

Community Engagement

Council Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Council meets its legislative obligations regarding public consultation by:

- Meeting the requirements set out in the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) and the State Government's Community Engagement Charter (the Charter)
- Using appropriate and resource effective engagement methods which are relevant to the specific circumstances of each decision, activity or process
- Providing for appropriate participation by the local community, key stakeholders and interested parties
- Consider feedback received to enhance decision making
- Providing information on the reasons for decision or actions of Council, where reasonable and appropriate.

This policy is a statement of Council's general position in relation to community engagement (public consultation), as required under the Act and the Charter.

2. Scope

This policy applies to decisions, activities and processes undertaken by the Council, a delegate of the Council or a person exercising power on the Council's behalf, where public consultation is required to be undertaken in accordance with the Act, the Charter, or this policy. A reference in this policy to 'Council' includes a reference to a delegate or other person exercising power on the Council's behalf.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the implementation and application of this policy, and where necessary reporting the outcomes of consultations to the Council. The specific delegations made under this Policy are outlined in part 8 of this policy.

This policy does not apply where the Council is exercising powers and functions under any other Act. Where there are consultation requirements under other legislation, e.g. the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, those specific processes take precedence over this policy.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Council Members	<u>Encourage participation</u> Support the promotion of engagement opportunities and encourage community members to actively participate in council's decision-making processes. <u>Consider feedback</u> Consider community feedback provided through official engagement processes alongside other influences on decision making (e.g. legislation, policy, resources, expert advice, previous decisions).
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Administration	<u>Plan and deliver engagements</u> Ensure engagement activities align with legislation and this policy. <u>Present feedback</u> Provide decision makers with clear, unbiased summaries of engagement outcomes, outlining how community views have informed any recommendation(s).
Community Members	<u>Participate in the engagement process</u> Participate in engagement opportunities in ways that suit their needs, noting that community views are one of several influences considered in Council's decision making. <u>Provide local knowledge and lived experience</u> Relevant to Council's decision-making process: • Share local insights, experiences, stories and perspectives to support shared understanding. • Provide feedback, ideas, support or sentiment to inform Council's consideration of options, impacts and potential outcomes.
Manager Communications & Engagement	• Maintaining and reviewing the Policy and any related procedures. • Supporting implementation and application of the Policy.

4. Policy Statement

Council is committed to open, accountable and responsive decision making, which is informed by effective communication and engagement between Council and the community.

Including communities in decision-making processes is important to the successful development of appropriate and informed decisions and policies by Council.

Section 50A of the Act requires Council to prepare and adopt a policy relating to community engagement for the purposes of the Act. The policy must be consistent with and comply with any requirements specified by the Charter.

The preparation and adoption of this policy fulfil the Council's obligations to prepare and adopt a policy under section 50(A) of the Act. The following principles in the Charter have been considered in the preparation of this policy:

- members of the community should have reasonable, timely, meaningful and ongoing opportunities to gain access to information about proposed decisions, activities, processes of councils and to participate in relevant processes
- information about issues should be in plain language, readily accessible and in a form that facilitates community participation
- participation methods should seek to foster and encourage constructive dialogue, discussion and debate in relation to proposed decisions, activities and processes of council
- participation methods should be appropriate having regard to the significance and likely impact of proposed decisions, activities and processes
- insofar as is reasonable, communities should be provided with information about how community views have been taken into account and reasons for decisions or actions of councils.

Council will undertake public consultation in accordance with the Act, the Charter and this policy.

Council may, in its absolute discretion, determine to undertake a step or steps in addition to those set out in this policy in relation to a matter for which it is required by the Act and/or the Charter to undertake public consultation.

However, Council is not required to give prior consideration and/or to determine whether or not to undertake any additional step or steps in relation to such a matter. A well-intentioned engagement that does not generate the anticipated level of engagement is not a breach of this policy.

Council may, from time to time, alter or substitute this policy, following public consultation.

5. Public Consultation Categories

The Charter addresses minimum mandatory community engagement activities for matters where the Act requires public consultation to be undertaken.

The Charter establishes different categories of consultation for matters, as follows:

Significant – Annual Business Plan and Rating Policy	
Matter	Act Section Reference
Adopting an Annual Business Plan	section 123(3)(b)
Changes to basis of rating, declaring differential rates, imposing a separate rate, service rate or service charge, or changing the basis on which land is valued for the purpose of rating	section 151(5)(e)

Significant	
Matter	Act Section Reference
Representation reviews	section 12(7)
Development and review of Strategic Management Plans	section 122(6)
Changes to use of differential rating	section 156(4a)(b)
Revocation of classification of land as community land	sections 194(2)(b)
Community Land Management Plans - adoption	section 197(1)
Community Land Management Plans – significant amendments	section 198(3)
Alienation of community land by lease or license	section 202(2)

Standard	
Matter	Act Section Reference
Opening hours and place of principal office	substantial changes - section 45(3)
Community Engagement Policy	section 50A(6)(b)
Council behavioural support policies	section 75F(6)
Access to meetings and documents	section 92(5)
Power to make orders	section 259(2)(b)

Local	
Matter	Act Section Reference
Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for more than 48 hours (with a detour in place) or where no detour will be available	section 223(1)
Proposed planting of vegetation on a road – significant impact	section 232(b)

Inform	
Matter	Act Section Reference
Opening hours and place of principal office – minor changes	section 45(3)
Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for less than 48 hours and the Council ensures that a detour is in place	section 223(1)
Election information	section 13A (2) of the <i>Local Government (Elections) Act 1999</i>

The table in Attachment 1 of this policy sets out the engagement activities that Council will undertake to meet the requirements of each matter for which public consultation must be undertaken in accordance with the Act and the Charter.

6. Other Decisions, Activities and Processes

Council recognises there may be decisions, activities and processes where the Act and Charter are silent in relation to community engagement, but for which community engagement may nevertheless be appropriate.

Council may undertake community engagement activities for community participation in relation to other decisions, activities or processes of the Council not specified in the Charter at its absolute discretion.

For the avoidance of doubt, there is no obligation on the Council to undertake any additional or discretionary consultation outside of the requirements of the Act and Charter.

7. Delegation

Specific engagement activities to be undertaken in relation to any decision, activity or processes shall be determined on a case by case basis, by:

- Council, by resolution
- the CEO
- a delegate with the power to undertake community engagement under the Act, the Charter or this policy
- a delegate with power to make a decision or undertake an activity or process that requires community engagement under the Act, the Charter or this policy.

Council, the CEO or a delegate is not required by this policy to undertake, or to consider or determine whether to undertake additional engagement activities or engagement methods

8. Definitions

Key term or acronym	Definition
Act	<i>Local Government Act 1999.</i>
Community	A general term for the people who live, work, study, own property, conduct private or government business, visit or use the services, facilities and public spaces and places of the City of Holdfast Bay. The community are often referred to as 'stakeholders' in the affairs of Council. A community may be a geographic location (community of place), a community of similar interest (community of interest) or a community of affiliation, practice or identity (such as industry or sporting clubs).
Community engagement	The process of seeking input or feedback from the community regarding a decision that may affect them. This includes any activity where council provides information on a decision or invites comment on a matter. For the purpose of this policy, community engagement and public consultation are one and the same.
Charter	The Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter published in the South Australia Government Gazette on 11 December 2025.
Community Engagement Policy	A policy required under section 50 of the Act, which sets out how

	council must engage with the community when required by legislation.
Public consultation	See Community engagement.
Stakeholder	An individual, group, or organisation with an interest in, or who may be affected by, a decision made or under consideration by Council.

9. Administration Use Only

Reference Number:	Document Set ID 5536825
Strategic Alignment:	
Strategic Risk:	
Responsible Officer(s):	General Manager, Strategy and Corporate Manager Communications & Engagement
Approval Date and Council Resolution Number:	28/07/2026, Report Number 254/26, C280726/9454
Approval History (Council)	22/06/2010, 14/06/2022
Review Cycle:	22/06/2029
Applicable Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1999</i>
Related Policies:	
Other Reference Documents:	Organisational Community Engagement Procedure

Attachment one - Charter Engagement Requirements

Council will comply with the minimum mandatory public consultation requirements for each category of matters set out in the Charter as detailed below.

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category				
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform
Website	Publish information about the matter that can be easily found on a Council website.	X	X	X	X	X
News publication	Publish information about the matter in a local news publication (print where available, but otherwise digital) that circulates in the Council area and is not produced by the Council.	X	X			
Consult with the whole Council area	Consider appropriate forms of notifications to the Council area. Consider whether additional information or notification should be made available to the community to bring their attention to the matter and to support participation.	X	X	X		
Invite submissions	Provide information about how the community can make a submission, including timeframe.	X	X			
Explain decision making process	In material prepared explain what the Council proposes to do, why it proposes to do it, and what it seeks to achieve. Explain how community feedback will inform the Council's decision.	X	X			

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category				
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform
Seek and consider feedback from the community—significant matters	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community. Provide a minimum community engagement period of 21 days to enable the community to provide feedback. Include a summary of community engagement feedback to the Council ahead of the decision.	X	X			
Public Meeting	Hold a public meeting where the community is invited to provide submissions (written or verbal) on the matter. The public meeting may be part of a Council meeting or a separate event.	X				
Council meeting invitation	Invite people who have made a written submission to attend a Council meeting to speak to their submission before the decision is made.		X			
Seek and consider feedback from the community	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community Provide information about how community feedback will inform the Council's decision. Ensure an appropriate period of time is provided to enable communities to provide feedback.			X	X	
Consult with local community	Consider appropriate forms of notifications to the area within the Council affected by the Council decision or action. Consider whether additional information or notification should be made available to the local				X	

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category				
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform
	community to bring their attention to the matter and to support participation.					
Information to the whole Council area	Provide information to the whole of the Council's community if it may be directly affected by the Council decision or action.					X
Information to local community	Provide information to the local community that may be directly affected by the Council decision or action.					X