Community Engagement Policy

Objective

The Community Engagement Policy aims to help the City of Albany (the City) make better decisions which reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities.

This policy affirms the City of Albany's commitment to community engagement and the use of associated guidelines and processes, being:

- **Guide**: How to engage with residents before your event guide; and

- **Toolkit**: City of Albany Community Engagement Communications Staff Toolkit;

- **Template**: City of Albany Community Engagement Community Engagement Project Template.

Note: For Statutory planning matters, Council has adopted a specific policy position that directs how these principles will be applied to community engagement and consultation.

Policy Statement

The City is a proactive organisation which has a willingness to listen to and value what community members have to say. The City seeks to use the ideas, knowledge and skills of the community to enhance decision making.

Community engagement assists the City to provide good governance and strong leadership, delivering better decisions that guide the City's priorities into the future.

The City is committed to strengthening Albany through effective community engagement to share information, gather views and opinion, develop options, build consensus and make decisions.

This policy does not negate the need for the City to comply with all statutory obligations.

The following community engagement principles apply to all community engagement undertaken by the City of Albany:

Commitment	Leadership and strong commitment to information, consultation and active participation in policy-making is needed at all levels.
Inclusiveness	Consultation will be planned and undertaken with the aim of engaging all people affected by the activity. Given consideration to the City's policies, e.g. Access and Inclusion Policy and the Aboriginal Accord Agreement. Affected and interested parties will be given opportunities to participate. Consultation will be sensitive to the needs of particular groups to maximize their ability to contribute.
Clarity	Objectives for and limits to information, consultation and active participation should be well defined from the outset. The respective roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder must be clear to all. 'Plain English' will be used wherever practical, with all technical terms explained using simple explanations.

Timing	Community engagement and active participation should be undertaken as early in the process as possible to allow a greater range of solutions to emerge and to raise the chances of best practice outcomes. Adequate time must be available for engagement and consultation to be effective. Communication is needed at all stages of the project cycle.
Transparency	The stakeholders in any consultation process should be clear about why and how the consultation will be undertaken and how much influence the consultation can have in the decision making process and outcomes. Stakeholders should be made aware of the any limitations in the process and if options are restricted. Stakeholders should be updated regularly on the progress and outcome of the consultation.
Resources	Adequate financial, human and technical resources are needed if public information, consultation and active participation in planning and/or assessment of major planning projects are to be effective. The City must have access to appropriate skills and resources. An organisational culture that supports their efforts is highly important.
Accountability	The City has an obligation to account for the use they make of community and stakeholder inputs received through feedback, public consultation and active participation. Measures to ensure the process is open, transparent and amenable to external scrutiny and review are crucial to increasing accountability overall.

Scope

The development and review of all Council strategies, business plans, policies, and procedures.

Legislative and Strategic Context

This item relates to the following elements of the City of Albany Strategic Community Plan 2032 and Corporate Business Plan 2021 - 2025:

- **Pillar**: Leadership

- **Objectives:**

  o Provide strong, accountable leadership
  o Grow awareness, understanding and engagement in City projects, activities and decisions

- **Strategies:**

  o Facilitate engagement with socially and culturally diverse groups to inform Council decisions, including younger people, people with disability, local Menang Noongar People and other cultural groups.
  o A well informed and engaged community.

Review Position and Date

This policy is to be reviewed by the document owner every three years.

Associated Documents

Documents that have a bearing on this policy and that may be useful reference material for users of this policy, follow:

- City of Albany Community Engagement Communications Staff Toolkit

- City of Albany Communications & Engagement Events Toolkit

Definitions

Key terms and acronyms used in the policy, and their definitions:

Corporate Documents	Strategies, policies, procedures, business plans, and associated documents, including guidelines and forms.
Statutory Documents	Corporate documents whose format and layout is guided by legislative requirement i.e. budgets, town planning schemes, annual reports.
Strategy	A plan made in advance of actions that identifies, serves and complements the City's major strategic goals and objectives.
Policy	A governing principle, set of principles or rules that guides the City's practices and constrains procedures or delegated functions.
Procedure	A prescription of specific action oriented processes, necessary to achieve strategic or policy objectives.
Business Plan	A plan that forecasts the critical aspects, basic assumptions and financial projections for an existing or proposed City trading enterprise or community service facility.
Guidelines	An operational guide that provides tools to guide staff through a process to undertake a specific function.
The Community	Those who live, work or recreate in Albany.
Community Engagement	Community Engagement is any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and uses public input to make decisions (source IAP2). It may refer to a range of interactions of differing levels of engagement between the City and the community including: • Information sharing processes, to keep community informed and promotes understanding. • Consultation processes, to obtain feedback. • Involving community members consistently throughout the process to ensure community concerns and aspirations are understood and considered. • Collaborating with community members in each aspect of the decision making.

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1.1	MGR	Reviewed Ref: OCM 23/05/2017 Resolution CCCS028. Synergy Ref: NP1766731.	23/05/2017
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2.0	MCR	Reviewed Ref: OCM 22/03/2022 Resolution AR110. Reviewed by MCR and Manager Governance and Risk (MGR): _Noting annual review of policies in conjunction with review of delegations by Council, review extended to every three years. S _Strategic context updated and minor administrative changes applied. Reviewed and minor amendments approved by Document Owner.	22/03/2022
2.1	MGR	Reviewed with annual review of delegations register. OCM 28/03/2023 Resolution AR131.	19/07/2023