or resources.
	Public participation	A term used by IAP2 meaning the involvement of those affected (interested or impacted) by a decision in the decision-making process. We use the term interchangeably with Community Engagement, Stakeholder Engagement or Consultation.
	Stakeholder	An individual or group with a strong interest in the decisions of Council and are directly impacted by their outcomes.
Policy Details		
1.	Principles of community engagement	
	<p>Council adopts the following principles and commitments which will inform all community engagement processes. These principles are set out in Section 56 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>.</p> <p>Council has built on these principles to describe our commitment which reflects the values and expectations of the West Wimmera community as determined in consultation with the community.</p>	
	Principle	Our Commitment
	The community engagement process has a clearly defined objective and scope.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement is planned by clearly identifying the purpose, scope and objectives of the community's participation, in the community engagement plan. We will communicate the reasons



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		for engagement with participants.
Participants in community engagement will have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure the community has the information necessary to participate meaningfully in the engagement activities. • We will endeavour to provide information that is objective, relevant, timely and easy to understand.
Participants in community engagement will be representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will identify the people, communities and stakeholders who are affected by and interested in the topic of engagement. • We will reach out to our community to involve and hear from participants that represent the affected and interested groups.
Participants in community engagement are entitled to reasonable support to enable meaningful and informed engagement.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will reduce physical, social and cultural barriers to participation. • We will consider the needs and perspectives of all groups that may want to be involved in the process. • We will seek to obtain the views of a broad cross section of the community, especially when there is a quiet majority. • We will allow sufficient time for review of information and participation in varied engagement activities.
Participants in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will influence Council decision making.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We recognise the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) as the international standard for effective community engagement. We will be guided by IAP2 recommendations. • We will inform participants of the level of influence they will have, as described in the IAP2 spectrum's



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		<p>promise to the public, and we will ensure they know the outcomes of any decisions made.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Level of Community Engagement</p> <p>Council will call for different levels of engagement, having regard to the significance, complexity and anticipated level of impact of what is being proposed, and the stakeholders we need to target.</p> <p>This policy adopts the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) <i>Public Participation Spectrum</i> to guide the range and extent of participation at each of the five levels. The five levels of engagement outlined on the IAP2 spectrum shown below will be utilised where appropriate to meet our commitment to the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform: To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions. • Consult: To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions. • Involve: To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. • Collaborate: To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution. • Empower: To place final decision-making in the hands of the public. <p>The levels of community engagement will be identified on the IAP2 spectrum at the project planning stage following an analysis of the desired outcomes (see Appendix A). The community engagement plan will identify the most appropriate communication tool and timeframes to ensure the particular target group(s) are well informed of both the issue and the engagement opportunities.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Type of community engagement</p> <p>Community engagement may include multiple levels of public participation, both at different stages of the process and because different stakeholders will choose to engage at different levels. The type or form of engagement practices undertaken can be broadly described as either deliberative or participatory. Many of Council's community engagement projects are likely to include both types of practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberative engagement <p>Deliberative engagement take place at the highest three levels of influence on the IAP2 spectrum, 'Involve', 'Collaborate' or 'Empower'. Deliberative engagement allows for discussion and the possibility of consensus if needed. The key features</p>	



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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. Deliberation can be scaled to fit the size and impact of the project. Some projects may require skilled facilitators to ensure a fair and equitable process.

Examples of deliberative practices are

- working with advisory groups
- online proposals and ideas are discussed by a panel of community members
- participants are asked to consider and prioritise ideas
- where a representative group participates in a series of sessions of information exchange in order to reach consensus.

Projects most suited to a deliberative approach include those where the outcome will have a far-reaching or long-term effect, and issues where there is considerable community concern or division about the alternatives.

- **Participatory Engagement**

Participatory engagement takes place at the first two levels of influence on the spectrum, 'Inform' and 'Consult' and involve one-way information exchange either from Council to community or community to Council. Participatory engagement typically occurs when feedback is invited on ideas, alternatives or draft documents.

Examples of participatory practices are

- Surveys
- Polls, ideas gathering
- Submissions

Participation at this level can be very broad, including by stakeholders who choose to track the project but offer no direct input.

- **Submissions Process**

On matters where the only form of community participation is an invitation to make submissions, and engagement on the matter was formerly governed by section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, Council will continue to proceed in a manner modelled



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	on section 223 of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i> .	
	Legislative Environment	
	<p>Some elements of community engagement are directed by statutory requirements. In accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> Council has a statutory obligation to develop a long-term Community Vision, Financial Plan and Asset Plan, as well as a four-year Council Plan. Under the <i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008</i> Council has a statutory requirement to develop a four-year Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Council will meet its statutory obligations by ensuring the community will have an opportunity to participate in the development of these plans.</p> <p>As a guide, the lowest type of community engagement to be implemented is set out below:</p>	
	Subject	Community Engagement Approach
	Community Vision	Deliberative Engagement
	Council Plan	Deliberative Engagement
	10 year Financial Plan	Deliberative Engagement
	10 year Asset Plan	Deliberative Engagement
	Annual Budget	Participatory Engagement
	Making of Local Law	Participatory Engagement
	Acquisition or Sale of Land	Participatory Engagement
	Other matter (i.e Capital projects, service plans, strategies or Council policies)	Dependent upon complexity of the matter
4.	Community engagement planning and review	
	<p>To ensure effective community engagement, Council implements the following eight steps to design, deliver and complete community engagement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clearly define the purpose and scope of the community engagement: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Document the project purpose, scope, engagement objectives, timelines, budget and the decision to be made. Identify any risks. 1.2. Take into account relevant legislation in framing the community engagement. 1.3. Determine initial expectation of the level of participation on the IAP2 spectrum. 2. Understand stakeholder and community interests: 	



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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Identify the stakeholders who are affected by, interested in, or who can influence or inform the decision. 2.2. Understand how stakeholders are affected, the nature and intensity of their interest, and capacity and willingness to participate. 2.3. Consider if there are barriers to participation that need to be removed to ensure an appropriate balance of views. 2.4. Identify the preferred methods for engagement. 2.5. Ensure that participants understand their role and level of influence on the decision-making process. 3. Design an appropriate community engagement process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Identify the stages of the engagement process and any negotiable or non-negotiable aspects. 3.2. Plan inclusive and accessible communications and methods to support the engagement. 3.3. Identify data requirements that are relevant and measurable, and how it will be analysed. 3.4. Plan how the data collected will be managed and ensure compliance with Council's privacy policy.
5.	<p>Informing the community of outcomes</p> <p>Council shall inform all participants of the outcome of any community engagement processes they have been involved in.</p> <p>Council shall make these outcomes publically available to a level of detail in alignment requirements of the <i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014</i> and any other relevant legislation.</p>
6.	<p>Charter of Human Rights</p> <p>This policy is deemed to be consistent with the <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i>, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S.13 – not to have their privacy interfered with • S18 – to take part in public life, by having the opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participate in the conduct of Council decision making; and ○ Have access to Council and Council information.
7.	<p>Roles and responsibilities</p>



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Responsibilities for implementing this policy are shared as follows:	
Party	Roles and responsibilities
Councillors	<p>Ensure that matters under consideration are informed by the planned level of community engagement.</p> <p>Balance the range of stakeholder views and concerns on an issue when making a decision.</p>
Senior Management Group	<p>Consult with councillors to establish the engagement process to be used.</p> <p>Champion better practice community engagement through policy, process and leadership.</p> <p>Monitor implementation and compliance with this policy.</p>
Managers	<p>Manage areas of responsibility to ensure community engagement is consistent with this policy.</p>
Staff	<p>Undertake to make community engagement activities consistent with this policy.</p>



APPENDIX A

IAP2 SPECTRUM OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that define the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of a preferred solution.	To place the final decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.



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Policy Adopted:	Council Meeting [date]	Minute Book Page [number]	RecFind
Policy Reviewed:			

Draft