Coversheet

Unpacking power in democratic innovations:
A systematic review of how councillors share power in Australian local governance

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For my discussant(s):
This is a first draft of my article for the Local Government Studies Journal Special Issue '50 Years of LGS' for which my abstract for this article has been pre-accepted for submission March 31, 2024. The word count for the special issue is 3,000 words which means my article is currently 2,000 words too long. I thus hope the feedback can help address this for example by making suggestions on where to cut words out. I also hope to receive feedback on how to better link the conceptualisation of deliberative power-sharing with my Participedia review of power-sharing in democratic innovations in Australian local governance. Thank you in advance for reviewing my work and my sincere apologies for not being able to submit this article earlier (I am finishing up my PhD at the moment as I am submitting soon).
Kind regards, Anne N. Jedzini

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Abstract
This article aims to theorise and conceptualise 'deliberative power-sharing' in democratic innovations in Australian local governance. For over 20 years, Australian local governments have trialled democratic innovations to increase trust and legitimacy in political decisions. These experiments, however, receive various criticisms. Some criticise them for lacking binding decision-making power. Others question the feasibility of persuading councillors to share their power with community members. I argue that we need a nuanced understanding of how councillors share power with community members. I build this argument in two parts. First, I make the case of understanding power by combining Rainer Forst's concept of noumenal power and Mary Parker Follett's concept of power-with. Second, I present the findings of my systematic review of how power is shared in democratic innovations in 34 Australian local governments catalogued in the Participedia database. I found that there are four ways of sharing power between councillors and community members: (1) Deliberative power-sharing, (2) the sharing of power with deliberation, (3) power-sharing with deliberative elements, and (4) limited deliberation with no sharing of power. This article has significance because of its pragmatic approach to conceptualising and operationalising the sharing of power in democratic innovations in Australian local governance.

Key words
Power-sharing; democratic innovations; councillors; local governance; Australia; empirical

Introduction
This article aims to conceptualise 'deliberative power-sharing' by examining the case of democratic innovations in Australian local governance. I will advance the theoretical constructions of power-sharing and how these can be operationalised in empirical contexts. More specifically, I answer the following two questions:

- What are the current theoretical constructions of power-sharing and what are their features?

- How can deliberative power-sharing be operationalised in empirical contexts in Australian local governance?

In the article, I argue that we need a nuanced understanding of how councillors share power with community members through democratic innovations in Australian local governance. By democratic innovations, I refer to *"[…] processes or institutions that are new to a policy issue, policy role, or level of governance, and developed to reimagine and deepen the role of citizens in governance processes by increasing opportunities for participation, deliberation and influence*." (Elstub and Escobar 2019:11). For the purpose of my study, I use this definition of democratic innovations as an umbrella term for any deliberative and/or participatory process in Australian local governance. Deliberative power-sharing is an important line of enquiry because the use of this type of power-sharing can potentially increase legitimacy in political decisions for councillors while also contribute to higher trust for community members in both councillors and local government institutions (Niessen 2023:325). I define *deliberative power-*

sharing as the mutual justifications of reasons between councillors and community members in which the collective decision-making power to impact common good outcomes is shared jointly and equally (Forst 2015; Follett 1940).

Some politicians view the conferring of power to democratic innovations as a threat to the legitimacy of representative politics while other politicians view democratic innovations as a zero-sum game where giving up some political power to share it with community members is equal to either losing power or giving up power altogether (Rangoni, Bedock and Talkukder 2023). This perception of power in democratic innovations only makes community members more democratically and politically dissatisfied (Setälä 2011). But such position on power in democratic innovations does not either mean that community members want to take on complete decision-making power (Bedock and Pilet 2020).

Recent empirical studies of democratic innovations indicate that politicians and community members can deliberate together (Farrell, Suiter, Harris and Cunningham 2020; Grönlund, Herne, Jäske and Värttö 2022). Similarly, empirical studies of democratic innovations at the local government level specifically point to that deliberations between councillors and community members can lead to positive outcomes (Strandberg, Himmelroos and Grönlund 2019; Sørensen and Torfing 2019a). The reasons for that are councillors do not merely receive an external input from deliberating community members, but deliberate and work closely together with community members to develop new policies and make joint policy recommendations for the local government (Røiseland 2017; Sørensen and Torfing 2019b).

Australia is one of the leading OECD countries in democratic innovations in local government and government at large (Thompson and Riedy 2014; OECD 2020). These representative deliberative processes however are often mostly consultative and thus do not give community members any binding decision-making power, neither do they require councillors to implement community members recommendations (Belgiorno-Nettis and Redman 2021). Deliberative power-sharing hence offers a new and more democratic legitimate approach to trust building and shared decision-making power between councillors and community members in democratic innovations Australian local governments.

I build my argument in three parts. First, I provide a brief review of the literature on power in deliberative democracy with emphasis on studies of power in democratic innovations at the local government level in OECD countries. Second, I make the case of understanding power by combining Rainer Forst's concept of noumenal power and Mary Parker Follett's concept of power-with. Third, I present the findings of my systematic review of how power is shared in democratic innovations in 34 Australian local governments catalogued in the Participedia database. In this review I found that there are four ways power is shared between councillors and community members: (1) Deliberative power-sharing, (2) the sharing of power with deliberation, (3) power-sharing with deliberative elements, and (4) limited deliberation with no sharing of power. I conclude this article by summarising the key points I have discussed so far.

Unpacking power in democratic innovations: A brief review of literature

Power in deliberative democracy

Power in democratic innovations and in deliberative democracy more broadly is a contested issue (see Young 1996; Sanders 1997; Shapiro 1999; Kohn 2000; Pennington 2010; Hammond 2018). Deliberation can be defined minimally as: "*mutual communication that involves weighing and reflecting preferences, values, and interests regarding matters of common concern*." (Bächtiger, Dryzek, Mansbridge and Warren 2018:2). Central to the definition of deliberation and the underpinning normative principles of deliberative democracy is that political decisions and the institutions that represent these are legitimised based on the mutual justifications of reasons among free and equal citizens (Bohman and Regh 1997; Gutmann and Thompson 2004). Deliberation as such leaves no space for the presence of coercive power, defined as the threat of sanctions or the use of force (Ercan and Dryzek 2015). This thus explains why deliberation traditionally has been considered in opposition to coercive power, especially when coercion is not justified (Follesdal 2010.Power in deliberation and in deliberative processes has hence been conceptualised in this particular context. The presence of coercive power in public deliberation has led to substantial critique of deliberative democracy as a normative democratic ideal and political project (Hendriks 2009). In contrast to the often-sceptical perception of coercive power, some scholars have argued for coercion as a necessity to solve collective action problems (Mansbridge 2012), while other scholars have argued for the use of coercive power for marginalised groups to gain inclusion in deliberation (Curato 2011). Some scholars have also argued that coercive power relations do not constrain citizen deliberation, but make citizens use different aspects of power to enable deliberation (Holdo 2019:1).

Power imbalances in deliberation

In more recent years however, a new consensus has formed that coercive power pervades people's choice of words, language, and style of communication even in deliberation (Pellizzoni 2003; Knops 2006; Lupia and Norton 2017). Scholars now argue that instead of focusing on how to neutralize coercive power (Bagg 2018), mitigate coercive power (Kadlec and Freidman 2007), or eliminate coercive power (Mouffe 1996), focus should be on how to justify coercive power through deliberation (Curato, Hammond and Min 2019:53). Critics though counter argue that deliberation and deliberative democracy as a field built on colonial legacy normalises difference which contributes to assimilation of dissenting groups within the dominating ideology of the Global North (Banerjee 2021:296). Responses to this critique highlight that by the empirical centre of the Global North listen, and not talk at, colonial margins, grave power asymmetries can be confronted (Curato 2024:13). Other responses to the colonial power critique of deliberative democracy emphasise that: "Inequalities relating to gender, race, sexuality, and class must be brought to the centre of debates and understood as a starting point for deliberative theorising." (Mendonca and Asenbaum 2024:18). More specifically, this entails recognising the inequality of theorising and knowledge about democratic innovations outside the Global North and for scholars and practitioners alike to commit to addressing the epistemic and ontological power imbalances (Ibhawoh 2024:14).

Studies of power in democratic innovations

Most empirical studies of democratic innovations in OECD countries do not examine power as the unit of analysis. There is nonetheless a large volume of studies that look at the effects

of power in democratic innovations, particularly at the regional and national government level. Of the studies that are most relevant to my research on deliberative power-sharing in Australian local governance are those that have focused on deliberative mini-publics' decision-making power at the macro-level of representative politics (Courant 2018), the delegation of advisory and scrutinizing powers to a citizen council and supporting citizen assemblies in parliament (Setala 2021) and the extent to which institutionalised democratic innovations pave the way for public deliberation and power-sharing (Bennett, Escobar, O'Conner, Plotnikova and Steiner 2022).[1] Despite the widespread attention to different facets of power in democratic innovations at the regional and national level of government, most innovations take place at the local government level (see OECD 2020:20). While there are some studies that have examined the effects of power, power distribution and power delegation at the local government level (see for example Ercan and Hendriks 2013; Soerensen and Torfing 2019a; Soenderskov 2020), they remain a minority. Similarly, there are not many studies either that have interrogated the nature of power at the local government level, but one has. This study explored how deliberative approaches can supplement the traditional conception of local politics as a continues struggle for power and influence (Jenssen 2008).[2] Studies of power at the local government level in Australia have as such not been identified. No studies have been identified either of power-sharing and deliberation in local governance in Australia.

The need for deliberative power-sharing

With much attention in the deliberative democracy literature on how to address coercive power in varies ways in deliberation as well as in different types of democratic innovations, the scholarship has paid limited attention to positive, productive, and generative forms of power in this context. This includes limited theoretical and conceptual emphasis on different forms of power-sharing and what the relationship between power-sharing and deliberation is. The scholarship furthermore misses empirical emphasis on the study of power and power-sharing in deliberation and in democratic innovations. Finally, few conceptual and empirical studies on power and power-sharing in the context of deliberation have been conducted at the local government level in OECD countries and in Australia. This is despite most deliberative and participatory processes take place at the local government level and that Australia is the leading OECD country in this regard (OECD 2020). Thus, why there is both a theoretical and empirical argument to investigate the concept of deliberative power-sharing in the context of democratic innovations in Australian local governance.

Combining Forst and Follet: Making the case for deliberative power-sharing

Linking noumenal power and power-with

Forst's concept of noumenal power as 'the space of reasons' (Forst 2015), and Follett's concept of power-with as 'collective power of joined will formation' (Follett 1940) are compatible for two reasons. First, the two theories merge cognitive power with coactive power in institutions and organisations. These concepts are both relevant for my study which focuses on power-sharing in deliberation between councillors and community members in democratic innovations in Australian local governance. More specifically, I am examining how

[1] For more studies that have examined the effects of power in democratic innovations see also Warren and Pearse 2008, Christensen, Jaske, Setala and Laitinen 2017, Jacquet 2018 and Curato et al. 2021.

[2] For studies of power in local governments that are not in OECD countries see Connelly 2009.

collective decision-making to impact common good outcomes (power) is *shared* through the mutual justifications of reasons (deliberation) between councillors and community members in the democratic and political institutional context (local governance) of Australia. Second, neither of Forst or Follett's theories can individually be applied to understand the concept and context of deliberative power and the sharing of this type of power.

Forst and Follett's concepts of noumenal power and power-with explain well the generation of deliberative power among opposing groups, like councillors and community members, in an institutional and organisational context such as in Australian local governance. Forst's space of reasons provides an analytical lens for understanding councillors and community members thoughts, actions and general behaviours in relation to one another as mutual justificatory reason-givers, but also in relation to other reason-givers in this particular context. Follett's collective power of joined will formation similarly provides an analytical lens for understanding how group power is generated through the integration of diverse knowledge and experience, fact checking and consensus building.

My reading of Forst and Follett together makes two aspects clear about power that are relevant for my study on deliberative power-sharing between councillors and community members in democratic innovations in Australian local governance. These are:

- How councillors and community members exercise and share power depend on their respective space of reasons, and what narratives of justification they accept or reject. On the acceptance of narratives of justification, Forst explains that the social structures in which these are embedded allow one or more actors to use their noumenal or symbolic capital, that is social recognition and standing, as a resource to exercise power over others (Forst 2015:120). Councillors and community members thus might attribute noumenal capital to different actors depending on the narratives of justification they accept or reject by a reason-giver.

- Whether deliberative power-sharing between councillors and community members is possible is contingent on councillors' ability to generate power-with and not just have power-over community members. Power-over will always be present. Follett therefore argues that focus should not be on how to get rid of power-over, but instead on how to reduce power-over through the principles of (1) integration (that difference is key to 'integration' in institutions and organisations), (2) following the law of the situation (that people do not give orders to other people, but only based on the situation), and (3) functional unity (that people do not take sides, but see themselves as a part of a unity where consensus is build, and power is shared) (Follett 1940:92).

By bridging Forst and Follett's power concepts, I am able to conceptualise deliberative power-sharing. In this next section of the article, I will present my definition of deliberative power-sharing and the five key aspects that theoretically constitute this power concept.

The five conceptual elements of deliberative power-sharing

Departing from my analysis of Forst and Follett's concepts of power, I conceptualise deliberative power-sharing based on the following five key elements. These are: (1) Democratic justification, (2) justified deliberative power, (3) contextualised empowerment,

(4) equitable conflict resolution and (5) shared responsibility. I will unpack each of these elements individually below and discuss how Forst and Follett contributes to them. I will unpack democratic justification first.

1. Democratic Justification

The first key element of deliberative power-sharing is democratic justification. By democratic justification, I refer to the justification of those democratic and politically governed processes in Australian local government institutions which enable deliberation between councillors and community members.

Forst's contribution

To achieve democratic justification, Forst (2015) highlights that democratic rule only exists when those who are subjected to a normative order, such as community members, also are the normative authorities who co-decide, for example with councillors, such order through democratic justificatory procedures. Democratic power, Forst points out, is excised through justifiable reasons about fundamental rights of justice (Forst 2015:125). In those situations where asymmetrical social relations are not justified and thus not legitimate but might appear legitimate because the space of reasons is sealed off, democratic justification is no longer present. That means coercive power enters the picture and those who are subjected to power are prevented from justifying it because the space of reasons is being limited (Ibid.).

Follett's contribution

To achieve democratic justification, Follett emphasises the importance of participation to have co-operation among workers or among different groups of people such as councillors and community members (Follett 1940:155). Follett stresses that democracy is about the "fruitful relating" and the interactions and co-functioning of bringing about the type of organisation that supports such co-functioning (Follett 1940:1974). Through the generated commitment of shared purposes and pluralistic responsibility in democracy, people, like councillors and community members, are held accountable by joint, and not top-down control in democratic and political processes in institutions such as Australian local governments (Follett 1940:54).

2. Justified Deliberative Power

The second key element of deliberative power-sharing is justified deliberative power. By justified deliberative power, I refer to the justification of the deliberative power exercised by councillors and community members in democratic and political processes in Australian local government institutions.

Forst's contribution

To achieve justified deliberative power, Forst highlights that power must be analysed along a spectrum that extends across the exercise of the justificatory quality of reasons among deliberating people, such as councillors and community members, to the exercise of physical force outside the realm of justifications (Forst 2015:126). Forst points out that in a liberal democracy based on public reason, as Australia for example, what is fundamental to the public reason is that it is considered reasonable. These reasons are neutral to the extent that they are independent from the different ethical doctrines of the good. But they are not morally neutral as they, from the perspective of Forst, are moral reasons that hold the

legitimacy of what generally is considered right. It is however the basic capacity of reason which makes deliberating people distinguish between what is ethically good, which reasonable people can disagree on, and what is morally right, which people cannot have fundamental reasonable disagreement about (Ibid.).

Follett's contribution
To achieve justified deliberative power, Follett (1940) emphasises the importance of public deliberation in political decision-making at the local government level. Follett believes that democracy grows out of contention and integration in local communities as opposed to legislative bodies (Mattson 1998:xlvi). Conference or committee is considered for deliberation, as opposed to for voting, and as way to pool knowledge, judgement, and purposes. By bringing these elements together, Follett calls for people, such as councillors and community members, to look for all sides of the situation and use these to not only guide conference or committee but also to justify deliberation.

3. Contextualised Empowerment
The third element of deliberative power-sharing is contextualised empowerment. By contextualised empowerment, I refer to the empowerment of the democratic, political and institutional context in Australian local governments in which deliberation between councillors and community members are organised, designed and facilitated.

Forst's contribution
To achieve contextualised empowerment, Forst (2015:123) highlights that we need to think about forms of power that: "[…] empower and ground a different practice of freedom that is powerful because it leaves the definition of freedom to the individuals themselves […]". Based on the work of power theorist Michael Foucault, Forst points out that power forms the self-image of the subject, but that this is an "imposition" because it categorizes and marks the individual to his own individuality and as such also the law of truth that person must recognize and everyone else must recognize in that person (Forst 2015:123). Forst considers this a negative view of power, thus why he argues for a neutral understanding of the meaning of power which often is associated with power-over for other power theorists including Foucault.

Follett's contribution
To achieve contextualised empowerment, Follett emphasises the importance and relevance of the law of the situation. In the attempt to avoid two extremes, giving orders or giving no orders at all, Follett suggests to depersonalize the giving of orders, unite all those people who are concerned of the situation, identify the law of the situation and follow that (Follett 1940:32). All forms of hierarchical power to Follett, including the giving of orders, are considered illegitimate because these are power-over. On recognizing the law of the situation, Follett stresses that the aim is not get people to obey orders, but to devise methods that can help best identify the order that is integral to a particular situation (Follett 1940:33).

4. Equitable Conflict Resolution
The fourth element of deliberative power-sharing is equitable conflict resolution. By equitable conflict resolution, I refer to the equal, fair and impartial resolution of any conflict between

deliberating councillors and community members in democratic and political processes in Australian local government institutions.

Forst's contribution
To achieve equitable conflict resolution, Forst (2015) highlights that the concepts of power and rule, coercion and domination need to be distinguished from each other. This is because it otherwise is difficult to determine what is legitimate and illegitimate power and hence also what is considered conflict. The concept of power is separated from the concepts of rule, coercion and domination because these are not exercises of power, but instead an exercise of lack of power. Forst stresses that an imposition of the will in any given conflict of wills is always an exercise of power, but that this power paradigm is more closely aligned with the concept of domination (Forst 2015:114). If there is no agreement on what is viewed as legitimate and illegitimate power, it will thus be difficult to also agree on what is considered conflict in disagreements among deliberating councillors and community members.

Follett's contribution
To achieve equitable conflict resolution, Follett emphasises the integration of difference. Conflict is not perceived as either good or bad, but as the natural difference between people. Follett (1940:1-2) believes conflict is a human condition of existing and as such cannot be eliminated. Instead of condemning conflict, Follett argues that it should be used to the advantage of the collective of the people. There are different ways of dealing with conflict. Follett breaks conflict into three separate categories of conflict which are (1) domination, (2) compromise and (3) integration. Whereas domination and compromise have clear winner and losers, integration means that a solution has been identified where all desires of those people who are affected by the situation have been met (Follett 1940:3). In the case of disagreement among deliberating councillors and community members this means that everyone must contribute to the conflict resolution by listening, reflecting and understanding the desires of all participants.

5. Shared Responsibility
The fifth and final element of deliberative power-sharing is shared responsibility. By shared responsibility, I refer to the equal division of democratic and political responsibility that is jointly shared among deliberating councillors and community members in democratic and political processes in Australian local governments institutions.

Forst's contribution
To achieve shared responsibility, Forst (2015:112) highlights that power is not only exercised by and over free agents because it is also the word of what is going on when someone acts for certain reasons which others are responsible for. In the case of deliberating councillors and community that would mean everyone carries some form of joint responsibility for the deliberations, but also for the decisions that are made as a part of the deliberations since everyone acts for reasons for which fellow participants are responsible for.

Follett's contribution
To achieve shared responsibility, Follett (1940:59) emphasises that everyone needs to be responsible, loyal and obedient to the functional unity. In a functional unity everyone has a function and that function correspondents with each person's capacity. That way, no one will

have greater authority and responsibility than what go with their function (Follett 1940:85). Shared responsibility in the context of deliberating councillors and community members thus means that councillors and community members' function correspondents with their capacity in the deliberations and that this capacity aligns with the type of authority and hence also responsibility each councillor and community member have.

Deliberative power-sharing in practise: The case of Australian local governance

Operationalising deliberative power-sharing in Participedia

In this next section of the article, I will present the findings of my systematic review of how power is shared in democratic innovations in 34 Australian local governments catalogued in the Participedia database. The above conceptualism of power has assisted me in driving four forms of power sharing that are relevant for this particular context. These are: (1) Deliberative power-sharing, (2) the sharing of power with deliberation, (3) power-sharing with deliberative elements, and (4) limited deliberation with no sharing of power. I will unpack each of these four forms of power-sharing individually and link them with their respective empirical examples from the Participedia review. I will unpack deliberative power-sharing first.

1. Deliberative power-sharing: The Byron Model (2019)

I identified one case of deliberative power-sharing in my review of how power is shared in democratic innovations in 34 Australian local governments. This is the Byron Model (case 14) in the State of New South Walse from 2019. The aim of the Byron Model was to develop a local model of democracy for Byron Shire. This democratic innovation ran over a 2-year period where the members of the process deliberated on what democratic practises and amounts of excise power works best for the local community. There are four empirical indicators of the Byron Model as a case of deliberative power-sharing. The first indicator is that there was deliberation internally between councillors, citizens and community stakeholders. The deliberation took place in and across the three main groups who participated in the Byron Model. The second indicator is that the three deliberating main groups were a part of a wider community engagement process that provided input into the deliberating main groups. The wider community engagement process included a deliberative forum for underrepresented groups in the Byron Shire, community sessions, discussion workshops, and community surveys. The third indictor is that all members of Byron Shire had free and equal access to participate in the democratic innovation, and the fourth and final indicator is that all policy recommendations were responded to and adopted by Byron Shire Council.

2. Sharing of power with deliberation: Mornington Peninsula Standing Citizens Panel (2022)

I identified twelve cases of sharing of power with deliberation in my review of how power is shared in democratic innovations in 34 Australian local governments. Of these cases, I will highlight Mornington Peninsula Standing Citizens Panel (case 1) in the State of Victoria from 2022. The aim of the Mornington Peninsula Standing Citizens Panel was to deliberate on various policy issues that impact the Mornington Peninsula and provide recommendations to council on these. This democratic innovation ran over a 1-year period where the members of the process deliberated on pre-decided topics by the council which, among others, included infrastructure matters, future planning and community concerns. There are four empirical indicators of the Mornington Peninsula Standing Citizens Panel as a case of sharing of power with deliberation. The first indicator is that there was deliberation internally between the

selected citizens of the local community. The deliberation took place internally in this main group. The second indicator is that the deliberating main group was a part of a wider community engagement process that provided input into the deliberating main group. The wider community engagement process included community sessions, discussion workshops, and community surveys. The third indictor is that most but not all members of the Mornington Peninsula had free and equal access to participate in the democratic innovation, and the fourth and final indicator is that all policy recommendations were responded to, but only some and not all recommendations were adopted by Mornington Peninsula Shire Council.

3. Power-sharing with deliberative elements: Vision 2030, Living Darwin (2018)

I identified three cases of power-sharing with deliberative elements in my review of how power is shared in democratic innovations in 34 Australian local governments. Of these cases, I will highlight Vision 2030, Living Darwin (case 29) in the Northern Territory from 2018. The aim of the Vision 2030, Living Darwin was to deliberate on the strategic plan for Darwin's future towards 2030. This democratic innovation ran over a 2-week period. There are four empirical indicators of the Vision 2030, Living Darwin as a case of power-sharing with deliberative elements. The first indicator is that deliberation is not the primary method for interaction in the process. Some deliberation took place however in the broader community engagement process. The second indicator is that process with deliberative elements was a part of a wider community engagement process that provided input into the main process. The wider community engagement process included community sessions, discussion workshops, and community surveys. The third indictor is that most but not all community members of Darwin had free and equal access to participate in the democratic innovation, and the fourth and final indicator is that all policy recommendations were responded to and most were adopted by the City of Darwin.

4. Limited deliberation with no sharing of power: Glenunga Community Hub (2009)

I identified five cases of limited deliberation with no sharing of power in my review of how power is shared in democratic innovations in 34 Australian local governments. Of these cases, I will highlight Glenunga Community Hub (case 34) in South Australia from 2009. The aim of the Glenunga Community Hub was to better understand the local community's needs for parks and facilities. This democratic innovation ran over a 6-month period where the members of the process deliberated on the perceived need for a community and sports hub. There are four empirical indicators of the Glenunga Community Hub as a case of limited deliberation with no sharing of power. The first indicator is that deliberation is not the primary method for interaction in the process. Limited deliberation however is a part of the broader community engagement process. The second indicator is that the process with limited deliberation was a part of a wider community engagement process that provided input into the main process. The wider community engagement process included townhalls, community sessions, discussion workshops, and community surveys. The third indictor is that most but not necessarily all community members had free and equal access to participate in the democratic innovation, and the fourth and final indicator is that the community input was sometimes, but not necessarily, compiled into a recommendation report for council, and not all input was responded to by council.

With the operationalisation of deliberative power-sharing in empirical contexts, I will now conclude this article. In this next section of the article, I will summarise the key points I have discussed so far.

Conclusion

Summarising key findings

In this article I argued that we need a nuanced understanding of how councillors share power with community members through democratic innovations in Australian local governance. The aim of this article was to conceptualise deliberative power-sharing by examining the case of democratic innovations in Australian local governments. I did this by advancing the theoretical constructions of power-sharing and how these can be operationalised in empirical contexts. I specifically aimed to answer my two research-questions for this article. These were: (1) What are the current theoretical constructions of power-sharing and what are their features? and (2) how can deliberative power-sharing be operationalised in empirical contexts in Australian local governance? To answer these questions, I built my argument of this article in three parts. First, I made the case of understanding power by combining Forst's concept of noumenal power, space of reasons, and Follett's concept of power-with, collective power of joined will-formation. Second, I proposed the concept of deliberative power-sharing by combining Forst Follett's power theories. In this conceptualisation, I found that there are five key elements that theoretically constitute deliberative power-sharing. These are: (1) Democratic justification, (2) justified deliberative power, (3) contextual empowerment, (4) equitable conflict resolution, and (5) shared responsibility. Third, I presented the findings of my systematic review of how councillors share power with community members in democratic innovations in 34 Australian local governments catalogued in the Participedia database. In this review I found that there are four ways councillors share power with community members in the empirical contexts of Australian local governance. These are: (1) Deliberative power-sharing, (2) the sharing of power with deliberation, (3) power-sharing with deliberative elements, and (4) limited deliberation with no sharing of power. My research into power-sharing and deliberation has relevance because of Australian local government's existing initiatives in bridging the decision-making power of community members with councillors through reason-giving in representative deliberative processes.

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Declaration of interest

There was no conflict of interest in this research.

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Appendix

For the complete Participedia review, please see separate document.