



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Reviewed	9 December 2019
Next Review	October 2023
Version	3
Responsible Position	Community Engagement Stakeholder Specialist
Administration Reference	5706160

1. PURPOSE

To establish a framework of effective community engagement practices. This will build community relationships and gather stakeholder and community feedback to inform council decision making.

2. CITY STRATEGY OUTCOME

Our Future Willoughby 2028 identified five city outcomes guiding our community's future direction in relation to Council's policy making, along with 29 community priorities. The following three priorities are applicable to a city that is effective and accountable.

5.1 - Be honest, transparent and accountable in all we do

5.4 – Anticipate and respond to changing community and customer needs

5.5 – Make it easy for citizens to participate in decision making

3. APPLICATION

The Community Engagement Policy, which forms part of the Community Engagement Framework, and the Community Participation Plan, apply to all Council officials, members of staff, individuals under contract and delegates of council.

4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

Willoughby City Council will adhere to the following principles of Community Engagement;

- Community engagement will gather contributions from people who are affected by or interested in a decision;
- Community engagement will provide opportunities for community to contribute in a meaningful way to provide relevant, timely and balanced information;
- Community engagement will ensure a mix of appropriate and accessible means for people to provide feedback;
- Community engagement will ensure a broad range of community needs, interests and ideas inform Council decision making;
- Community engagement will consider human and cultural factors;
- Community engagement will be systematic, structured and timely;
- Community engagement will inform business improvement throughout council;
- Willoughby City Council will inform the community about the final decision, and how their input was incorporated;
- Willoughby City Council will utilise partnerships with community groups, business, and other Government organisations to achieve City objectives.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

Willoughby City Council is committed to understanding the needs and expectations of the community to inform decision making processes. Council recognises the value of engaging with the community in a meaningful way to meet Council's commitment to building long term, sustainable community relationships in achieving a shared vision for Willoughby City. Council commits to inclusive, credible and equitable engagement processes throughout the organisation.

6. RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS

Council

- In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, have regard to the long term and cumulative effect of its decisions.

General Manager

- Ensure the establishment and implementation of the Community Engagement Policy, which forms part of the Community Engagement Framework, and the Community Participation Plan;
- Provide adequate resources to effectively conduct community engagement activities;
- Lead and foster a culture of valuing community input to inform decision making.
- Ensure communication practices that inform the community about how their input was incorporated into Council decisions.

Directors

- Oversee the establishment and implementation of the Community Engagement Framework and Community Participation Plan;
- Allocate resources to effectively conduct community engagement activities;
- Facilitate and encourage a culture of valuing community input to inform decision making.
- Identify engagement opportunities to constructively engage with community in achieving City objectives;
- Ensure engagement activities are conducted in accordance with the Community Engagement Framework and Community Participation Plan.

All Staff

- Adopt and implement the Community Engagement Framework and Community Participation Plan into operational activities;
- Identify engagement opportunities to constructively engage with community in achieving business objectives;
- Ensure compliance with the Community Engagement Framework and Community Participation Plan in the performance of their duties;
- Ensure that any conflicts or risk to council identified during engagement processes are escalated to the relevant Council officer.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEWS

Directors

- Disseminate relevant information and data gathered during engagement processes across the organisation and to relevant community groups;
- Use the information gathered in engagement activities to inform decision making

8. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

8.1 REPORTING AND LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Willoughby City Council acknowledges when undertaking high impact development on Council owned and managed land, a community engagement process consistent with the engagement framework and Community Participation Plan will be undertaken in correlation with the statutory requirements.

8.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Community Engagement Framework consists of;

- Community Engagement Policy
- Community Engagement Process and Matrix
- Community Engagement Resources (Internal Staff Guide)
- Community Participation Plan
- Advisory Committee and Reference Groups Policy

Governing laws and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>▪ <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
Related policies and other documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Willoughby City Council Community Engagement Framework▪ Community Participation Plan (new requirement of Department of Industry, Planning and Environment 1 Dec 2019)▪ Communications Policy
Document History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Date amended 9 December 2019▪ Date amended 11 November 2019▪ Date adopted June 2016

Appendix

Definitions	
Policy	A statement/s of principles and intent that guide decisions to help achieve outcomes and community priorities.
Procedure	A statement or instruction that set out how policies will be implemented and by whom.