Community Engagement Framework

2016 - 2020

Shire of MUNDARING

Contents

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

Community Engagement Framework – (CEF)

Community Engagement Informing Strategy – (CEIS)

Community Engagement Handbook - (Handbook)

Corporate Business Plan - (CBP)

Long Term Financial Plan - (LTFP)

Strategic Community Plan - (SCP)

International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)

Executive Summary

Community engagement is defined by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) as 'any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and uses public input to make decisions'.

Community engagement is increasingly recognised as a core function of local government. It brings a raft of benefits to local government and the community it serves and is vital to achieving a community's strategic priorities.

Shire of Mundaring's approach to community engagement is based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. The spectrum describes levels of public engagement, starting with inform through to consult, involve, collaborate and empower.

The Shire views community engagement as an avenue for strengthening leadership and levels of trust in the community, improving decision-making processes, building integrity, developing strong partnerships with the community and fostering local passion and resilience.

This Community Engagement Framework 2016-20 (CEF) contains two parts.

Part 1 is the Community Engagement Informing Strategy (CEIS), which provides a strategic foundation for and adds value to the Shire of Mundaring's current community engagement practices.

The CEIS recommends the Shire:

1. Provide community engagement training.
2. Enhance online engagement.

To achieve recommendation 1, the Shire will need to expend an estimated $20,000 over four years and this can be accommodated within existing community engagement budget allocations. Recommendation 2 requires more detailed analysis of system requirements. However, it is estimated to cost between $22,000 to $30,000 pa. It will be further researched and considered as part of the development of a future Corporate Business Plan and Long Term Financial Plan.

Part 2 is the Community Engagement Handbook (Handbook), which contains a series of support documents to provide employees with practical guidance for planning, delivering and evaluating community engagement activities.

PART 1: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INFORMING STRATEGY

Background

Shire of Mundaring's aim is to deliver effective engagement programs that use appropriate methods to enable high levels of community participation.

Current engagement practices include, but are not limited to:

- Attending and/or holding stalls at local events
- Attending local community group and committee meetings
- Workshops
- Information sessions
- Reference groups
- Open house events
- Shire advisory committees
- Public participation at council meetings
- Annual electors meetings
- Forums
- Media releases in local papers
- Advertisements in local papers
- Shire website
- Electronic and printed newsletters
- Signage and banners
- Distribution of flyers and brochures
- Information boards
- Shopping centre displays
- Surveys
- Social media

The CEIS represents a formalisation of the Shire's approach to engagement, the integration of engagement and strategic priorities and commitment to building the capacity of elected members, employees and the community to undertake and participate in engagement projects.

Introduction

Community engagement is increasingly recognised as core local government business (Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, 2012). It brings a raft of benefits for both the local government and the community. These include better decision-making, improved efficiency and resource management, and increased trust, respect and accountability between local government and communities.

The CEIS affirms the Shire of Mundaring's commitment to delivering meaningful, best practice community engagement. It is testament to the Shire's recognition of the importance of community engagement in providing good governance and strong leadership.

The Shire aspires to integrate the best of international community engagement theory and practice with the appropriate level of consultation and engagement with local stakeholders. It aims to support, collaborate and partner with its communities to grow local commitment, mutual trust, passion and resilience and improve decision-making.

This CEIS provides an overview of the Shire's approach to community engagement. It presents two recommended strategies to assist the Shire develop its engagement capacity, and resources required to implement these.

Through the development and adoption of the CEIS, the Shire seeks to formalise and add value to existing engagement practices. It is intended for this document to ensure any engagement undertaken by the Shire is consistent and reflective of the vision and priorities of the Mundaring 2026 Strategic Community Plan.

In addition to this Strategy, the Handbook will provide a more detailed overview of the Shire's approach to community engagement and will include a series of supporting documents and tools for assisting elected members and employees to plan, deliver and evaluate engagement projects.

The CEIS does not negate the requirement for the Shire to comply with statutory obligations. In the case of consultation, the Shire will seek to avoid wherever possible advertising over the Christmas holiday period. Where consultation is deemed necessary for statutory purposes, it may not be possible to comply with this approach.
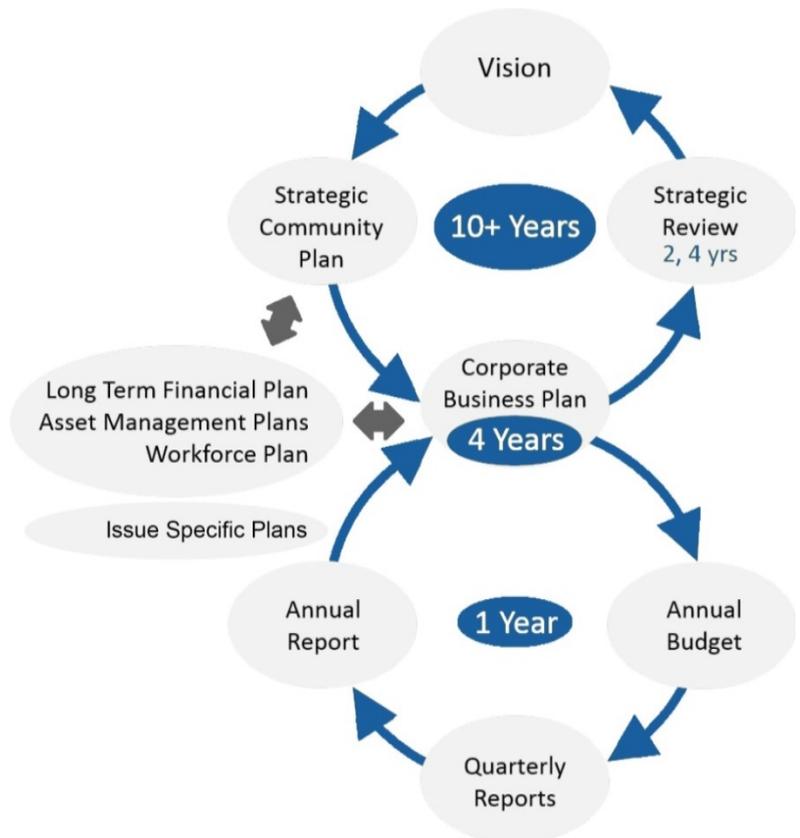
Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Integrated planning and reporting gives local governments a framework for establishing local priorities and linking them to operational functions. All of the Shire's corporate plans and strategies link back to the community's vision and strategic themes in the Strategic Community Plan (SCP), *Mundaring 2026.*

Involved in the development of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework are:

Community – participates in a community planning process to determine the major vision or intended big picture directions and also participates in regular reviews of those directions.

Council – endorses the SCP resulting from the community planning process, the four year Corporate Business Plan (CBP), Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and annual budget.

Local government administration – supports delivery of the SCP, through its corporate business planning which identifies the resources, services, operations and projects that the Shire will deliver.

Strategic Community Plan 2016-26 *Strategic Themes and Community Vision*

Shire of MUNDARING *a sense of space, a sense of place*	**Governance**	A fiscally responsible Shire that prioritises spending appropriately Transparent, responsive and engaged processes for Shire decision making
	Community	A community that is prepared for bush fires and other natural disasters Residents of all ages, needs and backgrounds re-engaged and supported by their community A strong and localised community spirit A place of vibrant culture and arts Flourishing local business
	Natural Environment	A community that manages water sustainability A place where the environment is well managed A great place to immerse yourself in nature
	Built Environment	A place that is connected, safe and easy to move around Community needs are considered in planning for the future Reliable digital services and power supply

What is community engagement and why is it important?

Community engagement is defined by IAP2 as 'any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and uses public input to make decisions'.

Engaging with the community is an acknowledgement of the skills, knowledge, expertise and passion of local stakeholders and the desire to combine these with those of elected members and Shire employees.

As identified by the strategic priorities and objectives of the SCP, community engagement is essential to achieving the community vision: a sense of space, a sense of place. It also enables the Shire to meet its statutory and policy requirements.

Done well, community engagement *'…creates a new direct link between the public and the decision makers in the bureaucracy. At its most basic level, public participation is a way of ensuring that those who make decisions that affect people's lives have a dialogue with that public before making the decisions… from the perspective of government officials, public participation provides a means by which contentious issues can be resolved…' (Crieghton, 2005, p17).*

Community engagement provides the Shire with the opportunity to:

- Share information
- Gather views and opinions
- Develop options
- Build consensus
- Make decisions/improve decision-making

Successful community engagement has a wide range of benefits. For the community, it can lead to:

- High levels of participation in and support for Shire projects and decisions.
- A high level of trust for and confidence in the leadership of the Shire.
- Increased community initiated projects and partnerships.
- Greater levels of understanding of the decision-making process and reasons behind decisions.
- A strengthened sense of community at all levels.
- A high level of support for local business.
- A variety of Shire and community partnership projects that target local need and contribute to a sense of enthusiasm and energy in the community.
- Positive relationships between elected members, Shire employees and the community.

For the Shire, the benefits of successful community engagement are centred around an improved understanding of local needs and the ability to effectively draw on local knowledge and expertise. They include:

- Better solutions and outcomes to complex problems and projects.

- Improved budgeting and project planning through the early identification of opportunities, risks and solutions for services and projects.

- More effective use of resources.

- Improved conflict management and resolution.

- Increased number and quality of community partnerships.

- Development of effective working relationships with local leaders and agencies.

Community Engagement in the Shire of Mundaring

Key principles for community engagement

The following key principles form the foundation of all community engagement undertaken by Shire of Mundaring.

Inclusiveness	• People or organisations affected by or who have an interest in the decision will be given the opportunity to participate in the community engagement process. • Community engagement processes will be open to all those who wish to participate.
Focus	• The purpose of the engagement will be clearly scoped to demonstrate how the process will impact the decision to be made. • A statement regarding the role and expectations of the Shire and stakeholders will be provided to participants and the final decision maker identified. • The Shire is committed to engaging with the community and to using a range of appropriate methods to do so.
Responsiveness and feedback	• The Shire will provide updates and feedback on the engagement process and decision to be made in a timely manner. • The Shire will ensure respect for a diverse range of interests that may be represented. • The interests of the community will always take priority over individual or vested interests. • Participants will receive information regarding how and/or why the final decision was made.
Transparency and openness	• All community engagement processes will be transparent and open. • All participants involved will have a clear understanding of their level of impact on the final decision.
Provision of Information	• Accurate, appropriate and accessible information will be provided to ensure participants are adequately informed throughout the engagement.
Evaluation	• Engagement processes will be evaluated prior to a decision being made to ensure the engagement being undertaken is meeting project objectives.

When should we engage?

The community must be engaged in matters that affect them, including but not limited to:

- **Legislative requirement** - where required under the Local Government Act 1995, Planning and Development Act 2005 and Local Planning Scheme or other relevant legislation.

- **Shire vision and strategic directions** - future long term planning for the Shire such as the SCP.

- **Site specific** - matters about a particular site, such as extraordinary development and disposal of Shire land.

- **Facilities and services** - development, review or improvement of facilities, infrastructure and services.

- Key issues/major projects of such a size that they impact on large areas of Shire, including emergency situations.

- Emergency preparedness and recovery.

- Other projects including public or community art, youth projects, events.

Roles in engagement

Elected members, Shire employees and the community all have a part to play in ensuring there is effective community engagement for any given initiative or issue.

Elected members play an important role in weighing up options in light of the needs and wants of residents and ratepayers when making a decision.

While elected members have their own values, networks and priorities, it is incumbent on each elected member to ensure the material put before them and their engagement with the community provide them with sufficient breadth and diversity of views. Their role in deliberation then becomes 'judge-like', weighing up the facts of the case, regardless of personal philosophy, and making a decision based on this whole view.

Elected members can get this information through:

- Attending engagement events.

- Participating in working groups and committees.

- Understanding the range of consultation processes used at the Shire.

- Discussion with Directors on key issues.

- Differentiating a 'chat at the local shop' with engagement with stakeholders throughout the Shire.

Elected members also have a role to play in providing input to the Shire's review of its approach to community engagement.

The role of **employees** is to ensure the documents and options put to Council contain not only the facts but also the varying views on any given issue. Presenting dominant as well as dissenting views can assist Council in determining the long-term impact of a given decision or course of action.

Employees can get this information through:

- Developing and participating in engagement activities.

- Participating in working groups and committees.

- Understanding and delivering effective community engagement.

- Ensuring community engagement is part of the project management process.

- Undertaking internal consultation.

Community members may wish to initiate engagement with Council and the Shire around a range of activities, project and issues. This engagement may be achieved through a variety of methods including:

- Written correspondence.
- Phone calls.
- Attendance at Council meetings.
- Attendance at Shire reception.
- Social media.
- Requests for site visits.
- Requests for elected members and/or Shire employees to attend residents' meetings.
- Casual conversations at community gatherings.

Recommended Strategies

1. Provide community engagement training

It is recommended that all elected members be provided with the opportunity to participate in community engagement training. In addition, key employees should also be selected to participate. These employees should be selected for their ability to provide support and advice to colleagues, commitment to and interest in community engagement and level of influence within their directorate.

Given the Shire's approach to community engagement is based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, it is recommended that elected members and employees attend accredited IAP2 training. To accommodate new employees and employees who may attend an additional course to add value to the basic engagement training, training would be offered each financial year, starting in 2016/17. Training for newly elected members would also be offered following the biennial local government elections.

2. Enhance Online Engagement

To add value to the Shire's current community engagement practices and improve the Shire's ability to connect with people, it is recommended the Shire implements an enhanced online engagement platform. The platform could include a combined use of multiple feedback tools, for example online forum discussions, surveys and quick polls, questions and answers, formal submissions, storytelling, interactive mapping, budget allocators and project guest books with news feeds.

A Business Case which includes further systems analysis and consultation with the Shire's Information Technology Service will be developed for consideration by the Information Communication Technology Committee in 2017/18. There is a possibility that such tools may be developed internally and this approach will be explored as well. The implementation of the enhanced online engagement would then inform the development of a future Corporate Business Plan and Long Term Financial Plan.

Indicative costs

Recommendation	Details	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Training for elected members and key employees	1-day IAP2 course – Engagement Essentials and/or 2-day IAP2 course – Engagement Methods	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000
Implement enhanced online engagement tools	Further analysis required. Can be provided by a range of external providers. Option to develop in-house to be considered and costed.	Nil	$22,000 - $30,000	$22,000 - $30,000	$22,000 - $30,000

PART 2: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HANDBOOK

Purpose of this Handbook

The purpose of this Handbook is to ensure:

1. Shire employees are well supported through the process of actively engaging stakeholders in the development and review of plans and projects.
2. Elected members are supported in their role as decision-makers.
3. Community engagement undertaken by the Shire is consistent and reflects the objectives of the Shire's SCP.
4. Community engagement activities meet best practice standards.

How to use this Handbook

Each engagement is unique, with different stakeholders, different outcomes sought and different resources available. No one set of instructions will adequately meet the needs of all engagement activities. However, this Handbook aims to provide a set of guidelines to help you think about how to plan and deliver your engagement.

The best engagement plan is developed in consultation with others. It is a requirement that employees involve their respective Manager and Consultation Advisors (Communications Co-ordinator and Community Engagement Facilitator) when they commence the planning process.

Community Engagement Process Overview

1. **Meet with Consultation Advisory Team –** Identify involvement and prepare the Consultation Plan together.

2. **Consultation Plan Template (p22)** – to be completed for each engagement activity and submitted to your Manager and Consultation Advisors for approval.

3. **Identify decision makers and stakeholders -** clarify decision makers' and stakeholders' expectations and their role in the consultation process. Consider barriers that stakeholders may experience, for more information please discuss with the Access Advisor.

4. **Identify project objectives and clarify decisions to be made –** meet with internal stakeholders to clarify the project objectives and the decisions that need to be made. Draft a 'decision statement' – the question to be answered via consultation.

5. **Complete plan using supporting documents**
   - **Level of Impact Matrix (p26)**– assists employees to determine whether their project will have a high or low impact on the community. Also a **Level of Impact Matrix Interpretation Guide (p28)**
   - **Level of Engagement Flow Chart (p29)** – assists employees to determine the level of engagement for their activity (inform, consult, involve, collaborate or empower).
   - **Example Community Engagement Methods (p30)** – provides a list of example engagement methods.

6. **Implement approved Consultation Plan**

7. **Feedback and Reporting (p34)** – provides information on reporting for stakeholders and Council.

8. **Evaluation Guide (p35)** – provides guidance around evaluating a community engagement activity.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

The Shire's approach to community engagement is underpinned by the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, which demonstrates the possible types of engagement and how community participation and impact increases with the level of engagement.

Table 1 outlines the five levels of engagement and the expectations of each. It also includes a number of examples of engagement methods and reasons for engagement.

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Objective				
To provide the community with balanced and objective information and assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and solutions.	To obtain community feedback on analysis, alternatives or decisions.	To work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that public and private concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place the final decision making in the hands of the community.
Promise to the Community				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge your concerns and provide feedback on how community input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that where appropriate, your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how community input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Examples - Engagement Methods				
• Fact sheets • Websites • Displays • Newsletters • Media releases • Presentations	• Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Community meetings • Submissions	• Workshops • World Cafes • Web forums	• Citizen Advisory Committees • Consensus building • Open Space	• Citizens Juries • Ballots • Delegated decisions
Examples – Reason for Engagement				
• Fire ban • Building Act changes • Events • Public Safety projects	• Traffic/transport projects • Infrastructure redevelopments	• Tourism Strategy • Economic Development Plan	• Strategic Community Plan	• Community Recovery Plan

Table 1: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

Usually, all preceding levels are required for the successful delivery of the next one. For example, community engagement that aims to 'collaborate' requires use of the preceding three categories of inform, consult and involve.

There are a variety of factors that will need to be considered when determining the level of engagement. These factors include:

Economic Impact	What is the overall cost of the project or activity?
	What is the potential long-term income/cost to the community/Council?
Environmental Impact	What level of environmental impact will this project have?
	What are the long-term environmental impacts?
Social Impact	How many people will this project impact?
	Is this impact short or long-term?
Technical Risk	What are the technical risks of this project?
Outrage Risk	What outrage factors are present?
Diversity of Views	How diverse are community opinions about this project?
History	What is the history of this project?
	Has there been concern or support for this project?

Support and Advice

There are several avenues for employees undertaking community engagement to seek support and advice regarding their project.

1. **Consultation Advisory Team**
   Comprising the Community Engagement Facilitator and the Communications Co-ordinator, the team is responsible for:
   - Providing advice, guidance and support to employees during the development and implementation of the project.
   - Review of consultation plans developed for each engagement project prior to manager approval.
   - Monitoring consultation activities undertaken by the Shire to ensure they are delivered in a timely manner and avoid over consultation.

2. **Community Engagement Contact Employees**
   Community Engagement Contact Employees are Shire employees who have undertaken community engagement training. They will be available to provide support and advice in addition to that of the Consultation Advisory Team.

3. **Your Manager**
   Ensure you involve your manager in planning and delivering community engagement.

4. **Information Technology Team**
   The Shire's Information Technology Team is available to provide support and advice around IT aspects of online engagement after discussions with the Consultation Advisory Team about development of the project.

5. **Community Engagement Working Group**
   Comprising Consultation Advisory Team and Engagement Contact Employees, this group meet quarterly. The purpose of the Group is to: regularly review the Shire's engagement practices to ensure continuous improvement; prepare biannual progress reports for Council of community engagement outcomes; and provide feedback to the community via the Annual Report.

Shire of MUNDARING

Title

Consultation Plan
Date Year

CONSULTATION PLAN

Project Title	
Project Description	
Project Team Members	**Manager** **Project Owner** **Consultation Advisors (Community Engagement Facilitator and Communications Co-ordinator)** **Community Engagement Contact Person** **Other Project Officers**
Project Commencement & Completion Dates	

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Why do we need to consult?
Example – Legislative/strategic/site specific/facilities or services/council decision

OBJECTIVES
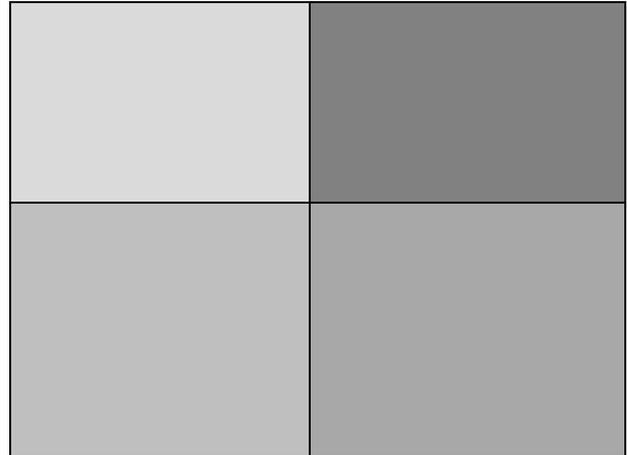What are we asking the stakeholders? Key objectives of this strategy are to:

Decision Statement	

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

Example of Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholders relevant to this issue

Keep Satisfied	**Nurture, Involve & Consult**
Minimal Effort Required	**Keep Well Informed**

Level of Influence ↑

Level of Interest ⇒

Are there any accessibility issues? How will they be addressed?

KEY MESSAGES

Key messages should form the basis of how enquiries are responded to, particularly from the media. Employees responding to media or community enquiries are to follow the key messages.

•
•
•
•
•

How will we engage with the community?	
Level of Impact of Project High or Low - Include details to justify decision	
Level of Engagement chosen and why	
List the chosen methods of engagement	
Engagement Activity Budget please attach	**Total budget $**

budget to this document	

ACTION PLAN (Refer support Document: Example Engagement Methods)

COMMUNICATIONS - Refer to Communications Co-ordinator

Communication during the project will change as the project progresses; therefore this is a working document. NOTE: Any delays or issues/concerns need to be dealt with ASAP to ensure proactive communications wherever possible, particularly if something has the potential for media attention.

Action	Message	Who	When	Where

Managing the media

All media enquiries to be directed to Communications
- Questions to be emailed to ensure accuracy in comments
- Responses to be provided in a timely manner
- Responses to be reviewed in-line with key messages
- Responses to be approved by CEO/Shire President.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT Refer to Community Engagement Facilitator

Action	Message	Who	When	Where

Feedback (Refer support document: Feedback and Reporting)	
How will feedback be provided to the community?	
Reports to be provided to Manager/ELT/Council?	
Implementing the final decision – how will this occur?	

Evaluation (Refer support document: Evaluation guide)	
What evaluation methods will be used? How will you know if the engagement was successful? Have improvements been identified?	

SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

Support Document 1: Level of Impact Matrix

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA		Your assessment of community engagement problems and issues.	RANKING *Tick the relevant column below to indicate degree of impact.*		
			LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Degree of complexity	One clear issue or problem that needs to be addressed. **LOW**				
	More than one issue and/or problem to be resolved. **MED**				
	Multiple issues and/or problems. It is unclear how to resolve them. **HIGH**				
Degree of potential community impact or outrage	Little effect on communities and they will hardly notice any changes. **LOW**				
	Fixes a problem that will benefit communities and the change will cause minor inconvenience. **MED**				
	Creates a change that will have an impact on communities and the degree of impact/outrage will vary. **HIGH**				
Degree of political sensitivity	Has acceptance throughout the community. **LOW**				
	Some may see a potential in raising the profile of a project/plan/service to gain attention to their cause. **MED**				
	Community expectations are different to those of the decision makers and there is a high potential for some to use the uncertainty to gain attention. **HIGH**				

Support Document 1a: *Level of Impact Matrix* Interpretation Guide

All 'Low' or some 'low' and some 'medium' ticked
If you ticked all 'low' or some 'low' and some 'medium' impacts in the *Level of Impact Matrix*, it is suggested that your project will fall under 'low impact' on the 'Level of Engagement Flow Chart'. This will lead to either 'inform' or 'consult' as you aim for engagement.
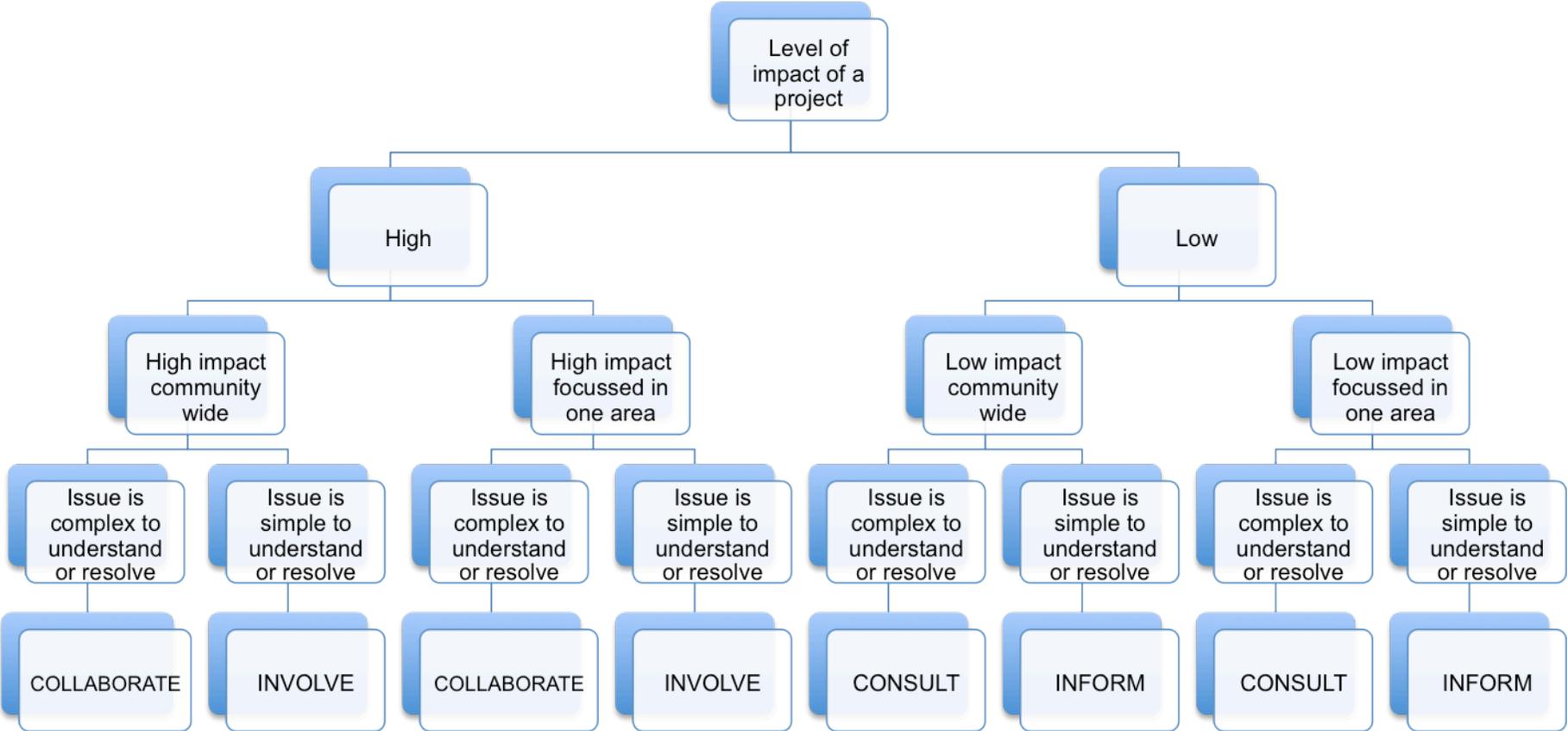
Mostly/all 'Medium' or one or more 'High' ticked
If you ticked mostly 'medium' impacts in the *Level of Impact Matrix*, it is suggested that your project will fall under 'high impact' on the 'Level of Engagement Flow Chart'. This will lead to either 'involve' or 'collaborate' as your aim for engagement.

If you ticked 'high' impact for any of the measures, it is suggested that your project will fall under 'high impact' on the 'Level of Engagement Flow Chart'. This will lead to either 'involve' or 'collaborate' as your aim for engagement.

Support Document 2: Level of Engagement Flow Chart

Please note: The flow chart below aims to guide employees in determining the level of engagement for their community engagement activity. However, employees should consult with their Manager and Consultation Advisors before proceeding. While 'empower' has not been included here, it may be appropriate in some circumstances.

Level of impact of a project
- **High**
  - High impact community wide
    - Issue is complex to understand or resolve → COLLABORATE
    - Issue is simple to understand or resolve → INVOLVE
  - High impact focussed in one area
    - Issue is complex to understand or resolve → COLLABORATE
    - Issue is simple to understand or resolve → INVOLVE
- **Low**
  - Low impact community wide
    - Issue is complex to understand or resolve → CONSULT
    - Issue is simple to understand or resolve → INFORM
  - Low impact focussed in one area
    - Issue is complex to understand or resolve → CONSULT
    - Issue is simple to understand or resolve → INFORM

The flow chart above is based on City of Bayside's Community Engagement Framework (www.bayside.vic.gov.au)

Support Document 3: Example Engagement Methods

These methods are examples only and not representative of all approaches. Please refer to the Community Engagement Facilitator or a Community Engagement Contact Employee for more engagement method options. Also, the References section of this document has a number of useful links.

Table of Example Engagement Methods

Example methods to 'Inform'	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong	Indicative Costings
Printed Materials • Fact sheets • Newsletter/eNewsletter • Media advertising • Brochures • Issue Papers • Direct mail out	• Can reach a large target audience • Public look for information that arrives in a regular format (eg newsletter, media column) • Written comments returned in reply paid/email format • Provides documentation of public involvement • Opportunity to develop mailing (postal and email) list	• Distribution planning inadequate • Materials do not adequately meet project objectives • Materials not read/received • Limited capacity to communicate complicated concepts • Information misinterpreted	• $500 - $1000 plus staff resources (excluding mail outs)
Displays • Council Offices • Libraries • Community Centres • Shopping Centre • Schools • Childcare Centres	• Information is accessible to the public at relatively little cost • Public look for materials at the distribution locations • Public visit Council facilities & may learn more about service provision • Public ask for further information at locations	• Distribution sites are over-crowded with information & materials get lost • There is no active promotion of materials • Upkeep of information at sites is not well managed	• $100 - $500 plus staff resources
Website / Community Engagement Portal	• Capable of reaching a large audience at low cost • Popular information resource	• People without access maybe disadvantaged • People lose interest if not kept up to date	• Staff resources

Example methods to 'Consult'	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong	Indicative Costings
Briefings • Council Staff • Elected Members • Technicians • Consultants • Key Stakeholders • Community Groups (including marginalised groups)	• Control of information/ presentation & expectations • Opportunities to clarify misinformation • Reach a wide variety of people • Build community capacity • Evaluate & readjust approach • Develop working relationships with stakeholders	• Some groups may be left out of briefings • Inaccurate information may be passed on to community • Expectations may be raised • Information may be used inappropriately	• $200-$500 plus staff resources
Surveys/ Questionnaires • Blanket distribution • Random distribution • Selected distribution	• Can gather information from people other than those with special interests • Gather information from people who might not attend meetings • Can gather specific information • Statistically tested results have more credibility	• Response rate can be poor • Communities over surveyed • Can be labour intensive • Questions may be misinterpreted • Results not trusted • Results not fed back to communities effectively	• $500- $20,000 plus staff resources
Open House • Communities engage at their own pace in a comfortable environment • Drop in individually to view plans, ask questions, give opinions & have an informal chat & a coffee, tea etc	• Facilitates a wide variety of people • Break down perceived barriers • Fosters communication and develops familiarity with employees • More convenient for people • Engages people more effectively • Minimise aggressive approach to employees	• Special interest groups may boycott or disrupt • Groups may use "dots" to lobby for special interests • Can be staff resource intensive • May not be accessible to people who rely on public transport	• $200- $1000 plus staff resources

Example methods to 'Involve'	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong	Indicative Costings
Focus Groups Used to test a message with a group of randomly selected people or to gain input into planning for engagement	• Provides opportunity to test material • Verify prior assumptions • Raise unexpected additional benefits	• Participants may feel restricted by the approach • May be perceived as exclusive • May be costly	• $1000 - $10,000 plus staff resources
Interviews • Face to Face • Telephone	• Gather clear understanding of public concerns & issues • Individuals feel inclined to provide input based on personalised format • Able to reach more people by varying timeframe for interviews	• Can be very time consuming • Participants can take their issues out on the interviewer • Participants become tired of being interviewed on a range of issues & will not engage willingly	• $1000 - $5000 plus staff resources
Workshops Commences with a presentation to a large group. Allows for interaction in small groups, with all information brought together at the end of the workshop.	• Participants can use the opportunity to raise their concerns, needs, issues • Foster equity and credibility • Opportunity to hear the "silent" voices • Special interest groups get to listen to other voices • Unexpected additional benefits • Develop working relationships with various individuals and groups	• Small numbers of participants • Resistance to breaking up into small groups by some participants • Special Interest Groups may monopolise the workshop • Participants alter the agenda • Facilitators not impartial or not skilled enough to deal with some behaviours • Information session format used rather than workshop format • Feedback not recorded effectively	• $500 - $25,000 plus staff resources

Example methods to 'Collaborate'	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong	Indicative Costings
Design Charrettes Sessions where participants become involved in the design of a projects' features.	• Can create effective partnerships & working relationships with communities & individuals • Can develop sense of trust for all concerned • Can identify issues & concerns in early stages of projects • Can result in improved outcomes	• Participants bring unrelated agenda to the session/s • Not enough time allowed for session/s • Small representation of community • None of what is discussed in the session/s is incorporated into the final design • Future expectations cannot be met	• $1000 - $5000 plus staff resources
Citizen Juries Group of citizens are selected to learn about an issue & then examine the data by questioning decision-makers, technicians, and interested parties – each of whom are witnesses to the process. The Jury makes recommendations based on their evaluation of the discussions.	• Opportunity to develop deep understanding of an issue • Positions of interest can shift • Limitations & possibilities can be identified • Can dispel misinformation • Can build credibility • Can provide unexpected benefits	• Group selection can be mistrusted • Participants may not show up on the day • Sessions can lose focus • Can be expensive	• $2000 - $15000 plus staff resources
Deliberative Polling Determines what people would think about an issue if they became more engaged and informed. A random, representative sample is first polled on a public interest topic. They are then invited to gather at a single place to discuss the issue.	• Participants can be exposed to the views & arguments of people from different backgrounds • Special interest lobbying can be diffused • Can develop capacity in communities • Can provide unexpected benefits	• Mistrust of the organisers & unfamiliar process can hamper participation • People do not have the time required to commit to the process • Timeframes are unrealistic • Agenda too ambitious or not specific enough	• $1000- $5000 plus staff resources

Support Document 4: Feedback and Reporting

In the final stage of engagement, accurate reporting on the outcomes of the consultation process is vital for providing an overview of information to decision makers and feedback to stakeholders about how their input was used in the decision making process.

Information received through consultation can be recorded in a variety of ways, depending on the consultation method used, decision makers' requirements and resources available. If access to data management software is unavailable, a basic template in Microsoft Word or Excel will often be sufficient. Aim for a consistent format that is simple to use and provides results that are easy to interpret. Please speak to the Shire's Community Engagement Facilitator, who will have an appropriate template/example that you can adapt for your own use.

Community Engagement Report
A Community Engagement Report provides an overview of the engagement process, outcomes and evaluation. This report can be made available to community engagement stakeholders and will be a valuable resource when planning for similar engagement activities in future.

A Community Engagement Report can include the following elements:
- Introduction and background information on the topic, key considerations and the engagement process.
- Outcomes of the consultation process, including any key issues or trends identified.
- Quantitative and qualitative data.
- A selection of exact phrases and words used by people throughout the consultation.
- Questions raised by the community and responses provided.
- Information on how feedback will be/was used in the decision making process.
- Summary of the evaluation of the consultation process.

A **letter/email will need to be sent to all stakeholders** thanking them for their involvement, advising how their feedback will be/has been used in the decision making process and inviting them to request a copy of the Community Engagement Report.

Council Report
Council Report Templates are available on the Intranet, along with the writing style guide, publication approval flowchart and information sheet templates. A Council Report needs to:
- Provide clear and succinct information and feedback from the community.
- Identify the main interests, and any differences between individuals and/or community.
- Identify the degree of agreement or disagreement between participants.
- Clarify key issues and any strongly held community views.
- Make clear and equitable recommendations based on the information provided throughout the report.

Support Document 5: Evaluation Guide

Assessing whether the community engagement process has achieved its purpose and met the engagement objectives demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement.

Evaluation at each phase of community engagement delivers valuable information about what is working and what needs to be improved, and allows for the engagement process to be flexible and to be modified to accommodate any changes.

Depending on resources available, a combination of some or all of the following tasks can be used to ensure relevant information is available to complete the evaluation.

- Distribute feedback/evaluation forms to engagement participants during the consultation process, which include questions about their views on the process.
- Conduct telephone interviews with a random sample of stakeholders during and after the process.
- Convene evaluation meetings with the project team, decision makers and key stakeholders at various stages of the consultation process.
- Convene a final evaluation meeting with the project team soon after the conclusion of the process.

An evaluation report, to be prepared at the conclusion of the engagement activity, will include the following:

- Introduction and description of the engagement process.
- Summary of the evaluation comments.
- Information on what worked and added value and what didn't work and could be changed and or improved.
- Lessons learnt.
- Recommendations for future engagement activities.

References

Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, http://www.acelg.org.au/

Chappell, B. (2015) *Community Engagement Handbook*
www.lga.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?c=64955

City of Bayside *Community Engagement Framework (www.bayside.vic.gov.au)*

City of Fremantle, *Community Engagement Framework 2010*

City of Fremantle, *Community Engagement Policy 2010*

City of Onkaparinga *Engagement Handbook*

City of Swan *Community Engagement Framework 2010 - 2015*

City of Wanneroo, *Community Engagement Policy 2014*

Crieghton, J (2005), *The Public Participation Handbook*, Jossey-bass

Department of Environment and Primary Industries www.dse.vic.gov.au/effective-engagement

IAP2, (no year), *Engagement Essentials Manual*

IAP2, (no year), *Engagement Methods Manual*

IAP2 *Public Participation Toolbox* www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/toolbox.pdf