

Community Think Tank outcomes report

Outcomes Report

Theme 6: Our trusted and responsive leadership



"An innovative, community-driven Council that works collaboratively to achieve agreed place-based outcomes, ensuring all have the opportunity to engage with their Council on local priorities and the future of their community through demonstrated best practice governance, financial sustainability and advocacy on community priorities and aspirations."

- By 2041, Council works in partnership with the community in a trusted, transparent, and accountable way.
- We work alongside the First Nations community and recognise Aboriginal self-determination.
 - Council is responsive, innovative, customer-focused and delivers excellent services.
 - Barriers between Council and the community are reduced through timely and effective communication, making interactions with Council easier.
 - Council advocates for community priorities and actively engages the community in decision-making.
 - Communities are nurtured to drive positive change for the communities they represent.
 - Regular and transparent reporting keeps the community well-informed of Council's progress.
 - Council is trusted as a socially, environmentally and financially sustainable organisation, working to achieve Banyule's Community Vision 2041.
 - People of all ages and backgrounds actively participate in decision-making and civic life.



Banyule City Council

19.12.24

capire

Giving every person a voice.

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Capire staff and associates take great care while transcribing participant feedback but unfortunately cannot guarantee the accuracy of all notes. We are however confident that we capture the full range of ideas, concerns and views expressed during our consultation activities.

Unless otherwise noted, the views expressed in our work represent those of the participants and not necessarily those of our consultants or our clients.

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Executive Summary

Under the Local Government Act 2020, deliberative engagement is required to be used to develop the Council Plan, Asset Plan, Financial Plan and to review the Community Vision.

The Banyule Community Vision reflects Banyule's community values, aspirations and priorities until 2041. It comprises of an overarching vision statement and six priority themes which guide Council to shape Banyule's policies and plans and to prioritise investment.

This report details the process and outputs of Banyule City Council's (Council) Community ThinkTank (ThinkTank) which met four times between July and December 2024 to undertake a deliberative process, taking a deep dive into Banyule Community Vision 2041 (Community Vision), community priorities, concerns and key Council documents, before providing recommendations to help to develop Council's key strategic plans.

The selection of ThinkTank members was managed by Council, with the support of newDemocracy Foundation, to ensure that the ThinkTank would be representative of Banyule's diversity. Over 400 eligible Banyule community members expressed their interest, a total of 55 people were randomly selected to form the ThinkTank.

Informed deliberation is a key facet of a deliberative process. To support the ThinkTank process, members received two participant packs that included broad engagement data and information about Council and Council's strategic plans, summary reports after the first three sessions, and the use of a private ThinkTank webpage (portal) on Shaping Banyule for additional information, questions and answers.

Upon completion of the engagement process, the ThinkTank developed and presented three key outputs to Banyule councillors:

1. Revised Community Vision theme descriptions for all six Community Vision themes.
2. Recommended priorities that Council should focus on for the next four years, for each Community Vision theme.
3. Principles that cut across the four Community Vision themes to guide Council's work over the next four years.

Additional outputs included recommended actions for how Council could track and communicate progress towards the Community Vision 2041, and additional comments or topics not related to the remit.

After participating in the ThinkTank process, members shared something that they are excited about for the future of Banyule and the challenges and successes of the process.

A pre and post ThinkTank survey aimed to capture any shifts in ThinkTank members' perception, trust and confidence in Council and civic participation. Overall, there was an increase in understanding, trust and confidence in Council, members' perception of increased skills and knowledge to contribute to decision making and people's connection to the Banyule community.

The following quotes capture some of the ThinkTank members' reflections about their experience of the process:

Reflection on the process: *'The process is a strong statement of democracy. 'Blessed to be able to give our opinion, right or wrong'. 'Long live the City of Banyule!'*

Challenge of participation: *'Sometimes I felt participants were being asked to address complex questions, without the skills or time to do this.'*

Success of participation: *'I feel that I was able to understand the process and keep people in my discussion groups on track when the conversations and discussions started to deviate from the assigned tasks.'*

Additional comment: *'Thank you to the hardworking team at BCC for everything you've done and the friendly way in which you've engaged us. I really appreciate it and feel like I'm welcome to Banyule.'*

1. Introduction

1.1. Report purpose

This report details the deliberative engagement process and outputs of Banyule City Council's (Council) Community ThinkTank (ThinkTank). It summarises the project, the ThinkTank process, recruitment, members, outputs, reflections and evaluation.

Capire Consulting Group (Capire) was contracted by Council as an independent consultancy to facilitate and report on the ThinkTank sessions.

1.2. Project background

The Local Government Act Victoria (2020) states that councils must adopt a community engagement policy that includes deliberative engagement practices that are capable of being applied to the development of the Community Vision, the Council Plan, the Financial Plan and the Asset Plan.

Council is working closely with the Banyule community to plan for the next four years, including the recruitment of the ThinkTank, a fifty-five-community member panel to participate in the deliberative engagement process.

The ThinkTank met four times between July and December 2024 to take a deep dive into Banyule Community Vision 2041 (Community Vision), community priorities, concerns and key Council documents, before providing recommendations to help to develop Council's key strategic plans.

A broad community engagement program was undertaken between 29 April and 23 June 2024 aimed at harnessing the wisdom of Banyule's diverse community, to inform the ThinkTank and to help work out:

- Council's big picture for the next four years (2025 to 2029) - the Council Plan
- what's needed to improve the community's health and wellbeing - Health and Wellbeing Plan
- how to best manage buildings and assets - the Asset Plan
- how to fund Council's work and what to prioritise - the Budget.

1.2.1. Banyule Community Vision 2041

The [Banyule Community Vision 2041](#) was developed in 2021 following multiple stages of community engagement including a Community Working Group.

The Community Vision reflects Banyule's community values, aspirations and priorities until 2041. It comprises of an overarching vision statement and six priority themes which guide Council to shape Banyule's policies and plans and to prioritise investment.

The Community Vision statement is:

We in Banyule are a thriving, sustainable, inclusive and connected community. We are engaged, we belong and we value and protect our environment.

The six priority themes are:

1. Our inclusive and connected community
2. Our sustainable environment
3. Our well-built city
4. Our valued community assets and facilities
5. Our thriving local economy
6. Our trusted and responsive leadership.

1.3. Engagement limitations

All engagement processes have limitations. The following points highlight the limitations that should be considered when reading this report.

- It was taken in good faith that the information participants provided in their Expression of Interest forms were true.
- Session discussions were largely participant led. Some participants may have chosen to contribute to some activities and not to others.
- The newDemocracy Foundation independently selected participants to represent Banyule's diversity, to the best of its ability. However, the final membership is not necessarily a statistically accurate sample of the whole population due to some people exiting the process.
- While the ThinkTank members delivered a strong cross-section of views from across the municipality, it cannot be guaranteed that the community's complete set of views were represented.
- The number of ThinkTank members at each session fluctuated. This is normal due to unexpected personal commitments or illness of members.

2. ThinkTank overview

2.1. ThinkTank remit

Community panels address a challenge or a 'remit' which frames the conversations, determines what information is relevant, clarifies what is negotiable and what the panel can influence.

The remit for the ThinkTank was:

The Banyule Community ThinkTank will identify clear priorities and principles for Council over the next four years. Members will be provided with up-to-date information to support their informed conversations with other Thinktank members, before making recommendations to councillors based on what members agree should be Council's priorities for inclusion in its Council Plan and Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and other strategic documents.

2.2. Participant packs

Prior to the first session, ThinkTank members were provided with Participant Pack 1 to support their informed participation throughout the sessions. The pack included key information about the ThinkTank, who is Council, what Council does, the people of Banyule, Community Vision 2041 and what was heard about the Community Vision 2041 during broader community engagement.

Following Session 1, ThinkTank members were provided with Participant Pack 2. The pack included an overview of Council's approach to delivering the Community Vision, and an overview of the Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan, Asset Plan and the budget.

To further support ThinkTank members with their discussions and to respond to questions asked during Session 2, four recorded presentations were created by Council officers on progress and performance, asset management, budget and finance and health and wellbeing. This information formed a 'virtual' participant pack for the ThinkTank.

After a vote in Session 3, ThinkTank members were given an additional hardcopy pack with the revised Community Vision theme descriptions from Session 1 and proposed shorter versions Council drafted between Session 2 and 3 incorporating online feedback. ThinkTank members were invited to review and compare the long and shorter theme descriptions before finalising them in Session 4.

2.3. Sessions overview

The ThinkTank process was delivered over four in-person sessions totalling 24.5hours. Table 1 provides an outline of each session including session objectives, and number of attendees.

A summary report was provided to ThinkTank members after each of the first three sessions to capture the ThinkTank's session outputs, build on the information provided, and to support members to prepare for the next session. These reports are on the [ThinkTank webpage](#) and may be read in conjunction with this overarching report.

Table 1: Overview of sessions

SESSION	OBJECTIVES	ATTENDEES
Online welcome session Tuesday 2 July 7pm to 7:30pm	- To welcome ThinkTank members. - To provide ThinkTank members the opportunity to meet with key Council staff. - To provide quick introduction to the online ThinkTank private member's page.	26
Introduction and Community Vision Saturday 20 July 9:30am to 4:00pm	- To build the ThinkTank members' understanding of Council and the ThinkTank process. - To build the ThinkTank members' understanding of the Community Vision.	43

SESSION	OBJECTIVES	ATTENDEES
	- To help ThinkTank members start to get to know each other and work together. - To discuss and agree on principles to work together. - To allow the ThinkTank to reflect, discuss and ask questions about the presentations to inform their work. - To review and refine the Community Vision Theme descriptions.	
Participant Pack 2 online support Thursday 22 August 7:30pm to 8:15pm	An opt-in opportunity for ThinkTank members to ask questions based on information presented in Participant Pack 2. To provide a brief overview of what Participant Pack 2 includes.	7
What stands out as important? Saturday 31 August 9:30am to 4:00pm	- To deepen ThinkTank member's knowledge about what Council's role is and what they are currently doing to get closer to the Community Vision 2041 through the delivery of its services, assets and projects. - To enable ThinkTank members to understand current challenges, risks and opportunities. - To equip ThinkTank members to be able to identify initial priorities (areas of focus) that Council should focus on for the next four years.	37
Online information launch Tuesday 29 October 7pm to 8pm	- To launch a set of recorded presentations. - To bridge the gap between Session 2 and 3. - To provide an opt-in opportunity for people to reconnect. - To run through the 4 new subpages and questions in the online forum.	7
Consolidation of thoughts Saturday 30 November 9:30am to 4:00pm	- To reflect on any new information that the ThinkTank was provided during the break between Sessions 2 and 3, and any feedback and further thinking they've done. - To equip ThinkTank members to be able to further add to and refine the priorities (areas of focus) that Council should focus on for the next four years and clearly define principles.	36 ¹
Recommendation preparation and presentation Saturday 7 December 9:30am to 2:30pm	- To present finalised Vision themes and descriptions, as well as related priorities and principles for decision making to Councillors and council staff. councillors. - To develop a recommendation on the way that Council should communicate progress towards the Community Vision with the broader community.	35

2.4. ThinkTank private webpage

A private ThinkTank webpage (portal) was set up on Shaping Banyule, Council's online engagement platform.

ThinkTank members had access to all the resources and information required throughout the process including:

- Agendas and associated key documents to support each Session.
- The ThinkTank Remit and Principles to work together.
- The key demographics of the ThinkTank and how it reflected the Banyule community.
- A video of participants from Session 1.
- Summary reports for Sessions 1, 2 and 3 including presentation slide pack and participant packs
- Timeline of key dates and session information.
- Council officer contact information.
- Pre-recorded videos for period between Sessions 2 and 3.

¹ This includes three ThinkTank members who did not attend Session 3 but voted on the final priorities before Session four.

- Answers to questions asked by ThinkTank members during the sessions.
- Results for votes cast online.
- Recordings of online sessions including the online Welcome Session, Participant Pack 2 online support and launch of pre-recorded presentations.

2.4.1. Pre-recorded presentations and forums

Between Sessions 2 and 3, ThinkTank members were encouraged to go to the webpage to watch pre-recorded presentations from Council officers, based around four topics: priorities and performances, assets and facilities, budget and finances and health and wellbeing. These topics were identified following questions and areas of additional information required Council received during Session 2.

ThinkTank members were invited to an online launch introducing the first topic and given the opportunity to ask questions. ThinkTank members were invited to participate in online forums and answer questions on each of the four topics.

39 comments were collected through these forums and were included in the draft priorities and principles presented to the ThinkTank during 3 to support discussions.

3. ThinkTank recruitment and members

3.1. Recruitment

The selection of ThinkTank members was managed by Council, with the support of newDemocracy Foundation, to ensure that the ThinkTank would be representative of Banyule's diversity.

Over 400 eligible Banyule community members expressed their interest in joining the ThinkTank.

A random and stratified selection process was undertaken with all eligible expressions of interest to ensure, to the best of its ability, a representative ThinkTank. For detail on the process and program used to select participants, go to the [newDemocracy website](#).

The City of Banyule has an estimated population of 127,348. Based on the newDemocracy Foundation recommendations for a population of this size, the ThinkTank should be made up of at least 43 people. This number would ensure that Council can be 95% confident that the ThinkTank will statistically represent the Banyule community.

To be eligible, people had to either live in Banyule, own a business in Banyule or pay rates in Banyule.

People were not eligible if they were previously a Banyule City Council councillor, if they intended to nominate for the Council election in October 2024, or if there was concern on the part of Council officers that participation might lead to a conflict of interest. Community members who expressed their interest were asked to declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest for Council's consideration prior to the random selection process.

3.2. Members

A total of 55 people were randomly selected to become ThinkTank members. Based on identified demographic targets using Australian Bureau of Statistics data for the area, the selection included people from all backgrounds and lived-experiences, essentially making up a 'mini-Banyule'. Figure 1 is a photo from the end of Session 4 of ThinkTank members, project team members and councillors. Figure 2 presents the key demographics of the ThinkTank and how it reflected the Banyule community (based on targets).

We anticipated that ThinkTank members' circumstances could change over the six-month period, potentially affecting their ability to complete the deliberative process. Therefore Council intentionally selected beyond the target of 50 ThinkTank members to account for drop-offs. This helped to ensure that the ThinkTank remained diverse and representative.



Figure 1: ThinkTank members, project team members and councillors at the end of Session 4

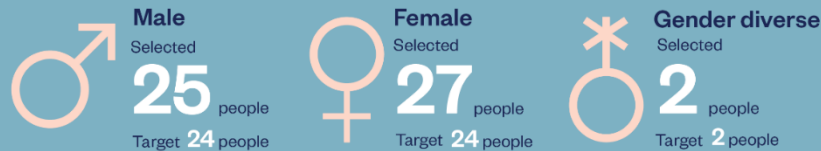
Banyule ThinkTank

The **Banyule Community ThinkTank** will help to deepen Council's understanding of what's needed locally and where to focus Council's attention. The group will be a mini-Banyule and includes people from all backgrounds and lived-experiences.

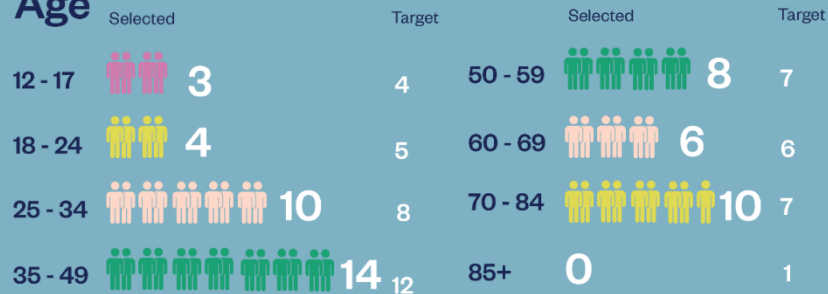
With the support of newDemocracy Foundation, a random selection process took place from over 400 applications to identify **55 ThinkTank members**.

A bit about our participants

Gender



Age



Housing

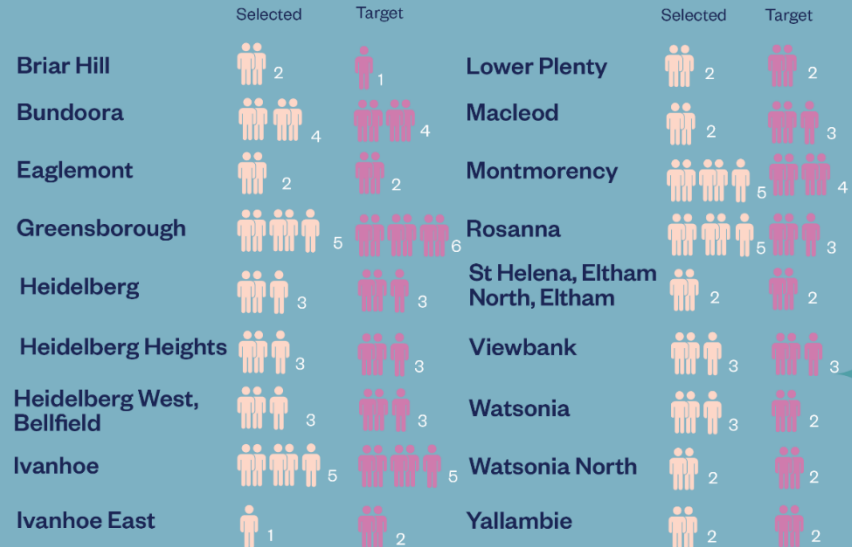


ThinkTank participants

Target
50

Selected
55

Suburb



Access and equity



7

ThinkTank members were born overseas and speak a language other than English at home



7

ThinkTank members are from an LGBTQIA+ community



13

ThinkTank members live with a disability, inclusive of mental illness



2

ThinkTank members are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent



Banyule Futures
Your Voice Our Future

Figure 2: Key demographics of the ThinkTank and how it reflected the Banyule community

4. ThinkTank outputs

By the end of Session 4, the ThinkTank developed and presented three key outputs to Banyule councillors:

- 1. Revised Community Vision theme descriptions for each Community Vision theme.
- 2. Recommended priorities for each Community Vision theme that Council should focus on for the next four years.
- 3. Principles that cut across the four Community Vision themes to guide Council’s work over the next four years.

This section details these key outputs in addition to definitions for inclusion at the start of the Community Vision, recommended actions for how Council could track and communicate progress towards the Community Vision 2041, and questions on notice or topics not related to the remit during Session 4.

4.1. Revised Community Vision theme descriptions

Each of the six Community Vision themes includes a theme title, a ‘nutshell statement’ and a detailed theme description. During Sessions 1 and 4, the ThinkTank revised all six Community Vision theme descriptions.

The ThinkTank’s revised theme descriptions are detailed below under the theme title and nutshell statement for each Community Vision theme.

Table 2: The revised description for the Community Vision theme one

THEME 1: OUR INCLUSIVE, HEALTHY AND CONNECTED COMMUNITY
Nutshell statement: A vibrant, connected, active and safe community where diversity and inclusion are valued and encouraged.
ThinkTank’s revised theme description: By 2041, Banyule remains a diverse, inclusive, and vibrant community, where everyone feels at home. • We honour and learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and support self-determination. • Community spaces and services are welcoming and accessible to all, with no barriers to inclusion or participation. • Banyule is safe and people enjoy nutritious food, lead active lifestyles and experience their best health and wellbeing. • Our festivals and events are inclusive and reflect our diversity. • We protect and celebrate our arts and cultural history, offering opportunities for people to connect, participate and be represented. • Volunteering, education and work encourage and build community connection. • Valuing people’s differences underpins our sense of belonging. • People of all ages and backgrounds actively participate in decision-making and civic life. • We recognize the importance of good mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Table 3: The revised description for the Community Vision theme two

THEME 2: OUR SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT
Nutshell statement: A progressive and innovative leader in protecting, enhancing and increasing the health and diversity of our natural environment, where we all commit to playing an active role in achieving environmental sustainability and reducing waste and carbon emissions.
ThinkTank’s revised theme description: By 2041, Banyule is a leader in environmental sustainability and recognised as one of the most sustainable communities. • Aboriginal culture and Caring for Country principles guide our sustainability efforts. • Council partners with the community, education and private sectors, investing in solutions to tackle climate change.

THEME 2: OUR SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

- Population growth aligns with sustainability goals, ensuring equal access to natural spaces.
- We are empowered, adaptive, proactive and resilient to climate change.
- Council promotes sustainable transport options and is on the way to being carbon negative, with a circular economy achieving zero waste.
- We are well-informed on waste, food security and climate actions, and Council leads environmental education.
- We protect and strengthen biodiversity reduce species extinction and enhance wildlife corridors and urban vegetation, including managing pets and pests.
- Urban farming and home-grown food practices are supported and encouraged to be the norm.
- Trees, green spaces and the Urban Forest are abundant and maintained to enhance liveability and neighbourhood character.
- Environmentally sustainable design is central to planning and development, and the use of renewable energy in our homes, businesses and facilities is normal.

Table 4: The revised description for the Community Vision theme three

THEME 3: OUR WELL-BUILT CITY

Nutshell statement: A well-planned, sustainable and liveable place that caters for current and emerging communities; where our local character and environment is protected and enhanced.

ThinkTank's revised theme description:

By 2041, Banyule is a well-planned, designed and built environmentally sustainable city that meets the community's needs.

- Local neighbourhood character, heritage, history and First Nations culture are protected and embedded into planning, thinking and design.
- We are a green city with abundant open spaces, trees and wildlife.
- Spaces are well designed for universal access, and planning decisions consider health and wellbeing.
- The city offers affordable, accessible and sustainable housing options for people's diverse needs.
- Banyule is a network of accessible neighbourhoods, connected by sustainable transport options.
- We encourage and invest in active transport like walking, cycling and community and public transport, and our walking and bike paths are safe and well-connected to the broader community.
- Good design is seen across our city in housing and other buildings.
- Development is sustainable and balanced, preserving grasslands, forests, wetlands, waterways and wildlife.

Table 5: The revised description for the Community Vision theme four

THEME 4: OUR VALUED COMMUNITY ASSETS AND FACILITIES

Nutshell statement: Our community assets, facilities and services, are affordable, sustainable, evenly distributed, safe, accessible for everyone and designed to provide meaningful experiences and connections.

ThinkTank's revised theme description:

By 2041, our facilities, parks, playgrounds and sports grounds are well maintained and accessible to all.

- Community assets are equitably distributed, culturally safe, inclusive and environmentally sustainable, reflecting local character and ensuring physical safety.
- Built assets are adaptable, well-maintained and meet the needs of our diverse community.
- Multipurpose facilities and libraries offer accessible spaces for connection, learning, work and friendship.
- We take pride in our well-built community hubs, aquatic and leisure facilities and sports centres, which are essential to health and wellbeing.
- Everyone has accessible and safe access to Council and non-Council community facilities.
- Our safe network of bike lanes, paths, roads and public transport connects everyone locally and beyond.

Table 6: The revised description for the Community Vision theme five

THEME 5: OUR THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMY
Nutshell statement: A thriving, resilient, socially responsible, local economy that encourages, supports and advocates for a diverse range of businesses and entrepreneurship, providing local investment and employment opportunities.
ThinkTank’s revised theme description: By 2041, Banyule is home to a diverse range of local businesses and everyone has access to quality education and employment. • We promote and have strong relationships with First Nations businesses, organisations and gathering spaces. • Economic growth is supported through business partnerships and regional collaborations and Banyule is a business-friendly destination. • Start-ups and new business ideas continue to grow and thrive. • There is investment in local traders and shopping precincts are safe, attractive and a destination for shopping and socialising. • Local employment opportunities are diverse, inclusive and flexible, supporting work-life balance. • Innovation and technological advancements are embraced to grow and connect local businesses, and social enterprises are well-established. • There are diverse education and job training opportunities for people of all abilities and life stages. • Volunteering is promoted as a valuable contributor to the community and local economy. • We run events to encourage local business and community connections.

Table 7: The revised description for the Community Vision theme six

THEME 6: OUR TRUSTED AND RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP
Nutshell statement: An innovative, community-driven Council that works collaboratively to achieve agreed place-based outcomes, ensuring all have the opportunity to engage with their Council on local priorities and the future of their community through demonstrated best practice governance, financial sustainability and advocacy on community priorities and aspirations.
ThinkTank’s revised theme description: By 2041, Council works in partnership with the community in a trusted, transparent, and accountable way. • We work alongside the First Nations community and recognise Aboriginal self-determination. • Council is responsive, innovative, customer-focused and delivers excellent services. • Barriers between Council and the community are reduced through timely and effective communication, making interactions with Council easier. • Council advocates for community priorities and actively engages the community in decision-making. • Communities are nurtured to drive positive change for the communities they represent. • Regular and transparent reporting keeps the community well-informed of Council’s progress. • Council is trusted as a socially, environmentally and financially sustainable organisation, working to achieve Banyule’s Community Vision 2041. • People of all ages and backgrounds actively participate in decision-making and civic life.

4.1.1. Final Community Vision theme description vote results

After the Community Vision theme descriptions were finalised in Session 4, ThinkTank members voted on them with their level of support. For each revised theme description, ThinkTank members shared whether they ‘love it’, ‘can live with it’ or ‘loathe it’. Table 8 outlines the outcome of the vote².

Overall, there was high support for the revised theme descriptions with only one ‘loathe it’ vote for the revised Theme one theme description.

² Note: ThinkTank members who were not able to attend Session 4 were invited to vote on the theme descriptions. Given the theme descriptions changed significantly during Session 4, the votes of two ThinkTank members have not been included below.

Table 8: Outcome of the final Community Vision theme descriptions vote (n=36)

THEME	LOVE IT	CAN LIVE WITH IT	LOATHE IT
Theme 1: Our inclusive, healthy and connected community	26	7	1
Theme 2: Our sustainable environment	31	5	0
Theme 3: Our well-built city	31	5	0
Theme 4: Our valued community assets and facilities	30	5	0
Theme 5: Our thriving local economy	29	6	0
Theme 6: Our trusted and responsive leadership	28	7	0

4.1.2. Definitions

During Session 1, there was confusion regarding some words used in the Community Vision theme descriptions. Following Session 1, 97% of the 37 ThinkTank members who participated in an online vote, loved, liked or could live with the inclusion of definitions at the start of the Community Vision.

Below are the final definitions to be included in the Community Vision.

- **Accessibility:** The practice of designing, developing and maintaining facilities, spaces, services and programs that can be used by everyone. This includes removing or minimising physical, sensory, cultural, social, financial, technological and information barriers that might stop people from participating fully and equitably in the community.
- **Assets and facilities:** *Assets and facilities* refer to the buildings, places, open spaces, roads, footpaths, drains and other facilities that the community use and depend on. Many of these are owned and managed by Council and others are owned and managed by other levels of government or private organisations.
- **Council:** The term *Council* refers to both the collective group of elected Banyule councillors and the people who work at the Banyule City Council including the CEO, executive staff and the many officers whose role, as stated in the Local Government Act 2020, is to serve its community and provide the programs, services, infrastructure and assets needed for the community.
- **Community:** The term *community* refers to people living, working, learning and enjoying the Banyule municipality. This includes community members, residents, business owner and operators, tourists – those visiting the municipality, agencies, volunteers, community groups – sharing a common interest and using the services and facilities in the Banyule municipality.
- **Everyone:** The use of *everyone* in the theme descriptions refers to and recognises the diversity of people in Banyule. The diversity of our community is referenced in Banyule's Diversity Statement:
 - 'Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders. We are committed to access, equity, participation and rights for everyone: principles which empower, foster harmony and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community.'
- **First Nations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:** *First Nations peoples* or First Peoples refers to peoples or nations of people connected to an area before colonisation. While these terms have some general acceptance, some individuals or groups of *Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples* may not prefer them. These terms are used interchangeably in the Banyule Community Vision 2041.
- **We:** The term *we* refers to the community members, residents, business owner and operators, tourists and any person who comes to and has influence over what happens in the municipality.

Additionally, the ThinkTank recommended a definition for *Healthy* during Session 4. This is yet to be developed and is subject to Council endorsement.

4.2. Priorities

During Session 2 and 3, the ThinkTank drafted, refined, voted on and finalised recommended priorities per Community Vision theme that Council should focus on for the next four years. The final priorities are outlined by Community Vision theme in Tables 9 to 14.

For more detail about the priority development process, see the [Session 2 summary report](#) and [Session 3 summary report](#) on the [ThinkTank Shaping Banyule webpage](#).

Table 9: Final priorities for Theme 1: Our inclusive, healthy and connected community

CATEGORY	PRIORITY
Participation	Develop Council structures and supports to enable new community initiatives to be developed, trialled and evaluated and reflect best practice.
	Make community and sporting opportunities culturally and psychologically safe for everyone.
	Targeted initiatives to address social isolation across communities and for selected communities.
	Position youth hubs in accessible community activity areas to improve reach, establish early pathways to connect to services and programs and broader connections to community.
	Improve connections to community and sporting activities via communication, support people to participate and how to get maximum benefit.
Social media	Respond to the changing social media environment by supporting young people's need to connect, access supports and belong.
	Partner to deliver education programs to foster safe use of social media.
Volunteering	Supporting volunteer organisations to attract and sustain volunteers by providing practical supports (training, accessibility, resources to reduce paperwork).
Parents with children	To address a gap, support children (6-12 years) to participate, connect, learn and belong in their local community.
Accessibility	Unlock use of Council and community spaces (public and privately owned) for a diverse range of people, programs and multiple uses, prioritising affordability.

Table 10: Final priorities for Theme 2: Our sustainable environment

CATEGORY	PRIORITIES
Community engagement, environment and activation/ enabling	Strengthen and increase community environment engagement through community outreach programs and inclusive communication channels.
Climate events response	Develop and implement strategies to assist the community to adapt and respond to extreme weather events (heat waves, flooding, high winds).
Pollution, waste and environment	Reducing pollution in all aspects with education and implementation (waste, water, air).
Biodiversity, education and empowerment	Protecting and strengthening biodiversity and urban forest through education within Council and the community.

Table 11: Final priorities for Theme 3: Our well-built city

CATEGORY	PRIORITIES
Infrastructure	Urban planning considers infrastructure and services required to meet the needs of current and future populations.
Transport	Advocate and plan for sustainable, accessible and equitable public and active transport connections.

CATEGORY	PRIORITIES
Housing	Ensure a range of housing that meets community expectations and needs of a growing and more diverse population.
Council spaces	Ensure Council-owned open and community spaces prioritise liveability, sustainability, connections and expression.

Table 12: Final priorities for Theme 4: Our valued community assets and facilities

CATEGORY	PRIORITY
Asset utilisation	Present population: Prioritise investment in <u>existing</u> assets and facilities to make sure they are safe, <u>accessible</u> to everyone and can be <u>fully utilised</u> .
Universal design	Future population: Ensure the needs of Banyule's changing and increasing population are considered in planning for infrastructure.
Asset distribution	Ensure <u>equitable distribution and upgrade</u> of assets and facilities when planning.
Prioritising existing versus new assets	Prioritise maintaining existing assets and facilities to make sure they are <u>adaptable</u> and <u>fit for purpose</u> for <u>multiple community needs</u> .

Table 13: Final priorities for Theme 5: Our thriving local economy

CATEGORY	PRIORITY
Growth	Support and mentor businesses, philanthropy and not for profits, especially new initiatives to become sustainable and scalable.
Aging population	Support the older population to maintain, upskill and re-enter the workforce.
Youth employment	Develop and invest in youth employment opportunities to upskill and connect young people to employers.
Arts and culture	Find innovative ways to use vacant or underutilised spaces for arts and cultural endeavours.
Promotion	Increase the promotion of businesses, employment and volunteering opportunities through different forms of communication such as social media and promotion in the Banyule banner.
Connect	Provide opportunities to network with other Banyule businesses, share knowledge and collaborate.
Connection	Make better use of existing assets and shops in business and retail precincts to activate spaces, connect people, encourage street activity and strengthen the local economy.

Table 14: Final priorities for Theme 6: Our trusted and responsive leadership

CATEGORY	PRIORITY
Community Planning	Support and empower community to participate in simple planning and set priorities to inform decision making for their local area.
Communicate	<u>Step 1: Develop</u> new and varied communication methods to increase engagement and reach the Banyule community. <u>Step 2: Share</u> with the community Council's work and how Council is progressing in simple and meaningful ways that everyone can access and understand.

CATEGORY	PRIORITY
Financial principles	Council to seek transparent alternative revenue sources to minimise the financial burden of rates on residents including appropriate public/private investment.
Education	Inform and educate the community on the role of Local Government and other tiers of Government.
Emergency funds	Maintain a sustainable buffer of emergency funds to mitigate the impact of emergency events. (Need to define level of funding-community wide/individuals)

4.3. Principles

During Session 4, the ThinkTank finalised and voted on principles that cut across the four Community Vision themes to guide Council's work over the next four years.

After the Principles were finalised, ThinkTank members voted on them with their level of support. For each principle, ThinkTank members shared whether they 'love it', 'can live with it' or 'loathe it'. Table 15 outlines the outcome of the vote³.

Overall, there was moderately high support. The most supported principles were 'accessible and inclusive spaces' and 'community pride for everyone and connection to Country'.

Table 15: ThinkTank principles and outcomes of final vote on the principles

THINKTANK PRINCIPLES	LOVE IT	CAN LIVE WITH IT	LOATHE IT
Prioritise Sustainability (Social, Economic, Environmental, Cultural)	29	6	3
Advocacy with the State and Federal Government and the private sector	29	7	2
Place based approach for decision making	26	11	1
Accessible and inclusive spaces	34	3	1
Community pride for everyone and connection to Country	30	7	1
Transparent and inclusive communication and engagement with communities	30	4	4
Balancing doing Council's core business with meeting community expectations	26	7	5
Make space and create opportunities to participate and elevate the voices of people who need it most	27	7	4
Prioritise climate action, biodiversity protection and support for green spaces and urban forest	25	9	4

4.4. Tracking and communicating progress

During Session 4, ThinkTank members were asked to share recommended actions for how Council could track and communicate progress towards the Community Vision 2041.

The below summarises the ThinkTank's recommendations for tracking and measurement.

- Suggested approaches included undertaking implementation science (i.e. to ensure and monitor evidence in practice), case studies, a community feedback committee, a dedicated reference group with ongoing feedback, baseline and endline surveys, opportunities for feedback loops, a 'score card', and a tracker.
- Use quantitative feedback whether Council have achieved the Community Vision 2041 or not, and qualitative feedback for stories.

³ Note: ThinkTank members who were not able to attend Session 4 were invited to vote on the principles. Given the principles changed significantly during Session 4, the votes of two ThinkTank members have not been included below.

- Create a set of community and Council performance measures in addition to social impact measures.
- Use good data on the 'now' and gather more local and qualitative data based on the Community Vision, priorities and community feedback.
- Create accountability on Council officers with yearly key performance indicators.

Suggested reporting and communication tools or techniques included:

- Use videos such as interviews with community members using a new service or experiencing an action from the Community Vision.
- Easy to read reports that are user friendly and no more than 40-pages.
- Utilise visual storytelling and graphic reporters to summarise big events and lectures that are complicated.
- Dashboard or traffic light reporting.
- Progress reporting on activities and priorities.
- Tagging priority themes in news stories Council shares.
- Using social media to promote stories, engage the community, and get instant feedback that is targeted and focused on specific topics.
- Regular and public reporting included in Council meetings.
- Providing a central information hub such as a Banyule App. Develop and communicate the Banyule App, pushing all new Banyule content to users and provide push notifications with updates such as tracking on the Community Vision.
- Ensuring front line staff (customer service) know up to date information.
- Using artificial intelligence in Council's website to assist with advanced searches.

4.5. Additional comments

The following questions and comments were raised as additional comments or topics not related to the ThinkTank's remit during Session 4:

- More seating in parks and other open spaces/areas with shelter for protection from rain and sun.
- More drinking taps to refill water bottle.
- Consider the environmental impact of AI and misinformation.

5. Reflections and evaluation

5.1. Reflections

5.1.1. Future thinking

During Session 4, ThinkTank members were asked to share something that they are excited about for the future of Banyule. The below summarises the ThinkTank's responses.

- A greener, clean and beautiful future with a greater focus on sustainability and environmentally friendly practices and policies, a lot of green areas, being an environmental and climate action innovator and leader, more trees, success of food organic and garden organic bins, increased urban trees canopy, urban forestry and moving away from petrol emissions.
- A greater sense of place, community, friendliness, belonging and connection for all with new neighbours, people continuing to feel connected with each other and nature, a great place for families and children to live and becoming state leaders.
- Development:
 - More social and affordable housing that is well designed, located and great places to live.
 - Development in the activity centres.
 - Responsible development.
 - Safe and secure housing.
- The implementation of the ThinkTank's recommendations and priorities with the current policies and detailed planning to help Banyule prosper.
- Seeing and having more cultural and artistic inclusive events to showcase Banyule's multicultural artistic communities.
- Better transport.
- A progressive and inclusive community that is inclusive of all diversity and inclusion (including all ages, backgrounds, cultures and stages of life) with no stigma.
- General health and wellness.
- Excitement for the effect of the local economy in the Banyule Council.
- Affordable and accessible health care for all, including better mental health.
- An end to homelessness and hopelessness.
- The younger generation is bringing in new ideas and businesses into the region.
- That Banyule is seen as a great Council.
- The community engaging and driving desires for Banyule whilst working together with Council.

5.1.2. Reflections on the process

At the end of Session 4, ThinkTank members shared reflections on the ThinkTank process around the prompt 'I like, I wish, I wonder'.

Examples of some of the reflections shared were:

'Great that the group championed the environment throughout.'

'Views of the need for financial support and elevation of the Urban Forest.'

'Great facilitation!'

'Liked that the group came together to make decision for our 'great Banyule'.'

'Given the diversity of the group, surprised at how closely aligned the group was with its views.'

*'The process is a strong statement of democracy. 'Blessed to be able to give our opinion, right or wrong'.
'Long live the City of Banyule!''*

5.2. Participant outcome evaluation

This section details the results from the ThinkTank participant outcome evaluation. Evaluation occurred over two self-completion surveys.

1. The pre-ThinkTank survey was distributed in the Participant Pack one before Session 1. It asked ThinkTank members to identify their perceptions, trust and confidence in Council and civic participation, their expectations for the ThinkTank and motivations for joining the ThinkTank. A total of 35 ThinkTank members completed the survey (n=35).
2. The post-ThinkTank survey was completed at the end of Session 4 via a QR code. It asked ThinkTank members the same questions as the pre-survey around their perceptions, trust and confidence in Council and civic participation, in addition to what they found most challenging and proud of through participating in the ThinkTank process. A total of 30 ThinkTank members completed the post-Session 4 survey (n=30).

The pre-ThinkTank and post-ThinkTank survey questions are available in Table 16 in Appendix A.

5.2.1. Pre and post survey results

PERCEPTION, TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN COUNCIL AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION

ThinkTank members rated their level of agreement with seven statements regarding perception, trust and confidence in Council and civic participation.

Overall, there was an increase in agreement with all statements, thus an increase in ThinkTank members' understanding of challenges facing Banyule, decisions that are within Council's control and influence, trust that Council actively supports community involvement in decision making, confidence that Council will honour the outcomes of the process, perception they have the skills and knowledge to contribute to decision making processes and connection to the Banyule community.

Figures 3 to 9 display the results.

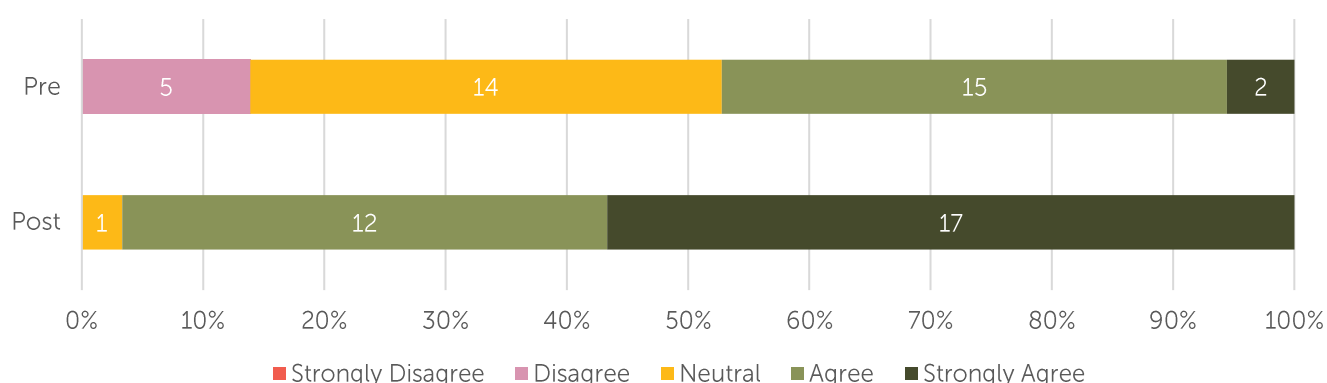


Figure 3: Pre- and post- survey responses to the statement 'I understand the broader challenges/issues impacting Banyule'

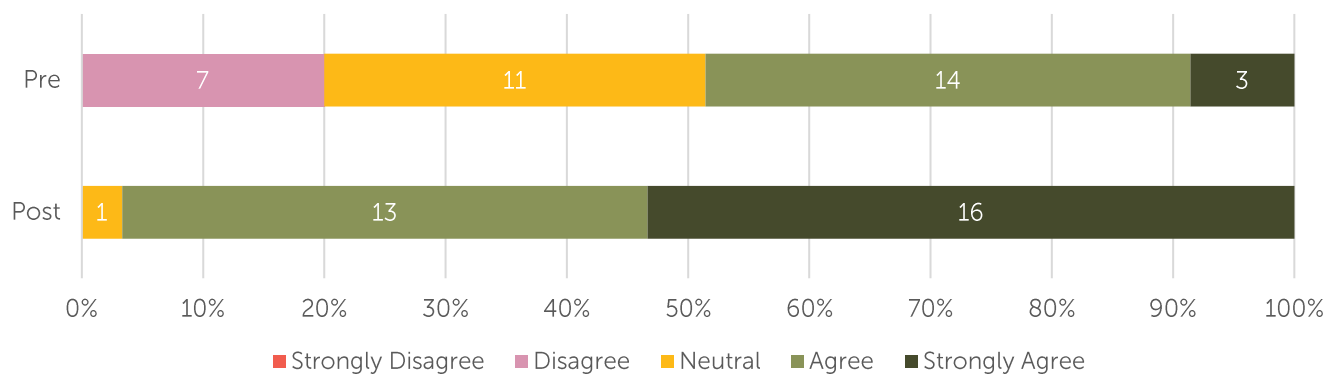


Figure 4: Pre- and post- survey responses to the statement 'I understand what decisions are within Council's control and influence'

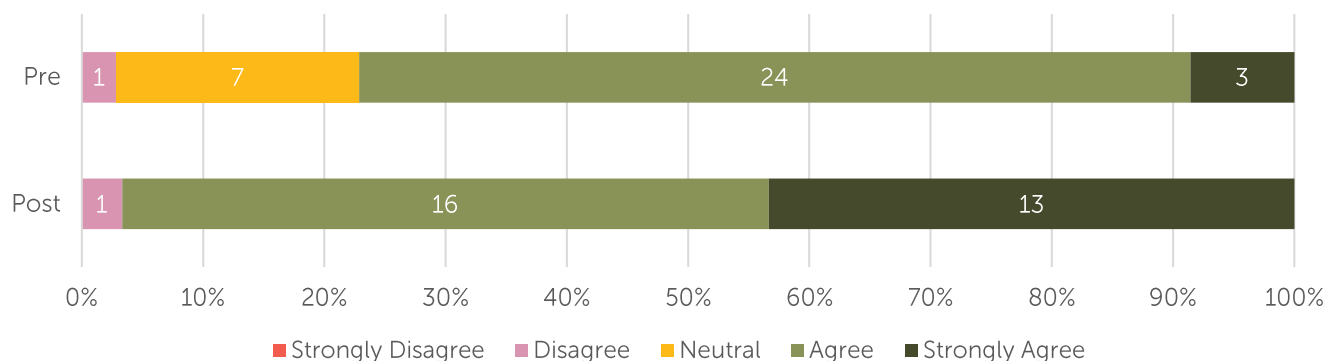


Figure 5: Pre- and post- survey responses to the statement 'I trust that Banyule City Council actively supports community involvement in decision making'

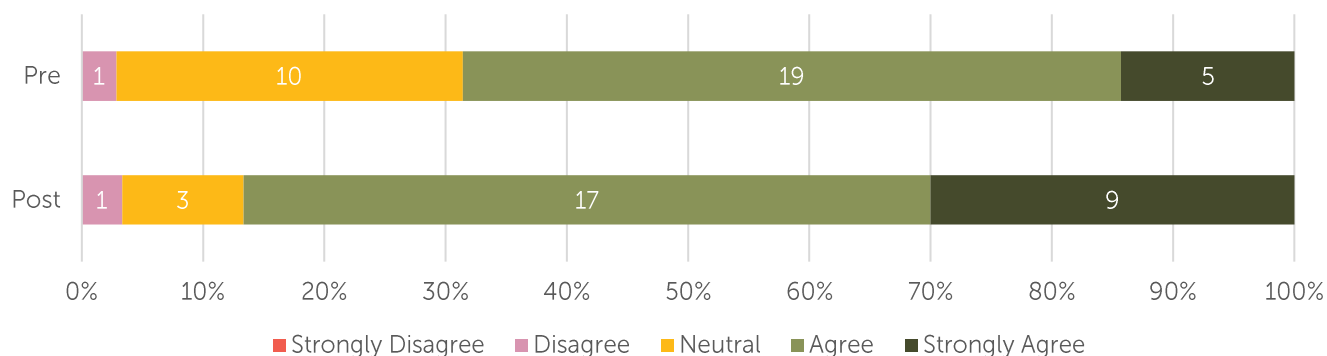


Figure 6: Pre- and post- survey responses to the statement 'I am confident that Banyule City Council will honour the outcomes of this process'

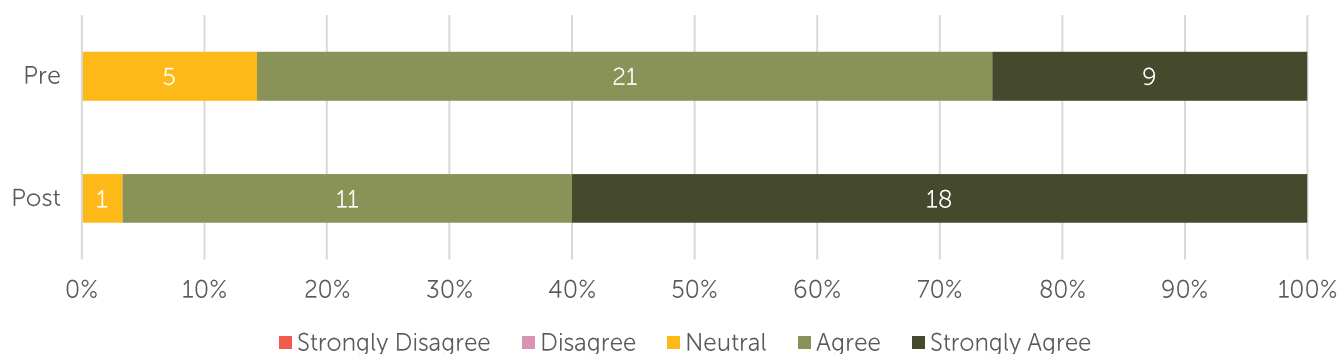


Figure 7: Pre- and post- survey responses to the statement 'I feel I have the skills and knowledge to contribute to decision making processes'

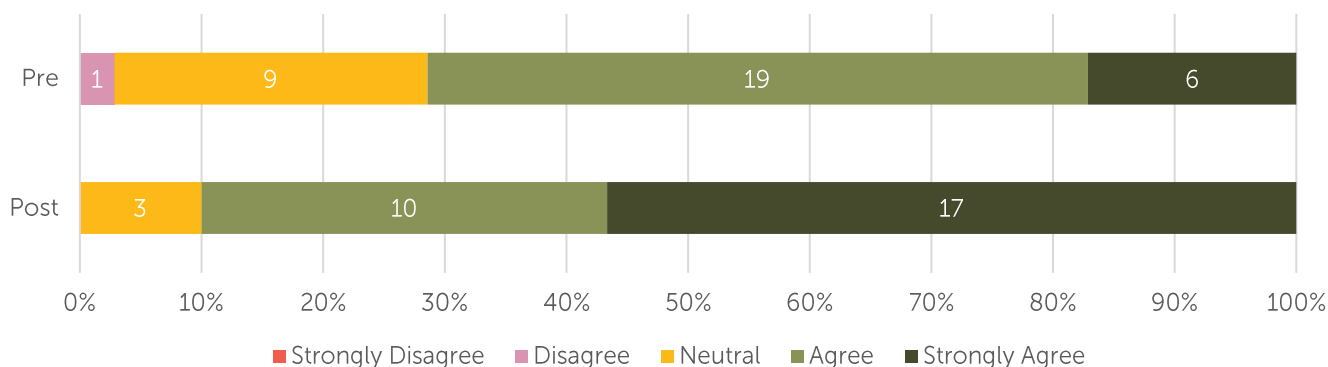


Figure 8: Pre- and post- survey responses to the statement 'I am confident in my fellow Banyule Community ThinkTank members to be able to work together through this process'

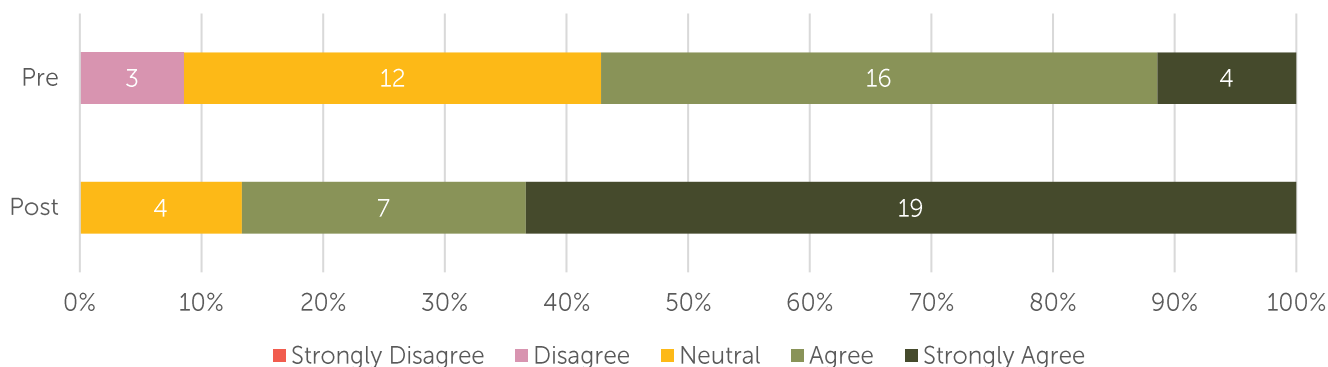


Figure 9: Pre- and post- survey responses to the statement 'I feel connected to the Banyule community'

PRE-THINKTANK EXPECTATIONS

In the pre-ThinkTank survey, members were asked to share their expectations for the ThinkTank and motivations for joining. Below is a summary of the responses.

- Collaborating with people of various views working towards a shared understanding and vision of the future of Banyule through respectful and robust conversations.
- To provide guidance to support better decision making by Council, with ideas put into practice to make Banyule better.
- Uncertainty about what will happen.
- Opportunity to be heard, and that councillors will truly listen to our views.
- Learning more about Council and from others on the ThinkTank.

'I expect to be part of a collective which gives council a perspective of its residents on various matters and give the council guidance in their decision making in order to be able to feel that they are genuinely reflecting the wishes of the broader community, rather than just operating within a bubble.'

'Go beyond lofty vision statements and develop tangible recommendations that can be measured with clear accountability.'

'Learn more about the Council and the Think Tank processes; clearly see how our input will be used. I also would like to learn more about my community and grow my interpersonal and communication skills through participation.'

MOTIVATIONS TO JOIN THE THINKTANK

The following is a summary of what motivated respondents to join the ThinkTank:

- Giving back to the community or being more engaged in the local community.

- Wanting to better understand what Banyule City Council offers and decision making processes.
- Interest in making Banyule better.
- Have a particular interest or skillset that will add value to discussions.
- Wanting to develop skills and step outside of comfort zone.

'I feel that I have the skill set and personality to help this process, to question it, to lead the other members through the discussion to points of conclusion.'

'As a fairly new member of Banyule I was motivated by the opportunity to know more about my local community. I was also motivated to join to express my thoughts on areas of interest to me including Arts and Culture and LGBTQA+ issues/culture from an older queer perspective.'

'Quotes like "just because we are born into a system, doesn't mean you have to stay in that system" really resonate the purpose/motivation behind my application. The Community ThinkTank creates an environment where voices from all age groups are welcomed, and in today's technologically advanced world, that's hard to come by. I'm here because I not only love to participate in conversations, but I also love to observe the creativity, connection, and collaboration that is a result of it.'

CHALLENGES OF PARTICIPATION

In the post-ThinkTank survey, ThinkTank members were asked what they found most challenging about their participation in the ThinkTank. The below summarises the responses.

- Sharing thoughts or ideas in public.
- Differences in opinion.
- Some sessions were too much information and/or boring (second day).
- Having such a long break between Session 2 and 3 due to the elections.
- Making the time to attend each session as it was a big commitment.
- Not enough time for individual reflection in the sessions prior to group work.
- To keep on top of all the information and the level of detail required to make a decision.

'The level of detail often required and time allowed to make a decision. Sometimes I felt participants were being asked to address complex questions, without the skills or time to do this.'

'Long break due to the election. It was hard doing the 'homework' so would recommend more sessions on learning.'

'The difference of opinion, especially when people missed sessions. At times it felt like we were going backwards. I also got extremely bored with the second session's presentations as well as the last session's "group brainstorm". I think it's best practice to do table sessions before groups, as then we can bring a consensus, rather than one person thinking their opinion on a specific issue (e.g. waste management) is the most important in the room.'

SUCCESSES OF PARTICIPATION

When asked what they were most proud of through their participation in the Think Tank, members shared the following sentiments:

- The outcomes we achieved and the recommendations we made to Council.
- That the ThinkTank worked together well and came to a consensus.
- Being able to voice ideas and express opinions.
- The collaboration with the group.
- Being committed to the process and attending each session.

- Meeting new people.

'Being dedicated to coming to all the sessions and collaborating with people I've never met before.'

'I feel that I was able to understand the process and keep people in my discussion groups on track when the conversations and discussions started to deviate from the assigned tasks.'

'To put in. To advocate for issues that are important to me and my grandchildren, even though they don't know it. 😊.'

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

ThinkTank members were also asked if they have any additional comments at the end of the post-ThinkTank survey. The below summarises respondents' comments.

- High appreciation for the Council and facilitation teams.
- That it was a fun, engaging, fair, equitable and enjoyable process.
- That it was lovely to get to know Council officers and community members.
- Feedback on moving the wordsmithing to the end, the need for a lot of toners in documents and additional topics they would have liked to raise.
- Desire for the work and model to not be lost with desire to be involved in the future, highlighting that others need to be aware of the potential for change and a suggestion for a similar process on the 'how'.
- Disappointment in the 'seemingly performative nature' of the process.
- That it would have been helpful to have fidget toys, consistent catering and location.

'Thank you to the hardworking team at BCC for everything you've done and the friendly way in which you've engaged us. I really appreciate it and feel like I'm welcome to Banyule.'

'Do not let this opportunity slip by. So many passionate people in one room. Harvest them and form a reference or advisory group to support genuine, place-based approaches to your work. Keep a similar model running, but focused on the "how," not the "what/why." This is often the bit where the disconnect between council and the community becomes fractured. The current committee structure is not enough.'

'I just hope you everyone is aware of the big potential that Australia and Australians have, take advantage and work on it and don't rely on the comfort of "that's how we are, that's someone else's problem.'

Appendices

Appendix A: Pre-ThinkTank and post-ThinkTank survey questions

Table 16: Pre-ThinkTank and post-ThinkTank survey questions

QUESTION	PRE-THINKTANK SURVEY	POST-THINKTANK SURVEY
I understand the broader challenges/issues impacting Banyule.	X	X
I understand what decisions are within Council's control and influence.	X	X
I trust that Banyule City Council actively supports community involvement in decision making.	X	X
I am confident that Banyule City Council will honour the outcomes of this process.	X	X
I feel I have the skills and knowledge to contribute to decision making processes.	X	X
I am confident in my fellow Banyule Community ThinkTank members to be able to work together through this process.	X	X
I feel connected to the Banyule community.	X	X
What are your expectations of the Banyule Community ThinkTank?	X	
What motivated you to join the Banyule Community ThinkTank?	X	
What did you find most challenging about your participation in the Banyule Community Think Tank?		X
What are you most proud of through your participation in the Banyule Community Think Tank?		X
Do you have any other comments?	X	X

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Capire acknowledges
and deeply respects the
Wurundjeri people and
the Traditional Owners
of the Victorian land.



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