

POL	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	SC2
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DIRECTORATE:	Executive Services
BUSINESS UNIT:	Executive Support
SERVICE UNIT:	Executive Support
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Manager, Community Services
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BACKGROUND:

This policy applies to all employees and to consultants engaged by the City of Cockburn. It reflects the values embodied in the City of Cockburn's Strategic Community Plan (2012 to 2022), Cockburn Community Development Strategic Plan (2011 to 2014), Communications Strategy and Action Plan (2012 to 2017) and Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2012 to 2017)

Definition:

At the City of Cockburn, community engagement refers to the way in which people interact and connect on policies, projects, events and issues to make the City of Cockburn an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest in.

"Community" is broadly defined as any ratepayer, resident, landowner or other person or body, either singularly, jointly or severally, having an economic or personal interest in any land, development, proposal or issue which affects, or potentially impacts, upon the physical, economic, social or environmental fabric of the City of Cockburn.

PURPOSE:

- (1) To adopt a Community Engagement Model based on three strategies – information, consultation and active participation.

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- (2) To implement the Community Engagement Framework to ensure a consistent approach to community engagement across the City.
- (3) To ensure the endorsed approach is widely practiced by City staff.
- (4) To ensure that all legislative and statutory regulations are met and, where possible, exceeded.
- (5) To regularly survey the community on their needs and the performance of the City in meeting their needs.

Principles

Providing stakeholders with the opportunity to engage with Council on policies, plans, events or issues that impact their lives requires:

1. strong organisational commitment;
2. an inclusive approach to accommodate minority and hard to reach groups;
3. adequate financial, human and technical resources;
4. access to information so that stakeholders have the capacity to be informed and understand the impact of policies, projects, events or issues;
5. adequate time, planning and preparation;
6. clear objectives for the consultation;
7. that the City accounts for the use it makes of stakeholders' input through the delivery of feedback;
8. that the City maintains a consultation register and reporting system to ensure that it learns from community engagement activity.

POLICY:

(1) Procedure

In planning and conducting community engagement, Council staff will be guided by this Policy and the Community Engagement Framework.

If Council makes a decision or implements a change that impacts the community, a Community Engagement Plan will need to be prepared. The decision to prepare a Plan will be made considering the size and nature of the change(s) that are being proposed, and the potential impact(s) on the community.

In preparing a Community Engagement Plan, staff will follow, where appropriate, the ten step process outlined in the Framework:

- Step 1 - Decide if community engagement is needed
- Step 2 - Assess the impacts
- Step 3 - Address legal requirements
- Step 4 - Determine the objectives
- Step 5 - Determine the methods of engagement

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Step 6 - Determine when engagement will occur

Step 7 - Resource and implement the plan

Step 8 - Manage risks

Step 9 - Provide feedback

Step 10 - Reflect on the lessons learned

(2) Review

The Community Engagement Framework and Policy will be reviewed every two years.

(3) The City of Cockburn is committed to the ongoing consultation of its Community to ensure that its Plan for the Future of the District and Corporate Strategic Planning processes are cognizant of community opinion.

To ensure community opinion represents a gauge of Councils wider planning processes, the following practices will form the basis of its consultation mechanisms:

1. A comprehensive Community Needs Survey (CNS), undertaken tri-ennially to establish and continually review that Councils facility and service provision is aligned, so far as it is practical to do so, with community priorities.
2. An annual Community Satisfaction Benchmarking (CSB) Survey to monitor the standard of Councils facilities and service provision.
3. Ad-hoc localised surveys undertaken on an as required basis as a means of measuring community opinion on issues identifiable within a clearly defined local area or group of people.