

Policy Reference Number	30CP
Responsible Department	Executive Services
Related Policies	Nil
Related Procedures	Nil
Date of Initial Adoption	3 July 2000
Last Reviewed by Council	22 January 2013

1. Purpose

To outline how Council will communicate with and engage the Community in inclusive, transparent and accountable processes to contribute to Council's decision making, and where necessary, detail how Council will fulfil its legislative requirements for public consultation as set out in the Local Government Act 1999 (the 'Act').

2. Power to Make the Policy

Section 50 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires Council to prepare and adopt a Public Consultation Policy.

3. Strategic Plan Link

This Policy has the following link to Council's Strategic Plan 2010 - 2020:

Leadership (Goal 2) -

A Council with strong leadership and excellent service delivery.

4. Principles

Council:

Focus and Commitment

- Is genuinely open to engaging with the Community and committed to providing meaningful community engagement opportunities.

Mutual Trust, Respect and Accountability

- Will enable inclusive involvement and value diversity; all opinions will be valued and considered.
- Will be accountable, accessible and ethical in all dealings with the Community.
- Acknowledges that community engagement activities enable Council and the Community to learn from each other, and that it is important to make an effort to exchange views.

Transparency, Openness and Evidence Based

- Approaches engagement from an impartial perspective, free from bias toward any stakeholder/s involved in the process.
- Utilises sound engagement practices that are based on contemporary research methods, professional codes and standards.

- Acknowledges that successful community engagement requires a consistent approach using a variety of techniques and engagement with the Community.
- Is committed to ensuring that the Community is well informed in a timely manner.

Decision Making and Feedback

- Will be the decision Maker and in doing so, will strive for transparent and responsive decision making that incorporates the outcomes of community engagement processes, balanced with other internal and external influences.
- Will inform its Community of the outcome of community engagement practices.

5. Definitions

Community:	May include all people who live, study or conduct business in, or who visit, use or enjoy the services, facilities and public places of the City of Campbelltown.
Community Engagement:	Is about involving the Community in problem solving or decision making processes . Community engagement can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INFORMING the Community with balanced and objective information to assist understanding about something that is going to happen or has happened • CONSULTING using two way communication designed to obtain public feedback about ideas, alternatives and proposals • INVOLVING with processes designed to help identify issues and views to ensure that concern and aspirations are understood and considered prior to decision making • COLLABORATING with the Community to develop an understanding of all issues and interests and to work out alternatives and identify preferred solutions
Community Engagement Techniques:	The methods that are used to facilitate engagement or interaction with the Community e.g. a workshop, survey (hard copy or online), public forum such as a Ward Forum or Public Meeting; seminar, roving stall for discussions, taskforce or committee.
The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2):	An organisation established to advance the practice of public participation world wide, promoting best practice and the values associated with involving the public in decisions that affect their lives (www.iap2.org.au/).

Policy Limitations

This Policy does not cover prescribed consultation requirements under the Development Act 1993 or the Freedom of Information Act 1991.

6. Policy

Council recognises that community engagement and participation processes are a vital part of local democracy. Effective engagement is good business practice and critical to good governance. For these reasons Council is committed to engaging with the local Community.

Council's community engagement processes will be based on the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Model and the South Australian 'Local Government Community Engagement Handbook – March 2008'. Staff will monitor state, national and international trends and practices in community engagement to ensure that Council's engagement processes remain up-to-date.

6.1 Application

6.1.1 Responsibilities under the Local Government Act 1999

In regard to the following matters, Council is required to follow its consultation provisions as outlined in its Public Consultation Policy:

- Principal Office opening hours - Section 45(3);
- Code of Practice Access to meetings and documents – Section 92(5)(b);
- Community Land classification – Section 193(2);
- Community Land Management Plans – Section 197(1);
- Community Land Amendment or Revocation of Management Plans – Section 198;
- Community Land Alienation by Lease or Licence – Section 202(2), 202(3);
- Public Consultation (Authorisations / Permits) – Section 223; and
- Trees – Section 232.

In this regard, Council will as a minimum:

- Publish in a newspaper circulating within the Council area a notice describing the matter in question, and invite interested persons to make submissions in relation to the matter being considered within a period of at least 21 days;
- Consider any submissions received and provide feedback to persons who have made submissions with regard to Council's decision in relation to the matter.

* http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Community_Engagement_Handbook.doc

6.1.2 Prescribed Public Consultation Processes

The Act also stipulates that specific public consultation should be undertaken in regard to some detailed activities. In this respect Council will follow the requirements as set out in the relevant sections of the Act.

- Annual Business Plan – Section 123;
- Representation Review - Section 12;
- Status of a Council / Change of Name - Section 13;
- Commercial activities / Prudential requirements - Sections 48(2)(d), 48(5), 48(6);
- Public Consultation Policy – Section 50(6)
- Strategic Management Plans – Section 122(6), 122(7);
- Rating – Section 151
- Community Land Revocation of classification –Section 194(2), 194(3);
- Removal of Vehicles – Section 237
- Passing By-Laws – Section 249; and
- Policies on Orders – Section 259.

In addition, public consultation for a Community Land Revocation of classification will be accompanied by signage at the site where revocation is proposed that:

- Identifies the land that is subject to proposed revocation; and
- Clearly states in plain English the nature of the proposal that is subject to public consultation.

6.1.3 Discretionary Community Engagement

The decision to engage with the Community and the scope and scale of the engagement will be determined based on the following criteria:

- number of ratepayers, residents or stakeholders likely to be affected
- sensitivity and nature of the issue or decision
- likely social, economic, environmental and cultural impact
- scale of public and Community interest, and
- the requirements of the Act, other legislation and Council policies.

6.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Elected Members and Staff play complementary roles in engaging with the Community.

6.2.1 Elected Members

Elected Members will make decisions about high level strategic issues on which Council will engage with the Community. These issues will be linked to an identified Strategic Plan priority, or a significant emerging local or regional issue.

Elected Members have responsibility for engaging with their local communities (eg through Ward Forums and day-to-day liaison).

6.2.2 Council Staff

Staff are responsible for engaging with the Community in their day to day business activities and on agreed projects. In doing so, Staff will notify Elected Members of the engagement and technique(s) that will be used.

6.3 Engagement Activities

Staff will apply community engagement methodologies appropriate to the circumstances and desired outcomes of any specific engagement. Where the engagement is significant, Staff will formulate a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan for that engagement.

Staff will use different community engagement techniques and communication mechanisms depending upon the issue or project, its particular circumstance and the audience it needs to target.

6.4 Community Participation

6.4.1 Voluntary

Participation by members of the Community in any Council community engagement activity will be voluntary and may at times include incentives to increase participation.

6.4.2 Participation by Minors

Staff will only engage under 12 year olds in any community engagement activities with the consent of parents or legal guardians.

6.4.3 Public Meetings

There will be an announcement at the beginning of any public meeting of Council where there is a petition available for people to sign.

6.4.4 Presentations to Council

Presentations by members of the public at formal Council meetings are governed by the South Australian Local Government Act 1999 and Council's Policies.

6.5 Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting

Staff will obtain either qualitative (use of words) or quantitative (use of numbers) data from the Community during its engagements or a mixture of both. Staff will implement sound social research methods and will adhere to professional ethical standards and codes of practice for the collection, analysis and reporting of any qualitative and quantitative data.

The views and information obtained from community engagement activities will always be reported accurately to Council, without bias, and never used to mislead anyone, in any way.

6.5.1 Council use of Personal Details

Staff will abide by Council's Privacy Policy when collecting and using personal information acquired during community engagement activities.

6.5.2 Storage and disclosure of Personal Details

Staff will put in place systems to protect personal data collected and stored by Council.

Personal details of participants in community engagement activities may be recorded in reports to Council, and will be provided where a response has been made to an engagement activity by formal letter or submission.

Staff will retain participant's personal details for a period prescribed under the South Australian State Records Act 1997 and will not disclose these details to any third party except where required by law..

6.5.3 Community Engagement Register

Council will maintain a register of all community engagement activities. This will assist in developing a system of governance that mitigates the risks of duplication and over consultation, records activities undertaken, and allows the Community to see at any time what engagement has taken place, is being planned or is actually occurring.

7. Review & Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed annually. The Chief Executive Officer will report to Council on the outcome of the review and make recommendations for amendment, alteration or a substitution of a new Policy if considered necessary.

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8. Availability of the Policy

This Policy will be available for inspection at Council's principal office during ordinary business hours and at Council's website www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au. Copies will also be provided to interested members of the Community upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.