

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

August 2025

legislative

**Parent document:** City of Adelaide Community Engagement Charter

## PURPOSE

Council recognises and values the knowledge and experience of its diverse communities and is committed to involving the community in decisions that affect them. Equitable access to participatory decision-making by involving and empowering members of our community supports an inclusive, thriving and sustainable city that benefits everyone.

This Policy outlines the City of Adelaide's legislative requirements as contained within Section 50 of the *Local Government Act 1999* (SA), which requires Council to adopt a public consultation policy that sets out the responsibilities of Council. This Policy is also supported by the City of Adelaide Community Engagement Charter (the Charter).

## STATEMENT

Our community is diverse and the City of Adelaide, when undertaking engagement with our community, needs to consider all city users, that is, residents, businesses, workers, students and visitors. As a Capital City Council, we are the State's cultural, government and economic centre stage, with hundreds of thousands of people coming into our Council on a daily basis.

Community engagement is the process of actively involving the community in decisions, planning and projects that impacts them or their local area. For the City of Adelaide, our community includes "all people who live, work, study or conduct business in, or who visit, use or enjoy the services, facilities and public places of, the City of Adelaide" (*City of Adelaide Act 1998*).

Ensuring that our engagement activities are community centric, accessible and inclusive and undertaken in a transparent and genuine manner is vital to meeting our legislative commitments, supporting informed decision making and building a strong community.

This Policy only applies to matters that require public consultation as required by the *Local Government Act (1999)* SA (the Act).

Public consultation prescribed under other legislation applicable to Council will be undertaken in accordance with those requirements, rather than this Policy, should there be any inconsistency.

## Relationship with Community Engagement Charter

The City of Adelaide has developed a Community Engagement Charter (the Charter), which outlines our guiding principles to be bold, aspirational and innovative on how we work with our community to shape our city's future.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Charter.

The Charter defines community engagement as *"the process of actively involving the community in decisions, planning and projects that impacts them or their local area. For the City of Adelaide, our community includes anyone who lives, works, studies, does business, or visits the city"*

The Charter and Policy are guided by the following principles:

- **Community Centric** – The community is at the heart of what we do. We listen to them so that we can shape our city's bold future together.
- **Accessible and Inclusive** – All community members have an opportunity to participate in decisions that impact them.
- **Transparency and Trust** – Council builds trust by engaging authentically with our community on an ongoing basis.

## Legislative requirements

### Community Engagement in line with Council Policy:

Under the Act, Council is required to undertake particular types or levels of community engagement (as a minimum) in line with Council Policy in relation to the following topics:

- **Annual Business Plan** (Adopting Annual Business Plan) – *Section 123*
- **Basis of rating** (Change to Basis of Rating Report) – *Section 151*
- **Basis of differential rates** (Altering the basis of differential rates) – *Section 156*
- **Classification** (Excluding land from classification as community land) – *Section 193*
- **Revocation of classification of land as community land** (Revoking the classification as community land) – *Section 194*
- **Public consultation on proposed management plan** (Adopting, amending or revoking a management plan for community land) – *Section 197*
- **Alienation of community land by lease or licence** (Alienating of community land where the management plan does not allow it) – *Section 202*
- **Control of work on roads – public consultation** (Granting of authorisation or issue of permit - alienating roads/control of work on roads) – *Section 223*
- **Trees** (Planting vegetation where it will have a significant impact on residents, the proprietors or nearby residents) – *Section 232*

### Community Engagement mandated by legislation:

Under the Act, Council is required to undertake specific types or levels of community engagement (as a minimum) in relation to the following:

- **Composition and wards** (carrying out representation reviews) - *Section 12*
- **Status of a council or change of various names** (Considering a change of status of Council or name change) - *Section 13*
- **Principal office** (Determining the manner, places and times of its principal office) – *Section 45*
- **Prudential requirements for certain activities** (Carrying out commercial activities - Prudential Arrangements) – *Section 48*
- **Public consultation policies** (Adopting or varying a public consultation policy) – *Section 50*
- **Access to meetings and documents—code of practice** (Altering the Code of Practice relating to the principles, policies and procedures that Council will apply to enable public access to Council and Committee Meetings, their minutes and release of documents) – *Section 50*
- **Strategic Management Plans** (adopting Strategic Management Plan) – *Section 122*
- **Amendment or revocation of management plan** (Amending or revoking a management plan for community land) – *Section 198*
- **Passing by-laws** (Making Bylaws) – *Section 249*
- **Councils to develop policies** (Making Orders) – *Section 259*

To ensure that our community engagement activities meet the specific legislative requirements, refer to the specified sections of the Act.

## Engagement Methods

Engagement methods may include:

- "Our Adelaide" Website
- Publication in a regular newsletter
- Letters to residents and other stakeholders
- Other direct mail publications or letterbox drops, as appropriate
- Advertising in media outlets as deemed appropriate
- Media releases to appropriate media outlets and community groups
- Community forums and stakeholder meetings
- Direct consultation with community representative groups
- Active and passive use of Council's website and social media
- Use of a community email database
- Customer Surveys
- Fixed displays, e.g. community notice boards
- Community group representations to Council workshops

## **OTHER USEFUL DOCUMENTS**

### **Related documents**

- City of Adelaide Community Engagement Charter (parent document)
- Privacy Policy

The City of Adelaide also develops a range of Strategies and Action Plans that drive the delivery of our services and projects. These documents may outline requirements for engagement activities as well – particularly in regards, but not limited, to Reconciliation and Access and Inclusion.

### **Relevant legislation**

- *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Road Traffic Act 1961*
- *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*
- *Adelaide Park Lands Act 2005*
- *City of Adelaide Act 1998*

## **GLOSSARY**

Throughout this document, the terms below are defined as:

**\*(the) Act** is the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*.

**Council** is the elected body charged with the responsibility for making decisions on behalf of the community. In certain circumstances Council may delegate decision making to the Chief Executive Officer (including staff / administration).

**Community** includes individuals or groups who have an interest in Council's decision-making and who are affected by Council's decisions. These individuals or groups may be identified as residents, voters, ratepayers, business owners, customers, contractors and suppliers, community interest groups, agencies and hard to reach groups.

**Community Engagement** is a planned process of engagement where information is provided and community and stakeholders are formally invited, as per the relevant requirements in the Act, to comment about matters on which Council will deliberate. It also describes varying levels of participation in our decision-making processes.

**Stakeholders** are recognised as individuals and organised groups who have an interest in Council's decision-making and who are affected by Council's decisions. Businesses, retail outlets, State and Federal Governments, community groups, other Local Governments and not-for-profit organisations are considered stakeholders. Stakeholders may also be groups or organisations who have a role to play in policy development and program or service delivery.

**Submissions** are contributions made by members of the community, expressing an opinion in writing (including on Council's community engagement website) relating to an issue and/or proposal which will be considered in Council's decision-making process.

**ADMINISTRATIVE**

As part of Council's commitment to deliver the City of Adelaide Strategic Plan, services to the community and the provision of transparent information, all policy documents are reviewed as per legislative requirements. When there is no such provision, a risk assessment approach is taken to guide the review timeframe. Council reserves the right to request names and addresses of respondents making submissions to any public consultations depending on the nature of the project or initiative being consulted on. This Policy document will be reviewed every **four** years unless legislative or operational change occurs beforehand. The next review is required in **2029**.

**Review history:**

Record Number	Adopted Body	Date Adopted	Description of Edits
-	Council	-	Policy updated to reflect new Community Engagement Charter and to improve clarity and alignment to legislation
ACC2022/64850	Council	16/07/2019	Removal of 'Temporary revisions to the Community Consultation Policy imposed in response to the declared COVID-19 Public Health Emergency as of 24 May 2022. This Policy returns as endorsed by Council 16 July 2019.
ACC2020/58461	Council	12/05/2020	Updated to reflect requirements of the Public Access and Public Consultation Notice (No 2) 2020
ACC2019/63611	Council	16/07/2019	Definition of 'community' updated (page 3); relevant legislation and related documents updated; compliance requirements of section 122 updated; privacy provisions updated; table 1 consultation steps 3 and 16 updated;
ACC2019/63611	Council		Compliance requirements for Section 122: Strategic Management Plans added to Table 1;
ACC2019/63611	Council		'Administrative' section (page 3) updated to align with City of Adelaide Privacy Policy;
ACC2019/63611	Council		Consultation Step 3 updated to remove duplication with Step 16. Step 16 removed;
ACC2019/63611			Table 1: Column 16, Section 232: Trees has been amended to 'Submissions to be considered in decision-making under delegation (Step 13) replacing the need for 'Submissions to be considered by Council in decision-making' (Step 7)
ACC2019/63611	Council		Table 1: Column 18 (step 5) of Section 259: Councils to Develop Policies (power to make orders) is amended to indicate the minimum of period of consultation for this section is four (4) weeks.
ACC2018/99497	Council	08/05/2018	Major Review of this policy

**Contact:**

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