

Council Policy

Council Policy Name: Community Engagement

Responsible Directorate: Office of the CEO

Version: Adopted

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this Policy is to outline the Council’s commitment to ensuring effective engagement with the community, including ensuring people understand how and why engagement processes will happen, keeping people informed about matters affecting them and enabling people to share their thoughts and feedback on matters that the Council will be making a decision on.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This Policy applies, where relevant, to Elected Members, employees and contractors who engage with the community in a number of different ways with regard to the delivery of services and projects, the implementation of policies, or in ways which support Council decision-making.

3. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Engagement	connecting with community members, groups, businesses and other stakeholders in a variety of ways to meet some or all of the following objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing • Consulting • Involving the community in decision making • Collaborating with the community about decisions • Empowering the community to make a final decision
Policy	this City of Busselton Council Policy titled “Community Engagement”

4. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Strategic Theme	Objective
Key Theme 5: LEADERSHIP	18: Provide effective marketing, communications and community and stakeholder engagement.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

- 5.1. The City believes that facilitating meaningful connections within our community is essential to enable the community to have genuine and valuable input into decision-making processes.
- 5.2. Different approaches to community engagement will be carried out depending on the level of community involvement required.
- 5.3. The City’s community engagement objectives are as follows:
 - The community will be informed of matters that affect them through open, timely and transparent communication;

- b. The community will be provided with information to help it understand and share its thoughts on matters that affect it;
 - c. The City will make it simple for the community to share their feedback and access information at key project milestones;
 - d. all feedback received by the community will be carefully considered by decision makers; and
 - e. People who take the time to share their thoughts through community consultation processes conducted by the City will be kept in the loop as projects progress.
- 5.4. The City's community engagement principles are to:
- a. encourage and facilitate broad participation from all members of the community;
 - b. make it easy for people to get involved by considering different needs and removing barriers to access of information
 - c. be clear about the purpose of any community engagement exercise including any limitations or constraints
 - d. ensure information is easy to access, accurate, timely and simple to understand
 - e. ensure community engagement activities and reporting are undertaken with transparency and without bias;
 - f. provide enough time and opportunities for people in the community to participate;
 - g. listen to the community and explain how their feedback will be supplied to decision-makers
 - h. ensure the right resources are in place to allow engagement processes to be effective and meaningful
- 5.5. As a general rule, the City will undertake community engagement when:
- a. a decision which the Council needs to make is likely to have significant impact on a particular individual or group in the community, noting point 5.6 below;
 - b. a decision which the Council needs to make might affect the economy, lifestyle, or environment of the City and its residents in a significant way;
 - c. the issue is a matter the community feels strongly about or has a significant interest in;
 - d. a decision the Council needs to make may require a substantial redirection of ratepayer funds;
 - e. the Council is required to make a decision relating to the future use of a strategic area of land within the City;
 - f. information is needed to guide future plans and inform strategic decisions that will affect the wider community;
 - g. the City is required by law to consult with the community as part of a statutory process; or
 - h. the Council believes it is important to include community input into a specific decision-making process.
- 5.6. Community consultation may not be undertaken where:
- a. a decision needs to be made quickly for the good of the City;
 - b. the City is required to follow legal, commercial or legislative rules that limit the City's ability to consult, or is bound by the confidentiality provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995*;
 - c. the City has no control or role in decisions being made by other organisations or agencies;
 - d. the decisions are related to the City's 'day to day' operations.
- 5.7. It is important that Elected Members are made aware of significant community engagement activities being undertaken by the City. Feedback will be sought from Elected Members prior to community engagement on projects that:
- a. shape the City's strategic direction
 - b. are likely to attract significant media attention
 - c. are considered high risk under the City's Risk Management Framework.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTATION / LEGISLATION

- 6.1. Media and Public Statements Policy
- 6.2. Community Engagement Framework 2021 (currently under review)
- 6.3. [Local Government Act 1995](#)

7. REVIEW DETAILS

Review Frequency		3 yearly		
Council Adoption	DATE	12 February 2025	Resolution #	C2502/26
Previous Adoption	DATE	9 September 2020	Resolution #	C2009/106