
Community Consultation and Engagement Policy

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| Policy Owner: | Community Development |
| Contact Person: | Director Community Development |
| Date of Approval: | 05 April 2011 (CD04-04/11) |

POLICY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a series of principles to guide consultation processes used by the City to encourage and support community involvement in local government decision-making. All community consultation and engagement is to be undertaken in accordance with the principles of this Policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

Community consultation and engagement enables the City of Wanneroo (the City) to involve the community in its decision-making processes.

It provides elected members and Council staff with the opportunity to:

- listen to the community;
- consider a range of options and develop ideas together; and
- build a shared understanding on an approach.

Consultation ensures that:

- the community is aware of, and involved in, the development and review of policies, plans and services;
- the community's satisfaction with the City's policies, plans and services is considered; and
- council is open and accountable in its decision making, resource management and expenditure.

Engagement means:

- Longer term conversations with the community;
- Educating the community; and
- Providing opportunities for feedback.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all City staff who deliver services to the community. The policy provides a framework for how and when the community needs to be informed/engaged about new or revised service provision. This might include anything from new play equipment or bus shelters to market research and public meetings about contentious local issues.

BACKGROUND

The Community Consultation Policy identifies potential strategies and timeframes for consultation according to the nature of the topic being considered. The public participation spectrum that supports the policy outlines the types of consultation that might be utilised and which of these are most appropriately implemented given the level of impact either across the City or more locally.

CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

This policy acknowledges that there are statutory requirements the City must comply with in consulting with the community about particular issues. This policy encourages an increase in the level and range of methods used in community consultation, in addition to the level required by existing legislative and statutory requirements.

Key Values and Principles

In undertaking any consultation process the City will be committed to the following principles:

- Encouraging participation of people who live, work, visit or support the City of Wanneroo;
- Encouraging broad representation from all population groups within the community to ensure that a diverse range of views are expressed and considered;
- Minimising barriers to participation;
- Clearly stating the purpose and aims of the consultation, and any associated limitations or constraints;
- Ensuring relevant information is readily available and that it is accurate, comprehensive and easy to understand;
- Clearly defining the consultation period and allowing sufficient time and opportunity for the community to participate;
- Listening, responding and providing feedback to participants and the community about how the information gathered through the consultation process was used to inform the decision or outcome; and
- Being efficient, responsible and accountable for each consultation undertaken and the decision made as a result.

Consultation in Practice

The level of community consultation undertaken relates directly to the level of community involvement required. This should always be appropriate to the nature, complexity and impact of the issue, plan or strategy. Where a decision about a particular issue can be delayed to allow time for community consultation this should occur, if it is appropriate.

Any consultation undertaken by the City will be completed *before* a decision is made. Consultation, and a commitment to community involvement, is not effective, or appropriate, when:

- A final decision has already been made by Council or another agency;
- Council cannot influence a decision to be made by another agency or party; and
- There is insufficient time available to consult, due to legislative, resource or legal constraints.

In these events the City will endeavour to provide information relating to the reasons why Council could not seek community consultation on the issue.

In some circumstances, the City will carry out initial communication and notification procedures for regular services, and may become aware through responses received that the community or key stakeholders have strong views concerning the issue. As a result, further consultation processes may be used to work with the community to resolve the issue(s).

Informing Council

It is important that Council and Elected Members are made aware of consultation occurring within the City. The following applies to community consultation:

- Ward councillors will be invited to attend consultation that impacts on a local community within their ward and provided with any supporting information prior to invitations being made to the community;
- Wider/generic consultation will be identified to Elected Members through Council Forum, Clipboard and the City's formal diary prior to any meeting or event.
- Consultation activities that are considered critical, that is they have a high level of media interest or potential impact on the City's operations or finances, will be considered by Council prior to implementation.

Engagement activities will be facilitated by the delivery of key messages to the community using approved media – including but not restricted to newspapers, newsletters and other print materials; the City's internet pages, e newsletters and other on-line opportunities; media releases; events; displays; and educational opportunities in partnership with other agencies and organisations.

IMPLICATIONS (Financial, Human Resources)

Each service unit that initiates new or revises existing services is required to appropriately budget funds and staff resources to undertake supporting community consultation. Corporate consultation will be facilitated by the Information and Business Improvement Service Unit.

IMPLEMENTATION

The following roles and responsibilities outline how the Community Consultation and Engagement Policy should be implemented in a consistent manner across all aspects of the City's business. In particular a consultation proposal form must be completed and supported by the appropriate director prior to submission to the Community Consultation Review Panel. Once endorsed, agreed strategies should be implemented promptly and the results reported to Council, where required.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Community Consultation Review Panel

To ensure that each consultation process is appropriate to the type of decision to be made, and the people that will be affected, a consultation strategy for each consultation will be developed and presented to the Community Consultation Review Panel.

The Community Consultation Review Panel will consist of:

- The Chief Executive Officer, or nominated representative
- The Directors of each City Directorate, or their nominated representatives

The Community Consultation Review Panel will be responsible for:

- assessing and endorsing each proposed community consultation process;
- providing advice to enhance consultation outcomes if appropriate; and
- reviewing evaluation reports from previous consultations.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

All disputes in regard to this policy will be referred to the appropriate Director in the first instance. In the event that an agreement cannot be reached, the matter will be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for a ruling.

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THIS POLICY?

All City of Wanneroo elected members and officers need to be aware of this policy and able to interpret and implement its requirements.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROVISIONS

To assist the City in using the most effective ways to consult the community, this policy provides for the review of consultation processes utilising a variety of methods including:

- Market research to identify preferred methods of providing information and receiving feedback from the community – conducted on a biennial basis;
- Seeking feedback from participants during and after consultation about the strategies and processes used; and
- Staff evaluation of consultation strategies, which is then submitted to the Community Consultation Review Panel after each consultation is completed.

The Community Consultation Policy will be reviewed every three (3) years.

DEFINITIONS

DEFINITIONS: Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only.

| Community Consultation | |
|------------------------|--|
| | <p>The term 'community consultation' covers the range of activities that the City utilises to support the involvement of residents, businesses, stakeholders and other community members in decision-making processes.</p> <p>These processes include the following five levels of community participation:</p> |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform • Consult • Involve • Collaborate • Empower |
| Engagement | The term Engagement covers the dissemination of key messages to the community to facilitate a long term, two way conversation about the future of the City of Wanneroo. It will also include educational opportunities and participation in decision-making processes. |

RELEVANT POLICIES/MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS OR DELEGATIONS

Community Consultation and Engagement Guidelines and Practice Notes – currently under review.

REFERENCES

Public Participation Spectrum

The Public Participation Spectrum forms an attachment to this policy. The Spectrum aims to provide staff with a guide as to when, and how, to consult with the community in different situations.

Attachment A: IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum (© 2004 International Association for Public Participation)

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

DIRECTOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

| Version | Next Review | Record No: |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------|
| 26 April 2006 (GS07-04/06) | April 2008 | 501131 |
| 05 April 2011 (CD04-04/11) | February 2014 | 10/64025 |
| | | |

ATTACHMENT - A



International Association
for Public Participation
AUSTRALASIA

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

Developed by the International Association for Public Participation

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

| INFORM | CONSULT | INVOLVE | COLLABORATE | EMPOWER |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| Public Participation Goal: | Public Participation Goal: | Public Participation Goal: | Public Participation Goal: | Public Participation Goal: |
| To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions. | To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions. | To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. | To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution. | To place final decision-making in the hands of the public. |
| Promise to the Public: | Promise to the Public: | Promise to the Public: | Promise to the Public: | Promise to the Public: |
| We will keep You informed. | We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. | We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. | We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible. | We will implement what you decide. |
| Example Techniques to Consider: | Example Techniques to Consider: | Example Techniques to Consider: | Example Techniques to Consider: | Example Techniques to Consider: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheets • Web Sites • Open houses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Deliberate polling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Advisory • Committees • Consensus building • Participatory decision-making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated decisions |

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