

## POLICY 1-2 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

**STATUS:** **Council Policy** - *A strategic policy that sets governing principles and guides the direction of the organisation to align with community values and aspirations.*

*Council policies are developed by the Policy Committee for approval by Council.*

**RESPONSIBLE DIRECTORATE:** Governance and Strategy

**OBJECTIVE:** To outline the City's commitment to actively involve the community in Council's planning, development and service delivery activities.

---

### STATEMENT:

In recognition of Section 1.3(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1995, the City has a stated objective to encourage greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of the local government.

The City is committed to improving its public participation practices. The City recognises that this will require:

- adequate resourcing;
- in-house and external training;
- the establishment of best practice public participation mechanisms; and
- a program of review to evaluate public participation processes.

The City will develop a Public Participation Strategy that will address:

- the identification of issues requiring public participation;
- the inclusion in the annual budget process of funding for public participation activities;
- increasing staff awareness and skills in public participation techniques;
- how all sectors and groups within the community can have the opportunity to participate in the City's activities; and
- a community education program relating to public participation in the City's affairs.

## **Definitions**

*Public participation* – can be defined as:

The provision of opportunities for the public to be involved in a range of issues affecting their communities and lifestyles. Such opportunities would enable the public to provide information, ideas and opinions on plans, proposals, policies and services; partner the City in working towards specific objectives; or actively contribute to physical works (eg. Environmental projects.)

While public participation can include the following elements it is far more than:

- Public Consultation
- Public Relations
- Information Dissemination
- Conflict Resolution.

## **Budget**

Where a specific public participation program relates to a budgeted item or City proposal, the costs of the participation program will be met from the budget concerned.

Where a specific public participation program relates to an independent proponent's proposal, the cost of the public participation program will be met by the proponent.

## **Reporting and review**

The City's Public Participation activities will be reviewed in relation to specified performance measures that include:

- level of public knowledge regarding opportunities to participate;
- level of public satisfaction with the opportunity to participate; and
- range of public participation projects undertaken throughout the organisation.

In order to provide the community with summary information regarding the City's public participation program, the review will be reported on in the City's Annual Report in accordance with statutory requirements and Council's Strategic Direction.

## **Sustainability Statement**

This Policy ensures that decisions by the Council are made with full knowledge, which may potentially support sustainable outcomes.

The Public Participation 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. Decisions which are owned by the community are far more likely to be sustainable.



---

Amendments: CJ213-06/99, CJ206-10/05, CJ156-09/06

Related Documentation:

Issued: October 2006



## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY**

**AUGUST 2006**

## CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>2. CONTEXT FOR A PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY .....</b>                    | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>3. BENEFITS .....</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>4. STRATEGY OBJECTIVE AND REQUIREMENTS .....</b>                            | <b>5</b>  |
| IDENTIFICATION OF THE ISSUES REQUIRING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION .....              | 5         |
| INCLUSION IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET PROCESS .....                                   | 6         |
| INCREASING STAFF AWARENESS AND SKILLS IN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES ..... | 6         |
| HOW ALL SECTORS AND GROUPS CAN HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE ...         | 7         |
| A COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM .....  | 9         |
| <b>5. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION</b>                   | <b>12</b> |
| <b>6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS .....</b>                                   | <b>13</b> |
| <b>7. EVALUATION .....</b>   | <b>16</b> |
| <b>APPENDIX – COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL.....</b>                                   | <b>17</b> |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Local Government Act 1995, Section 1.3(2) states the intention of the Act is to result in better decision making local governments, greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of local government and greater accountability of local governments to their communities. This Public Participation Strategy details how, at the administrative level, the City of Joondalup will use a new, more collaborative style of decision making resulting in better decisions.

The Public Participation Strategy is part of Council Policy 1-2 Public Participation. The public's right to participate in the affairs of the City of Joondalup are also detailed in the Local Government Act and Regulations, and the City's Local Law, Standing Orders 2005.

The City of Joondalup has a demonstrated commitment to public participation in its decision-making processes by bringing people of different perspectives together to talk about problems and potential solutions. The City recognises that this approach has the highest potential for building long-term and well-supported solutions.

**The goal of this Strategy is to provide a process and choices for involving citizens in decision-making and to enhance current opportunities and processes for that to happen.**

Citizen participation cannot nor should it replace the democratic process of decision making by duly elected and accountable public representatives. Rather, through public participation the community assists its elected members in understanding and factoring community aspirations, preferences, concerns and desires into their deliberations and decision-making.

This Strategy provides information on the following:

- The context for a Public Participation Strategy
- Benefits of public participation
- The objective and requirements of the Public Participation Policy 1-2
- The differences between consultation and public participation
- A process for public participation projects
- Evaluation of public participation projects
- A public participation toolkit

Contributions to the development of the Strategy have included:

- Extensive research into public participation practices of Local Government
- Support from staff of the Citizens & Civics Unit from the Office of the Premier & Cabinet in application of the "*Consulting Citizens*" guides
- The practical experiences of staff from a variety of professional backgrounds in working with the community
- The community perspective of the Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC)

## 2. CONTEXT FOR A PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

Currently there is a range of opportunities for the community to participate in local governance.

### Examples of public participation

- Community representation on an established committee of Council.
- Community representation on the City's community funding program assessment panels where recommendations on which applicants should receive funding are considered
- Community working parties such as those for redeveloping a local park or for resolving traffic problems
- Community workshops to address such matters as regional tourism, economic development and strategic planning
- Volunteer work with City staff on cultural events such as the Joondalup Festival or local heritage projects or environmental projects

Opportunities such as these appeal to people with very different interests, skills and knowledge to contribute and are advertised in the community newspapers. A list of the committees that include community representation can be found in the Appendix on p. 17.

### Policy Context

The City has a Public Participation Policy 1-2 that calls for the development of a Strategy to implement public participation processes.

The City's Strategic Plan 2003 – 2008 states that the decisions of Council will be guided by a number of underlying principles that have been developed to guide the City's decision making. Two of the Guiding Principles highlight Councils' commitment to public participation:

#### 1. **Community Focus**

*We will work in partnership with our community to build capacity, and develop community ownership and identity.*

#### 2. **Leadership through Partnerships and Networks**

*We will develop partnerships and networks throughout the community  
We will develop a supportive and trusting relationship with our community*

Further, objective 4.3 of the Strategic Plan is "to ensure the City responds to and communicates with the community" and identifies the following strategies to meet this objective:

- *Provide effective and clear community consultation*
- *Provide accessible community information*
- *Provide fair and transparent decision-making processes*

### 3. BENEFITS

Public participation does not remove the responsibility of Council for decision-making in the interests of “the good government of the district” - a requirement of the Local Government Act – but does result in the following benefits:

- Long term financial savings to the organising agency
- Increased user satisfaction in services
- Increased likelihood of policy/program acceptance
- Reduced conflict
- Improved relationship with citizens
- Improved public image
- Stronger communities
- Reinforced legitimacy in the decision-making process
- Actual or potential problems revealed
- Increased citizenship capacity

Source: Consulting Citizens: Planning for Success, (June 2003),  
Department of Premier and Cabinet Citizens and Civics Unit.

### 4. STRATEGY OBJECTIVE AND REQUIREMENTS

Specifically, the Strategy aims to achieve the following objective outlined in the City’s Public Participation Policy (1-2).

*To actively involve the community in Council’s planning, development and service delivery activities.*

The Policy also sets out the following requirements for a Public Participation Strategy:

- Identification of issues requiring public participation
- Inclusion in the annual budget process of funding for public participation activities
- Increasing staff awareness and skills in public participation techniques
- How all sectors and groups within the community can have the opportunity to participate in the City’s activities and
- A community education program relating to public participation in the City’s affairs

Each of the Strategy requirements will be addressed in turn.

#### ***Identification of the issues requiring public participation***

It is preferable that public participation should be planned, rather than reactive. In this way there will be sufficient time for designing and implementing a program of participation that can deliver acceptable outcomes for all those involved.

Previous research has shown that there is considerable public interest in a range of issues including policy, planning, expenditure, strategic planning and

others. These matters may be construed as 'big picture' issues or major projects for the City in that they are:

- Clearly aligned to [achievement of] the Strategic Plan or
- Have significant impact across the organisation or the community in terms of benefits, risks, and use of financial and other resourcing capabilities.

Public participation is therefore warranted where there are community-based issues that are likely to have a significant and potentially long term impact on:

- Policy development
- The financial and other resourcing capabilities of the City
- The lifestyle and amenity of the community

### ***Inclusion in the annual budget process***

Planning is a necessary prerequisite for conducting public participation exercises and for ensuring that there are sufficient funds and other resources available for the process.

Currently, responsibility for developing a budget for public participation processes rests with various sectors of the organisation. Past experience has identified a number of costs associated with conducting a public participation process. Therefore Business Unit Managers should give consideration to including costs such as those identified below in annual business plans and budget:

- Advertising of public participation initiatives
- Independent professional facilitation services
- Public speakers' fees
- Consultancy fees for analysis of information obtained through the participation process
- Venue and equipment hire
- Printing of workshop materials – workbooks, worksheets, maps etc
- Postage costs
- Catering/Refreshments
- Overtime payments for staff working out of hours
- Remuneration for travel to venue/costs of child care
- Incentives

### ***Increasing staff awareness and skills in public participation techniques***

In order to implement the Public Participation Strategy it will be necessary for staff training to be provided in the following skills and knowledge:

- Community engagement
- Managing diversity
- Public speaking
- Presentation
- Facilitation
- Negotiation
- Conflict resolution
- Program/Project Management

- Business research methods for analysing and reporting on information received and lastly,
- Evaluation of social programs

The Corporate Training Program will be updated to include training in the skills/knowledge associated with public participation that is accredited or otherwise professionally recognised.

In-house training on the new public participation process and associated documentation will need to be provided regularly as an adjunct to the current Corporate Training Program. It is envisaged that this training will be delivered as part of the implementation process.

### ***How all sectors and groups can have the opportunity to participate***

In circumstances where the City undertakes public participation, representation will be sought from all sectors and groups (stakeholders) likely to be directly affected by an issue. Where the issue is at the level of a specific suburb, participation should be sought from people within that suburb. Where the issue is considered to impact on all residents of the City, participation should be sought from each ward of Council. In the event that the issue is located within a discrete suburb but has wider implications, representation should be weighted toward those most directly affected in the first instance and then to other identified stakeholders proportionate to how they will be affected.

Participation targets are identified in the table following. Participation targets may be achieved through:

- Random selection of residents from the City's databases with a personalised invitation to participate
- Identifying and contacting individuals and groups with a special interest in the issue and inviting their participation
- Advertising through Public Notices for Expressions of Interest in community newspapers to the wider community
- Design, delivery and targeting of community education programs which are effective in empowering stakeholders to participate

However representation on an issue is determined, the decision should be made public in the interests of good governance.

| WARD               | SUBURB     | NO. PEOPLE BY SUBURB | Targets for suburb specific issues | % TOTAL POPULATION for City wide issues | PARTICIPATION TARGETS BY WARD for City wide issues |
|--------------------|------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|
| North Ward         | Burns      | 207                  | 30                                 | 17.1%                                   | 96   |
|                    | Connolly   | 2588                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | Currambine | 4378                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | Iluka      | 2435                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | Joondalup  | 4698                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | Kinross    | 4588                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | TOTAL      | 18894                |                                    |   |  |
| North Central Ward | Edgewater  | 3650                 | 30                                 | 17.3%                                   | 97   |
|                    | Heathridge | 5216                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | Ocean Reef | 5870                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | Mullaloo   | 4435                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | TOTAL      | 19171                |                                    |   |  |
| Central Ward       | Beldon     | 3124                 | 30                                 | 16.7%                                   | 94   |
|                    | Craigie    | 4566                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | Kallaroo   | 4073                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | Woodvale   | 6708                 | 34                                 |   |  |
|                    | TOTAL      | 18471                |                                    |   |  |
| South West Ward    | Hillarys   | 7344                 | 37                                 | 17.7%                                   | 99   |
|                    | Padbury    | 6614                 | 34                                 |   |  |
|                    | Sorrento   | 5663                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | TOTAL      | 19621                |                                    |   |  |
| South East Ward    | Kingsley   | 9907                 | 50                                 | 16.1%                                   | 90   |
|                    | Greenwood  | 7882                 | 40                                 |   |  |
|                    | TOTAL      | 17789                |                                    |   |  |
| South Ward         | Marmion    | 1664                 | 30                                 | 15.0%                                   | 84   |
|                    | Duncraig   | 11850                | 60                                 |   |  |
|                    | Warwick    | 3096                 | 30                                 |   |  |
|                    | TOTAL      | 16610                |                                    |   |  |
| TOTALS             |            | 110556               |                                    | 100.0%                                  | 560  |

**NOTE:**

Participation targets have been developed from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2005) report on estimated resident population as at 30 June 2004 for people aged 20+

- Column 4 - Participation targets for suburbs with lower populations have a greater target number set (30+) in order to ensure statistical validation
- Column 5 shows percentages based on the total population sample per ward and will be applied for broader citywide issues requiring public participation

## ***A community education program***

Current programs that provide information on these opportunities include civic education delivered through the Schools Connection Program and a 'hands on' Internet course provided by the Library and Information Services.

Civic education through the School Connection Program is targeted toward young people and assists them in understanding the functions of their local government, its connection to the State and Federal levels of government and how they, as citizens, can participate in their communities. The program satisfies the learning outcomes of the State education curriculum framework and also links to the City's Strategic Plan.

A hands on Internet experience is offered at all Joondalup libraries on a monthly basis where the public can be shown how best to access Council information and to 'have their say' on current projects, services and programs provided by the City.

To increase community uptake of all the opportunities to participate, an extensive process of research was conducted to identify the factors that would encourage people to become involved. The major findings were identified as follows:

### **1. Level of authenticity and trust**

People who feel they will be able to make a genuine contribution to the final outcome of any participative process are more likely to take up opportunities to participate.

### **2. Proximity to the issue**

People who strongly identify with their communities are those most likely to take up opportunities to participate.

### **3. Level of understanding of impact**

People who can understand the potential impact of the outcomes of participation on themselves and their communities will be more likely to participate.

### **4. Structure, 'safety' and equity**

People who feel the process is being managed well and conducted in a 'safe' environment will be more likely to participate.

These four findings indicated that the focus of community education should be to inform, support and empower the public to participate. To that end, four community education objectives have been developed.

## **Community Education Objectives**

1. To demonstrate authenticity and build trust, community education initiatives will employ a range of techniques to provide the public with the following information:
  - The purpose of a specific public participation project
  - The background/history of the project

- The non-negotiable aspects of the project e.g., financial constraints, legislative requirements, Australian Standards etc
  - The potential impact of the project on their lifestyle/personal situation
  - How the public will be able to participate
  - How public input will be used to inform final decisions
  - The timescale of the project and how the public will be able to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of the process.
2. To ensure that the people most directly affected by an issue for participation are provided with community education on the matter in hand by:
- Using participation targets
  - Seeking Expressions of Interest
  - Using random selection processes
  - Using displays
3. To ensure that members of the public understand what a specific participation process means for them, community education should be provided on the following:
- The roles and responsibilities of local government with respect to the participation project
  - Any technical matters likely to arise in the course of a participative process that are 'participation specific' e.g., Strategic Planning, Traffic Management
4. To demonstrate the City's capacity to manage and conduct public participation exercises that will meet participant expectations for structure, safety and equity, community education should be provided on:
- Community working parties or reference groups such as those for redeveloping a local park or resolving traffic problems
  - The design and evaluation of public participation processes

### **Delivery of Community Education Programs**

Based on the research findings, a two-pronged approach to provision of community education for participation will be taken. Firstly, a generic community education program will be offered to new citizens of the City, which identifies how local people can contribute to the City's planning, development and service delivery activities. Secondly, there will be 'participation specific' community education provided for projects such as the reviews of the District Planning Scheme and the Strategic Plan 2003 – 2008.

The focus of the generic program will be on:

- The role of the City in local governance
- Why community participation in local governance is important
- The difference between consultation and participation
- Typical opportunities to participate e.g. community representation on an established committee of Council, volunteer activities
- How opportunities to participate will be communicated and managed

- How the community will be able to evaluate the City's performance in managing a participative process

'Participation specific' programs which will be delivered in Phase Three of a Public Participation Process (see page 14), will also set out how opportunities to participate will be communicated and managed and how the community will be able to evaluate the City's performance. However, they may be targeted at particular suburbs or at the ward level and be delivered in various ways:

- By randomly selecting and inviting people in the affected area to attend a session at a venue near their homes
- By extending invitations to representatives from a range of community groups to attend a session at a venue near their homes
- By negotiating with community groups to make a brief presentation at one of their scheduled meetings

### **Evaluation of Community Education Programs**

As the purpose of community education is to increase levels of participation in local governance through empowering the community, evaluation of its effectiveness is necessary. In this way, a process of continuous improvement for design and delivery of community education - whether generic or specific - will be in place. Evaluation will therefore be based on the extent to which the community education objectives are met.

## 5. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION

The Public Participation Policy 1-2 clearly states that public participation can include the following elements, but it is far more than:

- Public consultation
- Public relations
- Information dissemination
- Conflict resolution

To ensure that the differences between the objectives of public consultation, public relations, information dissemination and conflict resolution and public participation are understood, the following table has been provided that identifies:

- Each process
- The objective of each process
- Examples of when each process is best used

| PROCESS                   | OBJECTIVE   | EXAMPLES  |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Public consultation       | To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/Building Approvals</li> <li>• Scheme amendments and structure plans</li> <li>• Road/PAW closures</li> <li>• Local laws</li> <li>• Planning/Development Policies</li> <li>• Principal Activities Plan</li> <li>• Customer Service Monitor</li> </ul> |
| Public relations          | To manage the relationship between an organization and its publics to achieve effective public relations, i.e. a shift in public, awareness, attitude or behaviour. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press releases</li> <li>• TV 'news'</li> <li>• Public service documents</li> </ul>   |
| Information dissemination | To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and/or solutions                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Report</li> <li>• Firebreaks</li> </ul>   |
| Conflict resolution       | To develop a method for resolving conflicts through which individuals and/or groups can reach consensus on an issue   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mediation</li> </ul>   |

| PROCESS              | OBJECTIVE   | EXAMPLES   |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Public participation | To actively involve the community in Council's planning, development and service delivery activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of the Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Development of 'external' policies</li> <li>• Development of new services &amp; or products</li> <li>• Formal Committees of Council – see Appendix on p.17.</li> <li>• Short-term working groups – traffic studies, park development, Joondalup Festival</li> <li>• *Major projects eg; Major Town Planning Scheme Reviews and associated studies; Major Road Proposals (Ocean Reef Road extension); Major Reserve Development Proposals.</li> </ul> |

*\*The extent of participation processes will in part be determined by any statutory obligations.*

## 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The City has developed a public participation process based on the Citizens and Civics Unit guides and research conducted by the City in 2005. The process is described in a flowchart that can be accessed online on the City's Intranet in the Knowledge Bank. The process includes a number of phases, which are described below.

### Phase 1 -Task Definition

During this phase, the following matters must be documented in a Public Participation Plan:

- The purpose of a specific public participation project
- The background/history of the project
- The stakeholders (participation target group)
- The potential impact of the project on the lifestyle and personal situation of the stakeholders
- How stakeholders will be able to participate
- How input from stakeholders will be used to inform final decisions
- The timescale of the project and how stakeholders will be able to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of the participation process
- The non-negotiable aspects of the project e.g., financial constraints, legislative requirements, Australian Standards and decisions of Council

This information must be made available to the public and form part of 'participation specific' community education and communication strategies.

This information is to be provided as a guide in instances where a contractor project manages a public participation process.

## **Phase 2 - Representation**

Activities during the phase include:

- Identification, listing and recording of details of stakeholders based upon the extent to which they are likely to be directly affected by an issue e.g., residents of a specific suburb or Ward or community of interest.
- Identification of participation targets for the project
- Identification of process for achievement of participation targets for the project e.g., random selection, direct mail, displays at local venues
- Ensuring that process for seeking representation includes participation targets and is publicised.

## **Phase 3 – Community Information and Education**

Activities during this phase include:

- Development of 'participation specific' information package for delivery to all stakeholders
- Delivery of 'participation specific' information package using a variety of media including advertisements, online information, direct mail outs or email outs, and public notices/displays. The focus will be on opportunities for individuals to make a difference in their community through assisting the City to achieve participation targets.
- Design of 'participation specific' community education programs, which will restate and augment the information package using a workshop/presentation format. Community education programs will provide an opportunity for the public to interact with and ask questions of staff involved in the participation process.
- Delivery of community education program to stakeholders
  - By randomly selecting and inviting people in the affected area to attend a session at a venue near their homes
  - By extending invitations to representatives from a range of community groups to attend a session at a venue near their homes
  - By negotiating with community groups to make a brief presentation at one of their scheduled meetings
- Evaluation of community education program

## **Phase 4 - Gathering Stakeholder Information**

Contact made with stakeholders during the previous phases provides an opportunity to gather and document information on:

- Their knowledge on the background/history of the issue
- Their connections with other groups/networks with an interest in the issue
- Issues that stakeholders would like addressed
- Outcomes stakeholders would like to see from the participation process
- How stakeholders can support and contribute to the participative process itself

- Ground rules they would like included in the process

During this phase, it will be possible to identify issues that are

- 'Out of scope' for the City or that can be referred to a more appropriate agency and
- To advise participants of the non-negotiable aspects of the process.

### **Phase 5 - Building the Agenda**

All stakeholder information can now be collated to identify:

- Issues in common
- Outcomes in common
- Ground rules in common

This information is then circulated to contributing participants for their information and sign off.

A reference group of participants can then be formed to 'build the agenda' for the participative process.

### **Phase 6 - Program Development and Implementation Phase**

This phase is the point at which stakeholders come together to deliberate on the issue. From the information obtained in the previous phases, the following decisions must be taken:

- What is needed in the way of background or technical information for participants to work together to resolve the problems/issues on the agenda?
- Who has that background or technical information?
- What is the best method for communicating that background or technical information in ways that will be understandable to all participants?
- What is the best method for participants to be able to work together/interact?
- Where should that interaction take place?
- What materials, equipment etc will be needed to support the process

The final program for a participative process will be dependent on the number and complexity of the issues to be addressed. One or more sessions may be appropriate.

### **Phase 7 – Evaluation**

During this phase the completed participative process will be evaluated to determine its efficacy from the perspective of participants.

Feedback received from the participative process will be analysed and a report produced on the findings. The complete process will be recorded using the documentation developed for that purpose

**The Public Participation Strategy is supplemented with a toolkit to guide future publication participation processes. The toolkit is provided as an attachment to the Strategy.**

## **7. EVALUATION**

Public participation projects must be evaluated to determine their efficacy from the perspective of all stakeholders and to identify opportunities for process improvement.

The following elements have been identified as contributing to successful participation processes:

- Incorporation of public values into decisions
- Improvement in the quality of decisions is substantive
- Conflict among competing interests is resolved
- Trust in institutions is built and
- The public are educated and informed

*Beierle and Cayford (2002)*

A survey instrument has been developed (see Toolkit) for determining the overall quality of a discrete Public Participation Project and incorporates questions based on the elements identified previously. To identify the extent to which participants have been satisfied with the process, the survey also includes questions on presentation, content and coordination.

## APPENDIX – COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL INVOLVING COMMUNITY MEMBERS

| Committee Title                       | Purpose  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| The Conservation Advisory Committee   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To liaise with community groups and the general public to promote the importance of conservation and rehabilitation of bushland and the natural environment.</li> <li>• To provide technical and practical advice on Management Plans and implementation of conservation strategies within the City.</li> <li>• To promote the importance of conservation, biodiversity and the rehabilitation of bushland and the natural environment</li> </ul> |
| The Joondalup Eisteddfod              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage and assist development of the Eisteddfod</li> <li>• To facilitate the day to day operations of the Eisteddfod</li> <li>• To assist the Coordinator of the organization, set up and operation of the Eisteddfod</li> <li>• To promote artistic excellence</li> <li>• To improve the performance skills of participations</li> <li>• To provide opportunities for public performance</li> </ul>  |
| Seniors Interests Advisory Committee  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To oversee the strategic coordination of all seniors' issues across Council.</li> <li>• To provide advice to Council to ensure that concerns of seniors are adequately represented in the City's planning processes and the strategic directions being developed for older people across the City.</li> </ul>   |
| The Sustainability Advisory Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To recommend to the City of Joondalup Council on policy, advice and appropriate courses of action which promote sustainability, which is (1) environmentally responsible, (2) socially sound and (3) economically viable.</li> <li>• To provide advice to Council on items referred to the committee from the City of Joondalup.</li> </ul>   |

## **DRAFT POLICY – COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

**STATUS:** **Council Policy** - *A strategic policy that sets governing principles and guides the direction of the organisation to align with community values and aspirations.*

*Council policies are developed by the Policy Committee for approval by Council.*

**RESPONSIBLE  
DIRECTORATE:** **Governance and Strategy**

**OBJECTIVE:** To encourage greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of the City of Joondalup

---

### **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.**

**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:**

- The purpose and scope of each consultation exercise is to be clear and unambiguous.
- 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.
- 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 CEO.
- Non negotiable or otherwise 'out of scope' aspects of a consultation are to be identified and stated from the outset.
- The target audience for any consultation exercise will be identified from the outset and may involve random selection of participants:
  - Where the matter impacts on specific location within the City those most closely affected are to be consulted;
  - Where the matter concerns service users, participation is to be sought from user groups/organisations and individuals;



- 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.
- The consultation methods to be employed for each consultation exercise are to be stated.
- Accurate, adequate and unbiased information is to be provided for the public to enable them to give informed opinions on the matter in hand. Information is to be made available in alternative formats on request.
- Adequate time and resources are to be provided for consultation processes to take place.
- Analysis of the feedback from a consultation process is to be published on the City's website.
- Where applicable, statutory legislative requirements for community consultation are to be satisfied.
- Circumstances where Council may decide not to consult are as follows:
  - Emergencies – matters concerning public safety etc.
  - Legal constraints.

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

**Sustainability Statement**

This Policy ensures that decisions by the Council are made with full knowledge, which may potentially support sustainable outcomes.

The 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. Decisions which are owned by the community are far more likely to be sustainable.

---

Amendments:

Related Documentation:

Issued:

### Attachment 3

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Protocol</b>  | <b>Community Consultation and Engagement</b>  |
| <b>Keywords</b>  | Surveys, public participation, focus groups, feedback   |
| <b>Protocol</b>  | <p>To provide guidance and advice on how to conduct community consultation and engagement processes.</p> <p>Further enquiries regarding this Protocol should be directed to the Coordinator Community Consultation and Engagement, Strategic and Organisational Development on Ext 4232</p> |
| <b>Related Policies (Council/City)</b>                     | Draft Community Consultation and Engagement Policy  |
| <b>Related Documentation (Plans/Legislative Authority.</b> | Section 1.3 (2) (b) and (c) of the Local Government Act (1995)  |
| <b>Protocol Owner</b>                                      | Manager of Strategic and Organisational Development   |
| <b>Last Reviewed</b>                                       | August 2010   |
| <b>Flowchart</b>   |   |
| <b>File Number</b>   | 75521 48080   |
| <b>Corporate Protocol Classification</b>                   |   |

| PROTOCOL      |                                       |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| Protocol Name | Community Consultation and Engagement |

### Objective:

- To ensure a consistent process across the organisation for community consultation that is open, transparent and accountable.
- To ensure the process for consultation is robust and can provide reliable community feedback on which Council is able to make informed decisions.

### Scope

The Protocol covers:

- the initial planning process for determining:
  - the type of information required from the consultation;
  - who should be invited to participate in the consultation (target group);
  - the methodology used to collect, record and analyse the results of the consultation;
- Documenting the process and obtaining approvals;
- Undertaking the consultation, data management and processing; and
- Reporting the results of the consultation.

### Not in Scope

This protocol does not include consultations and advertising for routine statutory planning and building applications eg, a request for neighbours' comments on proposals for minor development as part of the application assessment process.

### Definitions

Consultation for **Exploratory Purposes** aims to identify issues, concerns and opinions around a particular matter, eg ageing in the City of Joondalup. With the use of **open questions**, the responses may be used to inform policy development, strategic planning or service development. Consultation for **Exploratory Purposes** involves workshops, community forums, interviews and surveys. The responses are analysed to determine opinions and common themes.

Consultation on **Identified Options** aims to identify the extent of community support for a plan, project or policy which will involve the use of surveys (online, telephone, or mail-outs). The responses will identify the percentage of the target group in support of a plan, project or policy.

The **Target Group** is made up from those people invited to participate in the consultation and may represent those people most affected by Council's decision on a matter.

The **Methodology** is the way of collecting, recording and analysing feedback.

## Employees Responsibilities

- To ensure that the consultation process is consistent, open and transparent and involves the people most affected by a matter.
- To ensure that those who are invited to participate in the consultation are provided with all relevant background information.
- To ensure that the confidentiality of the participants is protected. Personal information within survey responses shall never be publicly displayed in any way that identifies individual responses.
- To ensure that Council receives comprehensive feedback to inform decision making.

## Procedure for Conducting Consultation

### Planning for a Consultation

The Business Unit Officers, in consultation with the Co-ordinator Community Engagement, will:

1. Identify the need for community consultation. This may be required as a result of:
  - A Notice of Motion or other decision of Council;
  - Policy, planning or service development; and/or
  - Legislation or statutory requirements.
2. Define the purpose of the consultation.
  - Is it intended to explore an issue? (**Exploratory Purposes**); or
  - Is it to determine the level of community support for specific options contained in documents published by the City (**Identified Options**).

Determining the purpose of the consultation is critical to the methodology to be used. Refer to the definitions above.

3. Identify the aspects of a consultation which are out of scope, eg matters outside the control of the City or that are non-negotiable, such as budgetary limitations or legislative constraints.
4. Determine who should be consulted, ie **participant identification**. The target audience will be identified from the outset by determining who will be affected by the matter. Does the matter:
  - Affect residents within a specific location? For example, people living adjacent to or within a specified distance of a proposed development.
  - Affect service users? For example, people using the City's Community Transport service?
  - Affect potential users of a new service? For example, youth, seniors, sporting clubs and/or parents.
  - Affect everyone in the City of Joondalup? For example, proposed implementation of new policies or plans?

A **random selection tool** is also available to create a list of names and addresses from the City's Property System (property owners) for consulting a sample of the population. Including questions in the survey relating to demographic information such as sex, age, place of residence, is critical in determining the extent to which the responses of the participants **represent the target group (representativeness)**.

5. **Method of Engagement** - Determine the appropriate consultation method for engaging the participants based on the purpose of the consultation. This will depend on whether the consultation is intended to be **exploratory** or to identify the level of community support from a range of **identified options**.

For **exploratory purposes**, the method could include the use of surveys with open questions, (hard copy or online), online or public forums or focus groups at which people can express their ideas verbally. This data is then analysed using qualitative software.

For **identified options** a survey which includes preset responses to questions (Yes/No) or statements (1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree, etc) should be developed and will quantify in percentage terms the support for a specific proposal.

6. Determine whether a survey is to be conducted **online** and/or via **hard copy surveys**.

The City's **online survey tool** gives various options for auditing responses which can identify obvious attempts at multiple responses from the same computer (IP address) and responses which are recorded on the same day and at the same time. Other measures to avoid duplication of surveys can involve providing a group with a User ID and password, but this method is only practical for smaller groups.

With **hard copy surveys**, it is necessary to determine whether written survey responses require **identification of respondents or anonymous responses**. The City will generally require names and addresses to be provided on written surveys, however, in the instances where Council determines that anonymous surveys are appropriate, the City will barcode the survey forms. This can be arranged via Governance and Marketing.

7. Consider the resourcing implications when determining the **number of people to be surveyed – ie sample size**. Surveying more than is required by market and social research industry standards<sup>1</sup>, can incur considerable costs for the City. Therefore it is important to determine the number of surveys to be distributed to achieve a sample size that is representative of the population being consulted. The sampling precision should ensure that a **representative sample** of participants will provide a 95% certainty that the results will reflect the views of +/- 4% of the population being consulted if a census was conducted of all households within the City.

For example, a consultation, which will have an impact on all City of Joondalup residents (160,000), would require a sample size of approximately

---

<sup>1</sup> The Survey System [www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm](http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm)

600 respondents. To achieve this number of responses, more than three times the number of surveys should be distributed to the population being consulted, ie, 100 people per suburb or 2,200 people in total. Consultation relating to a specific location, (eg, within a radius of one kilometre of a park) would be calculated to the same industry standard.

The determination of the radius within which the consultation for a specific location will take place will need to be included in the Community Consultation and Communication Plan to be provided as an attachment to all reports to Council dealing with community consultation. The template will require the provision of a choice of options for the Council to consider which take into account the number of residents within, for example:

- 1 kilometre radius of the development; or
- 1.5 kilometres radius of the development; or
- 2.0 kilometres radius of the development.

When determining the radius, the following will also need to be taken into account:

- Which suburbs are covered within each specified radius;
- Whether the proposed development is classed as a regional development which would affect people from many suburbs or a district or local development which would affect fewer people in the near locality;
- The type of development and the likely impact on residents nearby and across the region.

These options will be included in the Community Consultation and Communication Plan provided to the Council, as shown in Appendix 1.

8. ***Timing of the consultation*** – Consultations are not to be conducted over the Summer period (ie after the final Ordinary Meeting of Council in December and the first ordinary meeting of Council in February in the following year) unless otherwise stipulated by Council.

Exceptions to this are:

- when Council determines it is appropriate and justifiable to conduct consultation at this time; or
- when compliance with statutory requirements concerning advertising make it necessary to advertise consultations during the Summer period.

Approval for any consultation is determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

### **Documenting the Process and Obtaining Approvals**

The responsible Business Unit Officer, in consultation with the Co-ordinator Community Engagement:

9. Completes the draft Project Plan for Consultation. This Plan includes details of:
- Project Background.
  - Purpose of Consultation.
  - Stakeholders (Target group/sample sizes).
  - Methodology, eg survey design, workshop planning, resources for data processing and analysis.
  - Deliverables.
  - Project schedule and approvals.
  - Budget.
  - Project Sponsor, Manager, Facilitator and Team.
  - Communication Plan.
  - Risk Assessment.
10. Prepares a report to Council which:
- Identifies the consultation methodology and resources required; and
  - Requests endorsement to proceed with community consultation. A template outlining the summary information must be attached to the Council report. (*See Appendix 1.*)
11. Undertakes the tasks listed in the Project Schedule:
- Develops text for communications with the target group including surveys, letters to householders, Frequently Asked Questions on the topic, website information, advertisements, posters and/or display materials. All information must be clearly and simply communicated and appropriate to the audience.
  - Obtains approvals for the text from Directors and the Office of the CEO.
  - Submits to Governance and Marketing for branding of all communications prior to printing and distribution.
  - Requests the Co-ordinator Community Engagement to assist with the creation of mail merge information (ie names and addresses) through means of a random selection tool.
  - Coordinates mail-outs (in house or out-sourced) dependent on the size of the proposed target group.
  - Liaises with the Co-ordinator Community Engagement regarding an online survey facility, if required.
  - **Informs Elected Members, and in particular, Ward Councillors, of consultation programs to be undertaken prior to their commencement.**
  - Develops the program for a community forum and associated tasks such as venue booking, catering arrangements, registration for participants, guest speakers, hire of equipment and invitations.
12. Liaises with the Co-ordinator Community Engagement to identify resources to analyse the feedback.
13. Oversees the implementation of the tasks within timeframes. The Business Unit Officer reports any issues or delays in timelines to the relevant Business Unit Manager.

## **Data Management and Processing**

14. The responsible Business Unit Officer ensures that arrangements for data entry, cleansing and analysis are in place. This includes:
  - Liaison with Records and Information Technology to advise where returned surveys are to be actioned and stored;
  - Collection and storage of data captured at a public forum – hard or soft copy;
  - Arrangements for data entry – hard and soft copy; and
  - Liaison with the Co-ordinator Community Engagement to organise data cleansing, analysis and reporting.
15. The Co-ordinator Community Engagement analyses the data and presents the results in a memo to the relevant Business Unit Officer and, on occasions, will be required to prepare the Council report.
16. The Co-ordinator Community Engagement provides advice on sourcing of data entry staff, training of data entry staff, and creates the spreadsheet for data collection.

## **Reporting the Results of a Consultation**

17. The Business Unit Officer prepares a report to Council, incorporating the results of the consultation.

Should the consultation be one that does not require a report to Council, the results of the consultation are to be made available to Elected Members by placement in the Councillors Reading Room.
18. Publish the survey findings to the survey participants.

## Appendix 1

### Community Consultation and Communication Plan

*The following provides an example of the proposed content.*

#### Purpose of the Consultation

- To determine levels of community support for ..
- To obtain feedback on the ..

#### Who will be consulted?

- All people/landowners within a radius of .... Provide options for Council to consider such as the following:
  - The number of residents within 1km or 1.5km or 2km or 3km etc.
  - Which suburbs are covered within each specified radius;
  - Whether the proposed development is classed as a regional development which will affect people from many suburbs or a district or local development which would affect fewer people in the near locality; and
  - The type of development and the likely impact on residents nearby or across the region.
- The wider City of Joondalup community....
- Interest groups and stakeholders, including ...

#### How will they be consulted?

- People **directly affected** will receive:
  - A personally addressed letter explaining ....
  - Brochure on the ..... containing .....
  - A written survey form
  - Reply-paid envelope.
- The wider City of Joondalup community **not directly affected** will receive:
  - A brochure in the letter box; and
  - Information via newspaper articles, website, displays at City offices, signage at the affected location(s) which invite comments.
- Absentee landlords, **not directly affected**, will receive a letter in the mail.
- Stakeholders will receive:
  - A letter advising where further information can be obtained, brochure and Frequently Asked Questions.
  - Information via newspaper articles, website, displays at City offices which invite comments.
  - Agencies such as the Department of Planning, Department of Conservation will receive .....

## **Anonymity**

In most instances it will be a requirement of all surveys with *identified options* that the name and address of the respondent is included in order for the survey to be accepted as a valid response. This is to be stated on the survey form.

If Council determines it is appropriate to have anonymous responses, hard copy responses will be bar-coded to determine authenticity.

## **Date of Commencement and Duration of Consultation**

- Following endorsement by Council for public advertising, advertisements and media releases will appear in the next edition of the local newspapers. The mail-out will appear shortly after that.
- Length of advertising period, eg ..... days;
- Statutory requirements or timeframes for advertising .....

## **Communication Methods to be used**

### **Local Newspapers**

- Half/full page advertisements;
- Articles in the local newspapers; and
- Media statements and advertisements and instructions on timing.

### **Letters**

- Information packages will be sent to all landowners;
- Interest groups and external stakeholders will also receive a letter; and
- Instructions on timing of letters.

### **Website**

Information of the City's website with links to:

- The brochure
- Related maps
- Draft documents
- Submission Form
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Online video presentation

### **Display/TV Display**

- Static display in the City's Administration Offices, City Libraries and Customer Service Centres at Craigie Leisure Centre and Whitfords Shopping Centre.
- TV display to include online video.
- Brochures and submission forms etc to be available next to the TV display.
- Signage at the affected location(s).

### **Information Sessions**

- Number of information sessions
- Date and time of information sessions
- Duration of information sessions
- Details of static displays
- Staff available to talk to the public

### **Documents Required**

- Colour brochure including .....
- Relevant documents
- Relevant maps
- Covering letters to .....
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Survey
- Reply-paid envelopes
- PowerPoint presentation.

Provide information on where documents will be made available at Customer Service Centres at Whitfords Shopping Centre, Joondalup Administration Centre and Craigie Leisure Centre.