
CP001 – Community Engagement

1. Intention

To ensure strategic decisions and long term plans made by Council are aligned to the community's aspirations and are responsive to long term community needs. The objective of this policy is to provide guidance to Councillors, Community Committee Members and Officers in planning, implementing and reviewing community engagement and consultation for key projects, strategic planning and policy development.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Elected Members and employees of the Shire of Waroona.

3. Statement

Community engagement and consultation assist making informed decisions, and outcomes from such community input should be considered in conjunction with research, technical information, legislation, protocols, existing policy, and known social, economic, environmental and cultural priorities. This will ensure informed decision making, transparency, and timely and effective communication with key stakeholders and the general community.

Council may choose not to consult on some projects or matters when it believes it has enough information with which to make an informed decision. In such instances, the community will only receive information about the project and decision.

4. Principles

1. Council is committed to providing leadership and a strong commitment to information sharing, engagement and active participation of the community in contributing to the decision making process.
2. Council acknowledges the right of the community to access information, provide feedback, be consulted, and actively participate in strategic planning or in key projects of service development.
3. Council will clearly communicate the purpose of any engagement process and the steps involved, and will allow sufficient time for effective community involvement.
4. Council engagements will be clear and transparent to allow the community access to information and an understanding by the stakeholders of the processes and resources involved.
5. Engagement will be undertaken as early as possible in the planning process to allow for the scope of consultation to be widened and to improve the outcomes.
6. Information provided by Council during planning, project and key service development will be objective, complete and accessible. All those involved in an engagement process will have equal treatment when exercising their rights of access to information and participation.
7. Council will ensure adequate financial, human and technical resources are available to make an engagement initiative effective. The allocation of resources will be considered in relation to broader budgetary restraints and the implications to existing policies.

8. Engagement on specific planning, project and key service development will be coordinated across Council to enhance knowledge management, ensure policy coherence, avoid duplication and reduce the risk of “consultation fatigue” within the community.
9. Council will be accountable for the use made of input from an engagement process. Council will ensure engagement processes are open, transparent and amendable to external scrutiny and review.
10. Council will advise the community about how their feedback will be incorporated or considered in decision making to assist in managing community expectations.
11. Council will actively and openly evaluate its engagement processes and practices in planning, project and key service development. The results of evaluation will directly impact upon future engagement initiatives.

5. Objectives

1. Increase the community’s understanding, awareness and input into Council decisions.
2. Seek to inform the community about issues, strategies or plans that may have a direct or indirect impact on the community or parts thereof.
3. Ensure the community has the opportunity for meaningful input and genuine involvement in Council’s decision making.
4. Provide the community with the opportunity to become aware of the perspectives and opinions of others, and to recommend appropriate solutions to community issues.
5. Ensure Council is meeting its legislative requirements regarding community consultation.
6. Ensure Council has sufficient quality information, including the views of the community, to make informed decisions.

6. Legislative and Strategic Context

Nil.

7. Review

This policy is to be reviewed as required.

8. Associated Documents

Nil.

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| Division | Community | | | | |
| Policy Number | CP001 | | | | |
| Contact Officer | Director Place, Community and Economic Development | | | | |
| Related Legislation | Nil | | | | |
| Related Shire Documents | Nil | | | | |
| Risk Rating | Medium | Review Frequency | As required | Next Review | When required |
| Date Adopted | 28/08/2012 | | | | OCM12/08/092 |

| Amendments | | |
|--|--|------------------|
| Date | Details of Amendment | Reference |
| 18/12/2018 | Updated as part of major review. | OCM18/12/126 |
| 22/06/2021 | Updated as part of major review and reformatted. | OCM21/06/071 |
| Previous Policies | | |
| COM002 – Community Engagement 1.30 – Community Engagement | | |