

Community Consultation Policy

Council Policy

Responsible Directorate: Governance and Strategy

Objective: To state the City of Joondalup's commitment to effective, transparent and accessible community consultation to inform decision-making.

1. Application:

This policy applies to all community consultation activities in the City of Joondalup.

2. Definitions:

“community consultation” means any activity which seeks feedback from community members to inform decision-making.

3. Statement:

The City of Joondalup recognises the importance of effective, transparent and accessible community consultation in ensuring feedback from the community is considered as part of the City's decision-making processes. Community consultation informs, but does not replace, the decision-making role of the City and the Council.

The City will consult with the community whenever it is required to do so under legislation (see Table 1), or whenever it is considered valuable to inform decision-making. This could include major policy changes, new community facilities, or changes to City services, amongst others.

4. Details:

4.1. Principles of Community Consultation:

To ensure the City's community consultation practices are effective, transparent and accessible, the following principles will apply, unless bound by statutory and legislative requirements (see Table 1).

- a. The City will identify stakeholders by considering any persons, groups or organisations that could be affected by, or are interested in, the matter under consideration.

- b. The City will identify and implement the most appropriate methodology to both meet the needs of stakeholders and to best inform the City's decision-making processes. Methods of engagement could include questionnaires, meetings, focus groups, interviews, forums or workshops, amongst others.
- c. The City will ensure that the timing and duration of consultation activities has due regard for conflicting priorities such as public holidays, school holidays, Council elections and/or other consultation activities.
- d. The City will endeavour to make appropriate background information and contextual material available to consultation participants to support understanding of the relevant legal, statutory, strategic and/or local context.
- e. The City will employ sound social research and data collection methods and will adhere to professional, ethical standards and codes of practice for the analysis and reporting of consultation outcomes.
- f. The City will ensure that consultation outcomes are shared with the community where appropriate.

Creation Date: June 1999

Formerly:

Public Participation Policy

Community Consultation and Engagement Policy

Amendments: CJ213-06/99, CJ156-09/06, CJ174-10/10, CJ093-05/12

- Related Documentation:**
- *Dog Act 1976*
 - *Elections Caretaker Policy*
 - *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*
 - *Planning Consultation Local Planning Policy*
 - *Land Administration Act 1997*
 - *Local Government Act 1995*
 - *Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Guidelines*

Table 1. Legislative Consultation Requirements

The City of Joondalup is directed by various legislation which set out the consultation requirements for the following local government matters.

Type	Duration	Communication methods					
		Stakeholder Notification Letters	City Website	City/Libraries Noticeboard	On-Site Signage	Newspaper Advert	
Changing method to election by Council (<i>Local Government Act 1995 (WA) s. 2.12A</i>)	42 days	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (local)	
New local laws or amendments to local laws (<i>Local Government Act 1995 (WA) s. 3.12</i>)	42 days	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (local and state-wide)	
Closure of City-managed thoroughfares to vehicles for more than 4 weeks (<i>Local Government Act 1995 (WA) s. 3.50</i>)	Not specified	Yes — affected landowners	No	Yes	No	Yes (local)	
Disposing of property (<i>Local Government Act 1995 (WA) s. 3.58</i>)	14 days	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (local)	
Commercial enterprises by local government (<i>Local Government Act 1995 (WA) s. 3.59</i>)	42 days	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (local and state-wide)	
Strategic Community Plan (<i>Local Government Act 1995 (WA) s. 5.56 and Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Guidelines</i>)	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	
Giving notice of certain rates (differential general rates or a minimum payment applying to a differential rate category) (<i>Local Government Act 1995 (WA) s. 6.36</i>)	21 days	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (local)	
Review of wards (<i>Local Government Act 1995 (WA) sch. 2.2</i>)	42 days	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (local)	

Type	Duration	Communication methods				
		Stakeholder Notification Letters	City Website	City/Libraries Noticeboard	On-Site Signage	Newspaper Advert
Road closures (<i>Land Administration Act 1997</i> (WA) s. 58)	35 days	No	No	No	No	Yes (local)
New dog prohibited area or new dog exercise area (<i>Dog Act 1976</i> (WA) s. 31)	28 days	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (local)

REVISED

Community Consultation Protocol

Protocol Owner:	Manager Strategic and Organisational Development
Contact Person:	Strategic Policy Development Coordinator (4219)
Promapp link:	—
Related Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Consultation Policy • Planning Consultation Local Planning Policy • Elections Caretaker Policy
Related plans/strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Joondalup 2022</i>
Other related documentation/legislation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog Act 1976 • Land Administration Act 1997 • Local Government Act 1995 • Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 • Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Guidelines • Strategic Community Reference Group Terms of Reference
HPRM reference:	106742, 45153
Last reviewed:	July 2019

Objectives:

To ensure a consistent organisational approach to community consultation which is open, transparent and accountable and provides reliable information to inform decisions of the City.

Background:

The City conducts community consultation to gain the views of community members when the City is seeking feedback on an issue, service, plan, project, policy or event. The City's *Community Consultation Policy* outlines the principles of community consultation and establishes the City's commitment to transparent, fair and accessible practices.

In addition, Western Australian legislation, including the *Local Government Act 1995*, *Land Administration Act 1997* and *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* and *Dog Act 1976*, outlines statutory requirements for community consultation on specific issues.

In scope:

This protocol covers the process to plan, approve and undertake community consultation, analyse feedback and present the outcomes.

This protocol relates to all Business Units which need to obtain the views of community members to inform decisions of the City.

Out of scope:

This protocol does not include the requirements for informing the community about an issue that may affect them where feedback is not required but community members need to be advised. Such examples may include:

- Informing residents of upcoming maintenance of a road which may cause temporary road closures and inconvenience to road users.
- Replacing equipment in parks.
- Community education, such as advising residents about the implementation of a new or changed service.

The protocol does not relate to consultation on planning proposals which is covered under the Planning Consultation Local Planning Policy

Definitions:

Community consultation: Any activity which seeks the views of community members on an issue, service, plan, project, event or policy where the feedback will be used to inform the City's decisions. This could include, but is not limited to:

- designing a new community facility or refurbishing an existing facility
- considering a draft City plan or strategy
- setting-up a new program or service
- reviewing the effectiveness or success of an existing program, service or an event
- statutory consultation required by local laws or State legislation.

Employee responsibilities:

City officers must ensure that:

- all community consultation processes are transparent, fair and accountable
- comprehensive background information is provided to community members so that they are in possession of all facts to inform their feedback
- confidentiality of all respondents is observed
- timing of community consultation is considered to avoid holiday periods (eg public holidays and school holidays — see also Planning Consultation Local Planning Policy) and other significant events (eg Council elections — see Elections Caretaker Policy)
- community consultation proposals are discussed with the Policy, Planning and Research team prior to commencement to ensure a consistent and high quality approach across the organisation.

Procedure for undertaking community consultation:

Plan the community consultation:

1. Business Unit officers meet with a member of the Policy, Planning and Research team in Strategic and Organisational Development to discuss the community consultation purpose and scope, and determine whether a Community Consultation Plan is required.

Note: Most community consultations require a Community Consultation Plan. Exceptions include simple questionnaires to gain feedback on an event and ongoing customer satisfaction or customer experience monitoring. For ongoing consultations, Business Unit officers are only required to meet with a member of the Policy, Planning and Research team initially, and at an agreed review point.

2. The Policy, Planning and Research team provides advice on appropriate community consultation methods based on the objectives of the community consultation and the types of stakeholders. The Policy, Planning and Research team, in collaboration with Business Unit officers, document these within the Community Consultation Plan (if one is required).

Community consultation methods may include, but are not limited to:

- Questionnaires (online or hard-copy)
 - Meetings
 - Focus groups
 - Interviews
 - Forums
 - Workshops
3. Business Unit officers consider the timing and duration of a community consultation to avoid holiday periods (eg public holidays and school holidays) and significant events (eg Council elections — see Elections Caretaker Policy).

Seek approval of Community Consultation Plan (or planned approach):

4. The Policy, Planning and Research team seeks approval of the Community Consultation Plan (or planned approach) by the Manager Strategic and Organisational Development, Business Unit Manager, Director (if required) and Chief Executive Officer (if required).

Develop community consultation materials:

5. The Policy, Planning and Research team develops the community consultation materials (including communication materials) in conjunction with Business Unit officers.

Seek approval of community consultation materials:

6. The Policy, Planning and Research team seeks approval of the community consultation materials by the Manager Strategic and Organisational Development, relevant Business Unit Manager, Director (if required) and Chief Executive Officer (if required).

Brand community consultation materials (if required):

7. The Policy, Planning and Research team provides community consultation materials to the Corporate Marketing Team for branding (if required).

Inform Elected Members (if required):

8. The Business Units inform Elected Members via a Desk of the CEO article, email from the relevant Director or CEO, report to Council, or in person at a Briefing Session, Strategy Session, special workshop, etc. Elected Members should be informed at least 5 working days before the commencement of the community consultation and, where possible, be provided with the following:
- Community Consultation Plan
 - Community consultation materials (including communication materials)
 - An appropriate contact person to receive comments (usually Director)

Note: It is not required to inform Elected Members of community consultations seeking feedback on an event, or ongoing customer satisfaction or customer experience monitoring.

Advise internal stakeholders:

9. The Policy, Planning and Research team advises relevant internal stakeholders to ensure they are informed of upcoming community consultation activities. Relevant internal stakeholders could include:
- Customer Service (Governance)
 - Media Advisory Service (Marketing and Communications)
 - Records Services (Governance)

Conduct consultation in line with Community Consultation Plan (or planned approach):

10. The Policy, Planning and Research team or the Business Unit invites stakeholders to participate in the community consultation in accordance with the Community Consultation Plan. This could include:
- Direct invitations, such as by letter, email, phone, etc.
 - General advertising, such as via the City of Joondalup website, social media, community newspapers, signage, flyers, etc.
11. The Policy, Planning and Research team or the Business Unit collects and records stakeholder feedback in accordance with the Community Consultation Plan.

Analyse stakeholder feedback and report on community consultation outcomes:

12. The Policy, Planning and Research team analyses the stakeholder feedback and develops a report on the community consultation outcomes. The report is provided to the Business Unit.

Communicate results of community consultation:

13. The Business Unit communicates the outcomes of the community consultation to the Executive Leadership Team, Elected Members and/or the wider community via appropriate communication means (eg email, ELT/Council report, media release, etc).

Notes:

Strategic Community Reference Group: The Policy, Planning and Research team manages community consultation with the City's Strategic Community Reference Group. This is a formal reference group comprising Elected Members, community representatives from each ward and subject experts who provide advice to Council on matters of strategic community interest.

Community Engagement Network: The Policy, Planning and Research team manages community consultation with the Community Engagement Network. This is an electronic database of residents and community stakeholders interested in providing their views on strategic issues.

Community Consultation and Engagement Policy

Council Policy

Responsible Directorate: Governance and Strategy

Objective: To outline the principles of community consultation and engagement to encourage greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of the City of Joondalup.

1. Statement:

Community consultation and engagement processes assist Council in deliberating and then making decisions based on a clear understanding of the wishes of its community.

This Policy provides a clear statement of the Council's intention to make itself aware of community opinion in order to inform decision-making. The Policy seeks to ensure that all groups in the community have the opportunity to engage with the Council on matters that affect them, and will contribute to an improved quality of the decisions reached, and greater acceptance of the final Council decision by members of the community.

2. Details:

2.1. Principles of Community Consultation Engagement:

To enable Council to consult with the community on any matter, and in ways that are ethical, transparent and accountable, the following principles will apply:

- a. The purpose and scope of each consultation exercise is to be clear and unambiguous.
- b. Timeframes for any consultation undertaken, including the opening and closing dates, are to be stated. A minimum of 21 days should be allowed for a consultation period, unless otherwise stipulated by legislation.
- c. Consultations are not to be conducted during the summer break (between the last Ordinary Meeting of Council in December to the first Ordinary Meeting of Council in February), unless otherwise stipulated by Council. Consultations to meet statutory planning requirements may be conducted during the summer break, as they are approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
- d. Non-negotiable or otherwise 'out of scope' aspects of a consultation are to be identified and stated from the outset.

- e. The target audience for any consultation exercise is to be identified from the outset and may involve random selection of participants. The following is to be taken into consideration.
 - i. Where the matter impacts on a specific location within the City, those most closely affected are to be consulted.
 - ii. Where the matter concerns service users, participation is to be sought from user groups/organisations and individuals.
 - iii. Where a matter is deemed to impact on all residents and ratepayers of the City, random selection will be used to invite participation from a representative sample of the community.
- f. The consultation methods to be employed for each consultation exercise are to be stated.
- g. Accurate, adequate and unbiased information is to be provided to the public to enable them to give informed opinions on the matter in hand. Information is to be made available in alternative formats, upon request.
- h. Adequate time and resources are to be provided for consultation processes to take place.
- i. Analysis of the feedback from a consultation process is to be published on the City's website.
- j. Where applicable, statutory legislative requirements for community consultation are to be satisfied.

2.2. Circumstances for Non-Consultation:

Circumstances where Council may decide not to consult are as follows:

- a. Emergencies — matters concerning public safety and the like.
- b. Legal constraints.

2.3. Community Education

In the interests of encouraging 'active citizenship' and greater community participation in local governance, community education initiatives in the City of Joondalup will focus on the following.

- a. The role and functions of the City in local governance.
- b. Why citizen participation in local governance is important for a sustainable future.
- c. The obligations of 'active citizenship'.
- d. The range of opportunities for participating.
- e. How those opportunities will be communicated and managed.

Creation Date: October 2010

Amendments: CJ093-05/12

Related Documentation: • *Local Government Act 1995*

EXISTING

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Identified issues:	Proposed changes:
<p>The terms “consultation” and “engagement” are not clearly defined and may be causing confusion.</p>	<p>The revised Policy no longer references “engagement” and defines “community consultation” as <i>any activity which seeks feedback from community members to inform decision-making</i>.</p> <p>In practice, this means that the revised Policy continues to apply to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer service surveys and other ongoing satisfaction monitors. • Event feedback (eg feedback forms, quick polls, interviews, etc). • Legislative process that requires the City to accept submissions (eg amendments to local laws, disposing of property, giving notice of rates, etc). • Any other activity where the City is seeking feedback (eg questionnaires, workshops, focus groups, etc). <p>It is anticipated that removing the word “engagement” from the revised Policy and defining “consultation” specifically as <i>feedback sought</i> will provide clarity for Council and community members. In particular, the revised Policy does not cover general communication (eg notifications, community education, advertising, “informing”, etc), or unsolicited feedback (eg general emails, letters, social media posts, phone calls, etc).</p>
<p>The focus of the Policy is centred around written submissions (eg questionnaires) and does not adequately address more contemporary consultation methodology (eg meetings, focus groups, interviews, forums, workshops, online methods, etc).</p>	<p>A number of the “principles of community engagement” in the existing Policy are specifically related to written submissions and are not relevant to more contemporary consultation methodology. These have been updated with a more flexible statement that covers a much broader range of methodologies.</p> <p>Please note the following updates in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 21-day duration for consultation activities — This principle is too restrictive for the myriad consultation methods the City now employs. For example, it would not be possible to run a workshop, an on-site interview or even a telephone survey for 21 days. Even a more traditional method of consultation, such as a post-event feedback form, would not require a 21-day duration.

Identified issues:	Proposed changes:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibition on consultation activities during the summer Council break — This principle is not flexible enough for the different types of matters the City may wish to consult the community on in the future. For example, consultation on a school holiday program would be best undertaken during the school holidays, and consultation on a service or project specifically relating to summer would be best undertaken in the summer. <p>With the above in mind, a more holistic statement has been included in the revised Policy: <i>The City will ensure that the timing and duration of consultation activities has due regard for conflicting priorities such as public holidays, school holidays, Council elections and/or other consultation activities.</i></p>
<p>A number of sections of the Policy are very detailed and operational and do not allow enough flexibility to address the range of matters the City now consults the community on.</p>	<p>The existing Policy references a number of items “to be stated”, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation method employed • Opening and closing dates • Out-of-scope aspects <p>Similar to the issue identified above, these items are often not relevant to non-written forms of feedback. For example, if a focus group is being used, it would not be practical or necessary to state the opening and closing dates, or if an interview is being used, it would not be practical or necessary to state the consultation method being employed. It is also considered that listing items “to be stated” in a strategic policy is not appropriate and very much operational in nature.</p>
<p>The Policy includes a section related to “community education” and “active citizenship” which is not considered appropriate for a policy on community consultation.</p>	<p>The revised Policy no longer includes a section on “community education” and “active citizenship”. The revised Policy applies specifically to community consultation (defined as <i>any activity which seeks feedback from community members to inform decision-making</i>). While community education and active citizenship are still considered important, they are no longer relevant to the revised scope of the Policy and have been removed.</p> <p>It is not considered necessary to transfer these to a separate policy as what they describe cover operational matters that have since become embedded into City and Council practices.</p>