

Title	Community Engagement
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Policy Type

Council

Policy Purpose

To guide the City in its approach to seeking input from stakeholders on decisions which impact on them. This policy applies to all employees and consultants engaged by the City.

Policy Statement

(1) Vision

As a local government, everything we do is done with and/or on behalf of the community. The City is committed to engaging with the community and stakeholders in a way that positively contributes to the City's planning, decision-making, programs and service delivery.

Community engagement activities support Council's leadership role by providing relevant community and stakeholder insights in a timely way.

Community consultation is vital to effective decision-making. However, we acknowledge that it may not be possible to consult with the community on every issue. We will prioritise engagement on issues where community input will have the greatest impact whilst being prudent with when and how engagement is undertaken.

(2) Defining quality engagement

Community engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders, and communities to help the City shape decisions or actions related to a problem, opportunity or outcome. (Based on IAP2 definition).

Together, the community, stakeholders and City define 'quality engagement' as having the following attributes:

- **Inclusive:** engagement activities are accessible to people of all abilities and diverse backgrounds, and all community members can participate and have their voices heard.
- **Fit for purpose:** engagement methods and processes match the context and project purpose.
- **Informative:** people know how to be involved and have the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

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- Transparent: the purpose, process, and outcomes of an engagement are clear, so participants understand how their input will be used in the decision-making process.
- Timely: engagement activities are delivered in a timely manner allowing for participants to fully consider information and avoiding periods of national holiday including between Good Friday and Easter Monday, and Christmas to Australia Day.
- Meaningful: the input sought is used to the degree possible, considering the varying and sometimes competing needs within the community, and followed through in a timely way

(3) Inclusion

- (a) The City acknowledges the valuable insight of the Nyungar people as the Traditional Custodians of this land and commits to including and considering input from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community through the Aboriginal Reference Group.
- (b) The City acknowledges the valuable insight of seniors; young people, Culturally and Linguistically diverse people, First Nations people; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and Asexual people, and people living with disabilities and actively seeks input from the community and relevant local Reference Groups.
- (c) The City seeks to ensure that Elected Members don't unintentionally influence engagement in their role as decision makers by providing a dedicated activity or workshop on matters prior to decision making. Elected Members should only attend consultation sessions as an observer.

(4) Implementation

- (a) The implementation of this policy will be guided by the Community Engagement Framework and other internal documents.
- (b) All Community Engagement programs and timelines must be agreed and approved by the Manager Advocacy and Engagement.

(5) Parameters

- (a) This policy applies to City employees and to consultants engaged by the City. It also recognises the important role Elected Members play in facilitating dialogue and engagement with their constituents.
- (b) This policy complements but does not supersede any statutory obligations defined by relevant Federal, State and Local legislation.

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- (c) This policy excludes advertising, notification and other defined statutory requirements under the Planning and Development Regulations (Local Planning Schemes) 2015.

Strategic Link:	City of Cockburn’s Strategic Community Plan Community Engagement Framework Cockburn Community Development Strategic Plan Communications Strategy and Action Plan Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Reconciliation Action Plan
Category	Community Support
Lead Business Unit:	Community Development & Services
Public Consultation: (Yes or No)	Yes
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