

Community Engagement Policy

Policy Author	General Manager – Strategy & Corporate
Date of next review	May 2023

1. Statement of Intent

Our community has clearly told us they want more opportunities to connect with the Council and each other and have their ideas and experiences understood and listened to.

The Council recognises the role of community engagement and public consultation in helping to shape and test ideas and support decision making, leading to stronger outcomes (services, infrastructure, planning and programs) for the community.

Council values and encourages the involvement and contribution of the community in engagement and consultation processes. Good community engagement for the Council means that we:

- **Communicate a clear engagement objective.** This means people are clear on why they're involved and what we're seeking to understand, what can and can't be influenced and how feedback and information will be used to assist in decision making.
- **Understand who our stakeholders are.** This means we consider who is impacted or has a stake in the matter we are engaging on and further consider their gender, age, diversity, ability, location and interest.
- **Determine the level of engagement** (inform, consult, involve or collaborate) depending on the scope, complexity, impact and competing values or interests in the Council project or decision being made. This means that we may: consult the community and seek their feedback on specific options or ideas; involve the community so they can help balance views and help shape ideas and/or collaborate with the community so we can develop joint solutions to a problem, even though Council may still be the final decision maker. Informing the community of a decision that has been made is also a part of a community engagement process.
- **Are flexible in our approach and use a range of engagement techniques** to reach people and encourage feedback and discussion. This means we consider the various stakeholders we need to engage and the techniques that may be most effective for the identified level of engagement including but not limited to digital/online, face to face, on project site, direct mail, printed collateral and existing community groups.
- **Strive to be accessible and inclusive.** This means we use easy to understand language, try our best to make it easy for people to get involved, we use accessible venues and formats and consider other barriers so that people can meaningfully participate.
- **Close the loop.** This means we inform the community of the outcome as soon as we can and for longer projects we keep them informed of progress. We explain how their feedback was used to inform decisions.

- **Consider the resources, capacity and expertise we have** available to support any engagement activity. This means that before we commit, we understand and confirm we have the resources we need to be able to deliver a meaningful community engagement process.

While the *Local Government Act 1999* clearly identifies matters that Council must consult on, there will be other projects and decisions where engaging with the community may be appropriate. Council understands the need to seek input into projects and decisions that are likely to be of significant community interest, have economic, social, environmental or cultural importance, involve significant expenditure on large scale projects, where there is influence available for the community and decision making is likely to be enhanced through involvement of the community.

The Council strives to ensure the community engagement undertaken is meaningful. This will mean at times that Council will not undertake community engagement or be restricted in the level of engagement it can take. This may be due to things like the limited ability to influence Council's direction, resourcing constraints, timing or that we have existing community insights to draw on already.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees and contractors who undertake any community engagement and public consultation activity for and on behalf of the Council.

The adoption of this policy meets Council's obligations under Section 50 of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act), which states councils must prepare and adopt a public consultation policy that sets out the steps Council will follow in undertaking public consultation required by the Act.

3. Legislation and References

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Community Engagement Procedure.

- City of Playford Global Glossary
- *Local Government Act 1999* – Section 50
 - Matters requiring public consultation:
 - Section 12 : Representative Reviews
 - Section 13 : Statues of a Council/Change of Name
 - Section 50 : Public Consultation Policy
 - Section 122(6) : Strategic Management Plans
 - Section 249 : Passing By-Laws
 - Section 259 : Policies on Orders
 - Legislative matters requiring public consultation in accordance with Council's public consultation policy
 - Section 45(3) : Principal Office – Opening hours
 - Section 92(5)(b) : Code of Practice Access to meetings and documents
 - Section 123(3) and (4) : Annual Business Plan
 - Section 151(5), (7) and (8) : Changes to Basis of Rating
 - Section 156(14a) and (14b) : Rating Differential Rates
 - Section 194(2)(b) : Community Land – Revocation of Classification
 - Section 197(1) : Community Land – Adoption of a Management Plans
 - Section 198(2) : Community Land Amendment or Revocation of a Management Plan
 - Section 202(2) : Community Land Alienation by Lease or License

- Section 223 : Roads | Permits that would result in any part of a road being fenced, enclosed or partitioned so as to impede the passage of traffic to a material degree or for use or activity requiring public consultation under regulations.
- Section 232 : Planting of vegetation if the vegetation may have a significant impact on residents, the proprietors of nearby businesses or advertisers in the area

This Policy should not be considered as the only document that may relate to community engagement. Other tiers of government, agencies or organisations may have legislation or policies that also apply.

4. Application

Chief Executive Officer	Champion and embed a foundation of best practice in community engagement within the organisation.
Council Members	Consider views, ideas and feedback received from community engagement processes as part of the decision making process.
Senior Managers	Ensure that any matter that requires public consultation under the Act is delivered as per this policy and that legislative requirements are met.
Employees	Employees with community engagement responsibilities are to adhere to the principles 'what good community engagement looks like' and ensure any procedures, guidelines and processes are followed.
Engagement and Insights	Ensure this policy is made available for public consultation following correct community engagement procedures. Provide advice and support in relation to the application of this policy and ensure guidelines and templates for community engagement are prepared.
Customer Contact Employees	Ensure this policy is made available on request for viewing at Council's principal office.

5. Relevance to Risk Appetite Statement

Reputation

The City of Playford has a **LOW** appetite for negative perceptions that compromise its credibility and reputation. This policy will be supported by procedures, guidelines and a tool kit to support employees to deliver good community engagement that is well planned and accessible with clear objectives, flexible approaches and appropriate resources.

Regulatory Compliance

Council has **ZERO TOLERANCE** for non-compliance with statutory requirements. This policy sets out minimum standards for public consultation as required under *The Act*.

6. Feedback

Your feedback on this policy is invited and can be directed to the Manager Governance via email to governance@playford.sa.gov.au or by calling the Customer Contact Team on 8256 0333.

Administration use only

ECM document set no.	3960954
Version no.	3
Procedure link	Community Engagement Procedure
Policy author	General Manager – Strategy & Corporate
Endorsed by	Council
Resolution no.	4628
Legal requirement	<i>Local Government Act 1999</i> – Section 50
Review schedule	2 Years
Date of current version	May 2021
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Version history

Version no.	Approval date	Approval by	Change
1	October 2011	Ordinary Council Resolution No. 493	New Policy
2	December 2013	City Strategy and Enterprises Committee (no record of Ordinary Council resolution)	
3	25 May 2021	Ordinary Council Resolution No. 4628	<p>Policy title change from Public Consultation Policy in line with Statutes Amendment (Local Government Review) Bill 2020 language.</p> <p>Clear identification of what good community engagement looks like for City of Playford.</p> <p>Removal of procedural matters and incorporated into the Community Engagement Procedure.</p>
