

Draft Community Engagement Charter and draft Community Engagement Policy

Strategic Alignment - Our Community

Public

Tuesday, 18 November 2025
City Finance and Governance
Committee

Program Contact:
Rebecca Hayes, Associate
Director, Governance & Strategy

Approving Officer:
Anthony Spartalis, Chief
Operating Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to note consultation feedback on the draft City of Adelaide Community Engagement Charter (CoA Charter) and draft Community Engagement Policy (CoA Policy) and seek adoption of the final CoA Charter and CoA Policy.

On 26 August 2025 Council endorsed a draft CoA Charter and draft CoA Policy, for the purposes of public consultation. Public consultation commenced on 1 September 2025 and closed on 6 October 2025.

Consultation on the draft CoA Charter and revised CoA Policy provided the opportunity for community feedback, to inform the final CoA Charter and CoA policy and contribute to the development of internal resources such as the Community Engagement Toolkit.

A survey hosted on the 'Our Adelaide' online community engagement platform received seven responses. Six in-person sessions were held with over 100 interactions. Key themes arising from the consultation feedback included:

- Charter Purpose and Accountability
- Clarity of Language
- Meaningful Engagement
- Trust and Accountability in Decision Making

A summary of the consultation is provided as **Attachment A**. A copy of the written submissions is provided in **Attachment B**. Feedback received during in person sessions is provided as **Attachment C**. The final CoA Charter can be found in **Attachment D** and the final CoA Policy in **Attachment E**. Changes made to the CoA Charter and CoA Policy can be found in [Link 1](#) and [Link 2](#).

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 25 November 2025 for consideration

THAT THE CITY FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL

THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the feedback received on the draft Community Engagement Charter and draft Community Engagement Policy as contained in Attachments A, B and C to Item 7.4 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Finance and Governance Committee held on 18 November 2025.
2. Adopts the Community Engagement Charter, contained in Attachment D to Item 7.4 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Finance and Governance Committee held on 18 November 2025.
3. Adopts the Community Engagement Policy contained in Attachment E to Item 7.4 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Finance and Governance Committee held on 18 November 2025 and rescinds the Community Consultation Policy.
4. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to make any necessary changes, together with any editorial amendments and finalisation of the document's formatting and graphic design, to the Community Engagement Charter and Community Engagement Policy arising from the meeting of the City Finance and

Governance Committee held on 18 November 2025 to be presented to the meeting of Council on the 25 November for final adoption.

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Corporation Review the Community Engagement approach by 2025.
Policy	The City of Adelaide Community Engagement Policy, once approved by Council, will replace Council's current Community Consultation Policy (Link 3) .
Consultation	Consultation on the Community Engagement Policy for the City of Adelaide must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1999 (SA) .
Resource	Activities outlined in this report will be conducted using existing resources or approved budgets. There are no additional resources required as a result of this report.
Risk / Legal / Legislative	While every effort has been made by Administration to align the new CoA Charter and CoA Policy with the current legislative requirements, there is a risk changes may be required should the final State Charter be significantly different from the version that was provided for public consultation in May/June 2025.
Opportunities	Not as a result of this report
25/26 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 26/27 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Not as a result of this report
25/26 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

Background

1. Council resolved at its 25 February 2025 meeting for:
 - 1.1. An immediate commencement of the review of the Adelaide City Council Community Consultation Policy considering the current policy states it should be reviewed every two years and the last review was due in May 2021.
 - 1.2. The development of a Community Communications and Engagement Policy and a Community Engagement Charter to ensure our community can be informed and participate more fully in decision making about our City.
 - 1.3. This work to be completed in time for implementation in the last quarter of 2025.

Consultation Undertaken

2. At its 26 August 2025 meeting, Council approved the draft City of Adelaide Community Engagement Charter (CoA Charter) and draft Community Engagement Policy (CoA Policy) for the purpose of public consultation from 1 September 2025 to 6 October 2025.
3. To ensure the community was informed and aware of the opportunities to provide feedback into this process, the consultation was promoted through:
 - 3.1. City of Adelaide social media channels (LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram)
 - 3.2. Public notices in the South Australian Government Gazette on 28 August 2025 and The Advertiser newspaper on 1 September 2025
 - 3.3. Hard copies of the survey being made available at various locations including the Customer Centre, libraries and community centres, along with relevant documents for reference
 - 3.4. Notification to the Our Adelaide stakeholder database (over 15,000 registered users)
 - 3.5. Notification to the AEDA e-news database (approximately 9,000 recipients)
 - 3.6. Invitations sent to precinct and resident groups to discuss the project with Administration
 - 3.7. Five face-to-face information drop-in sessions across various locations in the City of Adelaide
 - 3.8. A resident workshop with the North Adelaide Society.

Consultation Results

4. During the consultation period, Council received:
 - 4.1. 210 visitors to the Our Adelaide page.
 - 4.2. Seven Our Adelaide online survey responses
 - 4.3. Two written submissions via emails or letters, and one report
 - 4.4. Over 70 interactions at the five in-person sessions at the Hutt Street Library, Minor Works Community Centre, North Adelaide Library, Rundle Mall and the City Library
 - 4.5. Approximately 40 community members providing feedback at the North Adelaide Society general meeting.
5. Key themes from the submissions and in-person sessions included:
 - 5.1. Charter Purpose and Accountability
 - 5.2. Clarity of Language
 - 5.3. Meaningful Engagement
 - 5.4. Trust and Accountability in Decision Making.
6. A consultation summary is provided in Attachment A and written consultation submissions are listed in full in Attachment B. In-person feedback and session details are provided in Attachment C.
7. During the consultation period, Mr Craig Pickering, Founder of Community Development Advocacy SA Inc, provided a report, prepared at the request of the Chair of the South Australian Planning Commission, to inform improvements to the SA Planning Commission's Community Engagement Charter ([Link 4](#)). The full report is available at [Link 5](#) for information. Feedback received from Mr Pickering in relation to the CoA Charter noted its stated aspirations are noteworthy but lack sufficient detail and accountability to be able to

be properly enforced and achieved. The required detail and accountability will be reflected in the internal Community Engagement Toolkit being developed with feedback from the public consultation.

Response to feedback on the draft CoA Charter

8. During the consultation period, feedback received on the CoA Charter informed several changes to the final document, as outlined in [Link 1](#):
 - 8.1. In response to community feedback, a statement has been added to the CoA Charter outlining its purpose and commitment: *'This Charter outlines our commitments to how the City of Adelaide will engage with the community when making decisions, plans, or projects that affect them.'*
 - 8.2. The CoA statement replaces the following statements which have been removed:
 - The City of Adelaide is committed to building meaningful connections with the community and using bold, aspirational and innovative approaches to work with our community to shape our city's future.
 - We will do this by listening, and creating accessible opportunities, so our community is able to embed their perspective in the delivery of our projects and services.
 - 8.3. The commitment to 'Strengthen existing partnerships with local groups and enable participation in decision-making' has been revised to 'Build trusted relationships with local groups and support respectful involvement in local issues and decisions.'
 - 8.4. Feedback suggested the need for clearer language around 'closing the loop.' As a result, the statement 'Report back to the community on how their feedback informed by 'closing the loop' has been revised to: 'Report back to the community on how their feedback informed Council and what decision was made'.
 - 8.5. To acknowledge the City of Adelaide's role as the capital city council and its responsibility to engage with all who contribute to city life, the definition of 'community' from the *City of Adelaide Act 1998* has been added to the Charter: '... [including] 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.'

Response to feedback on the draft CoA Policy

9. During the consultation period, feedback received on the CoA Policy has informed several recommendations:
 - 9.1. The CoA Policy wording has been updated to refer to the CoA Charter as the primary document instead of the parent document.
 - 9.2. Feedback received suggested that the CoA Policy should include more prescriptive detail. As the City of Adelaide's CoA Policy is required to align with the *City of Adelaide Act 1998*, relevant sections of the *Local Government Act 1999* (SA) currently under review, and the yet to be finalised State Government Community Engagement Charter (State Charter), such detail has not yet been incorporated. This is to ensure the CoA Policy meets legislative requirements and provides some flexibility once the State Government Community Engagement Charter is finalised.
 - 9.3. More prescriptive detail will be incorporated in the internal Community Engagement Toolkit once the State Charter is finalised.

Local Government Community Engagement Charter

10. The State Charter is being developed by the Office of Local Government (OLG). Consultation on the State Charter concluded on 29 June 2025. At the time of writing, no updates had been received on its progress.

Next Steps

11. Following endorsement by Council of the CoA Charter and CoA Policy, the community will be informed of the decision through the Our Adelaide project page and the Our Adelaide newsletter.
12. The internal Community Engagement Toolkit is being developed and incorporates feedback from the public consultation as well as internal stakeholder feedback.
13. Administration will continue to liaise with the OLG and Local Government Association of SA on the finalisation of the State Charter and will ensure any inconsistency between the State Charter and the CoA Charter and CoA Policy are identified and, where necessary, amendments made for Council's subsequent consideration and endorsement.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 - Draft Community Engagement Charter – Marked Changes

Link 2 - Draft Community Engagement Policy – Marked Changes

Link 3 - Council's current Community Consultation Policy

Link 4 - SA Planning Commission Community Engagement Charter

Link 5 - CDASA Report on Community Engagement Reform

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Consultation Summary

Attachment B – Written Submissions

Attachment C – In-person Community Sessions

Attachment D – Community Engagement Charter

Attachment E – Community Engagement Policy

- END OF REPORT -