

Policy P103 Stakeholder Engagement

Responsible Business Unit/s	Customer, Communications and Engagement
Responsible Officer	Manager Customer, Communications and Engagement
Affected Business Unit/s	All City business units involved in stakeholder engagement

Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure that, where appropriate, the City of South Perth community and relevant stakeholders have an opportunity to participate and contribute in a meaningful way to decisions made by the City that affect their lives.
- To outline the City's commitment and approach to stakeholder engagement, to contribute to good governance, strong leadership and improved decision making.
- To provide direction and guidance for the practice of stakeholder engagement at the City of South Perth.
- To support Elected Members in their decision making by providing informed feedback from stakeholders.

Definitions

Stakeholder engagement

A planned and purposeful approach which enables stakeholders to be involved in and contribute to decisions that affect their lives. This process may encompass a diverse range of techniques and methods.

Note: The terms, 'community engagement' and 'public participation' are widely used across the industry and may be used interchangeably with 'stakeholder engagement'.

Stakeholders and community

Stakeholders are those affected by or with a specific interest in a decision, project or issue. Stakeholders may be (but are not limited to) individuals, groups, organisations, agencies, businesses, reference and advisory groups, and/or the community. Stakeholders can be internal (i.e. within the organisation) or external (i.e. outside the organisation).

The **community** can include individuals or groups who live, work, play, study, visit, invest in, or pass through the City of South Perth. They may be ratepayers, residents, business owners, workers, tourists, visitors, or community groups.

These terms are often used interchangeably and are both widely used in the field of stakeholder engagement. Although separate definitions are offered, in practice, the distinction between the two terms is not always clear. Therefore, the terms may be used together, separately or interchangeably.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all Elected Members, City of South Perth employees and consultants/contractors involved in stakeholder engagement activities for the City.

The scope of this policy is guided by Section 1.3 (2) of the *Local Government Act 1995*, which states that the Act is intended to result in:

- Better decision making by local governments;
- Greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of local governments;
- Greater accountability of local governments to their communities; and
- More efficient and effective local government.

The policy is also drawn from the City of South Perth's Strategic Community Plan 2021-2031 and internationally accepted Core Values for engagement, developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

In decision making areas related to town planning (including strategic and statutory planning), the City has adopted a specific policy to determine how stakeholder engagement will be undertaken. Local Planning Policy - Advertising of Planning Proposals is drawn from and aligned to the City's stakeholder engagement policy. However, it goes into further detail of the specific statutory and legislative requirements.

Policy Statement

The City of South Perth recognises that involving stakeholders appropriately in projects and processes, and embracing a culture and practice of engagement, leads to more sustainable and informed decision making. Stakeholder Engagement is the responsibility of the entire organisation, including Elected Members, employees and consultants.

Stakeholder Engagement does not take the responsibility for final decision making from the Elected Members. Instead, it supports and informs the decision making process by enabling Elected Members (and employees) to be confident that stakeholder views have been ascertained, understood and considered, along with technical advice and requirements, research, constraints and any other policy or legislative considerations.

The City's Stakeholder Engagement Framework has been developed to guide and support the culture and practice of stakeholder engagement, within the organisation, to enable an approach that is consistent, effective and robust. The Guide includes resources for use by City employees and consultants, along with a training program for employees.

Stakeholder Engagement is supported at the City by a dedicated Stakeholder Engagement team established to build capacity in the organisation, and provide support, advice and assistance for engagement processes and projects.

Engaging over school holidays and/or Christmas

When stakeholder engagement takes place during school holidays or over the Christmas period (mid-December to mid-January), it will be extended to provide further time to engage. This requirement does not apply to all statutory advertising and engagement.

Stakeholder engagement principles

The following principles are the foundation of the City's approach to and practice of stakeholder engagement.

1. We are committed to embedding a culture of engagement at the City of South Perth

We will champion engagement at the City. We are committed to integrating engagement into the organisation's processes and practices by providing the necessary resources and support to employees.

2. We know why we are engaging

We are clear about the purpose of the engagement and ensure that this is reflected in the processes we plan and engagement we undertake.

3. We know who to engage

We identify the right stakeholders and use a range of techniques to ensure our approach is inclusive and appropriate.

4. We understand the background and context

We take the time to understand the history, issues or concerns which may affect the project and engagement and explore the context in order to clearly define the negotiables and non-negotiables.

5. We are committed to genuine engagement

We engage when there is an opportunity for stakeholders to have meaningful input into the decision to be made. We undertake authentic, appropriate engagement and provide stakeholder feedback to the decision makers. We learn from past practice and experience.

6. We are innovative, responsive and professional

We are dedicated to providing high quality engagement and are innovative and flexible in our approach. We work to build relationships and are responsive to the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)

Stakeholder engagement at the City is also guided and shaped by the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) Core Values and Spectrum of Public Participation, which are recognised internationally as best practice. These tools guide both the approach and practical application of stakeholder engagement.

IAP2 definition of engagement

Engagement is an intentional process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decision or actions of members of the community, stakeholders, or organisations in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome.

IAP 2 Core Values

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision making process.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.

3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

IPA2 Spectrum of Public Participation

IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process.

The City refers to the Spectrum to define the role of stakeholders in any engagement process. It outlines the goal of each level of engagement and includes the 'promise to stakeholders' made when an organisation chooses to engage with them in a particular way.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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Legislation / Local Law Requirements

Section 1.3 (2) of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Other Relevant Policies / Key Documents

Local Planning Policy - Advertising of Planning Proposals

M103: Stakeholder Engagement

City of South Perth Strategic Community Plan 2021-2031