

Community Engagement Policy

Policy Reference Number	ECM 5978001
Responsible Department	Executive Services
Related Policies	Nil
Related Procedures	Nil
Date of Initial Adoption	3 July 2000
Last Reviewed	1 September 2026

1. Purpose

To outline the Community Engagement Framework for Council's decision-making and detail how Council will fulfil its legislative requirements for community engagement as set out in the Local Government Act 1999 (the 'Act') and the Local Government Community Engagement Charter ('CEC').

2. Power to Make the Policy

Section 50 of the Act requires Council to prepare and adopt a Public Consultation Policy. This Policy also gives effect to the Community Engagement Charter (Gazetted December 2025).

3. Strategic Plan Link

This Policy has the following link to Council's Strategic Plan 2028:

- Deliver Strong Leadership (Goal 4)

4. Principles

Council adopts the principles of the Community Engagement Charter, including:

- Reasonable, meaningful and timely engagement.
- Access to clear, plain language information.
- Appropriate engagement methods based on impact.
- Transparency in decision making.

Focus and Commitment

- Is genuinely open to engaging with the Community and committed to providing meaningful community engagement opportunities.

Mutual Trust, Respect and Accountability

- Will enable inclusive involvement and value diversity; all opinions will be valued and considered.
- Will be accountable, accessible and ethical in all dealings with the Community.

- Acknowledges that community engagement activities enable Council and the Community to learn from each other, and that it is important to make an effort to exchange views.
- Will seek to engage in respectful two-way communication with the Community.

Transparency, Openness and Evidence Based

- Approaches engagement from an impartial perspective, free from bias toward any stakeholder/s involved in the process.
- Utilises sound engagement practices that are based on contemporary research methods, professional codes and standards.
- Will utilise flexible and convenient engagement methods wherever possible so that engagement with Council is as easy as possible.
- Acknowledges that successful community engagement requires a consistent approach using a variety of techniques which are fit for purpose.
- Is committed to ensuring that the Community is well informed in a timely manner.

Decision Making and Feedback

- Will strive for transparent Community Engagement reports whilst protecting the personal information of individuals to the extent possible under legislation.
- Will be the decision maker and in doing so, will strive for transparent and responsive decisions that incorporate the community engagement outcomes, balanced with other internal and external influences.
- Will inform its Community of the outcome of community engagement practices.

Review and Improve

- Evaluation of the community engagement process will seek to establish continuous system improvements.

5. Definitions

Community	The Charter established under section 50 of the Engagement Local Government Act 1999 that sets mandatory
Charter	Requirements for Council engagement
Committee Member	Means a person who is an Independent Member of a Council section 41 Committee or Panel
Community	May include all people who live, study or conduct business in, or who visit, use or enjoy the services,

	facilities and public places of the City of Campbelltown
Community Engagement	Is about providing meaningful opportunity for the Community to have input into Council problem solving or decision-making processes. Council's Community engagement, based on the IAP2 public participation spectrum includes: • INFORMING the Community (one way communication) with balanced and objective information to assist understanding about something that is going to happen or has happened • CONSULTING using two way communication to obtain public feedback about ideas, alternatives and proposals • INVOLVING the Community by working with them during a process to identify issues and ensure that public concerns and aspirations are understood and considered prior to decision making • COLLABORATING with the Community to develop an understanding of all issues and interests and to work out alternatives and identify preferred solutions • EMPOWERING the Community by placing the final decision making in the hands of the public (e.g. Council polls, citizens juries).
Community Engagement Techniques	The methods that are used to facilitate engagement or interaction with the Community e.g. a workshop, survey (hard copy or online), public forum such as a Drop In Session or Public Meeting; seminar, roving stall for discussions, taskforce or Committee.
The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)	An organisation established to advance the practice of public participation world wide, promoting best practice and the values and standards associated with involving the public in decisions that affect their lives (www.iap2.org.au/).

6. Policy limitations

This Policy does not cover prescribed consultation requirements under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* or the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*.

7. Policy

Council recognises that community engagement and participation processes are a vital part of local democracy. Effective engagement is good business practice and critical to good governance.

Council will seek to apply engagement methods that are proportionate, inclusive, and accessible, that encourage participation from a broad and diverse cross-section of the Community.

For these reasons Council is committed to engaging with the local Community.

Council's community engagement processes will be based on:

- The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Model; and
- The Community Engagement Charter and its mandatory requirements
- This Policy.

7.1 Community Engagement Framework

7.1.1 Council will categorise all community engagement in accordance with the Community Engagement Charter

The categories are:

- Significant – Annual Business Plan and Rating Policy
- Significant
- Standard
- Local
- Inform.

The category will be determined having regard to:

- Scale and impact of the decision
- Number of people affected
- Level of community interest
- Legislative requirements
- The social, environmental and economic impacts.

Council will apply the relevant mandatory engagement requirements for each category of engagement. The engagement activities undertaken by Council to meet these requirements are detailed in **Appendix 1** of this Policy.

7.2 Mandatory Engagement Requirements

7.2.1 Council will meet the minimum mandatory engagement requirements as set out in the Community Engagement Charter

Council will meet the minimum mandatory community engagement requirements set out in the Community Engagement Charter by applying the prescribed engagement activities for each category of engagement.

These requirements will be implemented through appropriate communication, consultation and participation methods to ensure the community is provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to Council decision-making.

Requirement	Applies To Category
Website publication	All
External news media	Significant
Invite submissions	Significant / Standard
Public meeting	Significant ABP&B
Local notification	Local
Feedback explanation	All

7.2.2 Non-Consultation Period

Council will not undertake consultations during the period 15 December to 15 January of any year.

7.3 Application

7.3.1 Public Consultation Categories

The following categories will be used for matters under the Act that require public consultation:

Significant – Annual Business Plan and Budget Policy

- Adopting an Annual Business Plan and Budget - section 123(3)(b)

- Changes to basis of rating, declaring differential rates, imposing a separate rate, service rate or service charge, or changing the basis on which land is valued for the purpose of rating - section 151(5)(e)

Significant

- Representation Reviews - section 12(7)
- Development and review of Strategic Management Plans - section 122(6)
- Changes to use of differential rating - section 156(4a)(b)
- Revocation of classification of land as Community Land - section 194(2)(b)

Standard

- Opening hours and place of principal office - substantial changes - section 45(3)
- Community Engagement Policy - section 50A(6)(b)
- Council Behavioural Support Policies - section 75F(6)
- Access to meetings and documents - section 92(5)
- Power to make orders - section 259(2)(b)

Local

- Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for more than 48 hours (with a detour in place) or where no detour will be available - section 223(1)
- Proposed planting of vegetation on a road – significant impact - section 232(b)

Inform

- Opening hours and place of principal office – minor changes - section 45(3)
- Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for less than 48 hours and the Council ensures that a detour is in place - section 223(1)
- Election information - section 13A(2) of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*.

For legislative matters, Council will:

- Determine the applicable Community Engagement Charter category
- Apply all mandatory requirements relevant to that category.

7.3.2 Prescribed Public Consultation Processes

Each matter will be assigned a Community Engagement Charter category and managed in accordance with the mandatory requirements of that category.

The *Local Government Act 1999* also stipulates that specific public consultation should be undertaken in regard to some detailed activities.

In this respect Council will follow the requirements as set out in the relevant sections of the Act.

- Representation Review - section 12
- Status of a Council / Change of Name - section 13
- Commercial activities / Prudential requirements - section 48
- Public Consultation Policy – section 50(6)
- Strategic Management Plans – section 122(6)
- Annual Business Plan and Budget – section 123
- Rating – section 151
- Differential Rating – section 156
- Community Land Revocation of classification – section 194(2), 194(3)
- Removal of Vehicles – section 237
- Passing By-Laws – section 249
- Policies on Orders – section 259.

In addition, public consultation for a Community Land Revocation of classification will be accompanied by signage at the site where revocation is proposed that:

- Identifies the land that is subject to proposed revocation
- Clearly states in plain English the nature of the proposal that is subject to public consultation.

7.3.3 Public Consultation for Development purposes

The Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 provides the framework for Councils regarding community engagement requirements for development purposes.

7.3.4 Discretionary Community Engagement

Council may, at its discretion, undertake additional engagement activities beyond the mandatory minimum requirements where it considers it appropriate, having regard to the nature and significance of the matter.

However, Council is not required to undertake additional engagement activities beyond those required by the Act and the Charter.

There may be other engagement activities that Council will undertake for issues not covered in the Act or Charter.

Engagement methods will be selected to ensure they are appropriate to the category of engagement and are consistent with achieving meaningful and effective community participation.

7.3.5 Community Initiated Engagement with Council

Any individual, group of individuals, organisation or political entity with an interest or stake in the outcome of a decision has the right to initiate and engage with Council on the matter.

In such circumstances Council will:

- Implement high standards of Customer Service ¹
- Undertake and encourage actions that build trust and credibility for the engagement process
- Carefully consider and accurately portray the public's role in the decision-making process on the matter
- Disclose all information relevant to the matter to enable participants to engage with Council in a meaningful way.

7.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Elected Members and Staff play complementary roles in engaging with the Community.

¹ Campbelltown City Council Customer Service Charter

7.4.1 Elected Members

Elected Members are usually the decision makers following formal community engagement processes undertaken by Council. Where this occurs, they will only participate as observers at engagement activities, and will not undertake behaviours that may influence the outcome of the engagement process.

Elected Members commit to making informed decisions when they have received feedback from the Community on a matter.

Elected Members have responsibility for engaging with their local communities through community run meetings and day-to-day liaison, however these processes are not to be undertaken concurrently or as part of a formal Council community engagement process.

7.4.2 Council Staff

Staff are responsible for engaging with the Community in their day-to-day business activities and on agreed projects. They will seek to omit bias from all community engagement processes and will not participate in engagement activities or undertake behaviours that may influence the outcome of a Council engagement process.

Staff will notify Elected Members of the engagement and technique(s) that will be used for each formal engagement process.

7.5 Engagement Activities

All engagement activities must be designed to meet the mandatory requirements of the Community Engagement Charter relevant to the category.

Staff will apply community engagement methodologies appropriate to the circumstances and desired outcomes of any specific engagement. Where the engagement is significant, Staff will formulate a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy for that engagement.

Staff will use different community engagement techniques and communication mechanisms depending upon the issue or project, its particular circumstance and the audience it needs to target.

Where a community engagement process relates to an issue that impacts the lives of children and young people (e.g. a playground upgrade), Staff will actively seek to engage children and young people in engagement processes.

Community Engagement Strategies will aim to involve the Community and Stakeholders as early as possible in the process, and particularly for large or complex projects will seek to continue their engagement at relevant stages of the project. When a multi-stage approach is to be implemented, engagement opportunities in each stage will be at a level along the engagement spectrum (from Informing to Collaborating) that is appropriate for Community and Stakeholders involvement in that stage.

7.6 Community Participation

7.6.1 Voluntary

Participation by members of the Community in any Council community engagement activity will be voluntary and may at times include incentives to increase participation.

7.6.2 Participation by Minors

Staff will only engage under 12-year-olds in any community engagement activities with the consent of parents or legal guardians or in formal educational settings.

7.6.3 Participation Limitations – Elected Members and Staff

Elected Members must not seek to influence the feedback received through Prescribed and Discretionary Community Engagement processes where Council is the decision maker.

Staff are only to facilitate, comment on feedback received and/or respond to questions in relation to a Council community engagement process when it forms part of their responsibilities through their profession at Council.

Elected Members are not eligible to be members of the Council's Connect 2 Campbelltown online community engagement platform. Staff are able to be registered participants of the platform only if required as part of their role at Council.

These limitations do not preclude Council from holding meetings and workshops, and seeking advice from Elected Members, Members of Council's Committees and Staff in relation to the direction of a project.

7.6.4 Participation Limitations – Committee Members

Committee Members are able to participate in Council community engagement processes as follows:

- If the Member has not participated in a Committee/Panel meeting where the engagement was discussed, they may respond to the engagement as an individual
- However, if the Member has participated in the engagement as an individual and the matter is then considered at a Committee/Panel meeting, the Member needs to declare a general conflict of interest.

7.6.5 Public Meetings

There will be an announcement at the beginning of any public meeting of Council where there is a petition available for people to sign.

7.6.6 Presentations to Council

Presentations by members of the public at formal Council meetings are governed by the South Australian Local Government Act 1999 and Council's Policies.

7.6.7 Disrespectful and unreasonable Respondents

Council will have a zero tolerance of unreasonable and inappropriate behaviour at its engagement activities.

Where written feedback contains swearing, offensive statements or personal attacks it will be disregarded. Ongoing inappropriate responses from registered participants of Connect 2 Campbelltown may result in the participant being blocked from the platform.

7.7 Engagement Information Requirements

All engagement materials will:

- Clearly explain the proposed decision or project
- Outline the purpose and desired outcomes
- Explain how community feedback will inform decisions
- Identify decision-making processes
- Be written in plain language and accessible formats.

7.8 Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting

Staff will use qualitative (words) and/or quantitative (numbers) data from engagement with the Community. Staff will utilise contemporary social research techniques and will adhere to professional ethical standards and

codes of practice for the collection, analysis and reporting of qualitative and quantitative data.

The views and information obtained from community engagement activities will be reported accurately to Council without bias or assumptions. Staff will provide a summary of community feedback to Council prior to the decision being made.

Staff will provide a summary to the Community of the Council's decision on the website.

7.8.1 Council use of Personal Information

Staff will abide by Council's Privacy Policy when collecting and using personal information acquired during community engagement activities.

Staff will only collect personal information from respondents as needed to enable auditing of response data and to inform decision making following a community engagement process.

7.8.2 Storage and disclosure of Personal Information

Staff will maintain systems to protect personal information collected and stored by Council.

Personal details of participants in community engagement activities will only be recorded in reports to Council where required by legislation. Staff will undertake auditing processes to redact any personal information included by participants.

Staff will retain participants' personal information for a period prescribed under the South Australian State Records Act 1997 and will not disclose these details to any third party except where required by law.

8. Community Follow Up

Council will ensure that after community engagement has concluded Community members are informed of engagement outcomes through Council's engagement platform (e.g. Connect2 Campbelltown).

9. Review & Evaluation

Within 12 months of each new Council term, Council will review this Policy. Following this initial review, this Policy will be reviewed at least biennially by Staff with minor administrative adjustments being approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

10. Availability of the Policy

Copies of this Policy will be available at Council's principal office during ordinary business hours and at Council's website www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au.

APPENDIX 1

The table outlines the engagement activities that Council will undertake to meet the requirements of each matter for which public consultation must be undertaken in accordance with the Act and the Charter.

Council will meet each mandatory requirement by undertaking at least one of the engagement activities listed. Where appropriate, multiple engagement activities may be undertaken from the 'Types of Council Engagement Activities Column' below to support greater community participation.

Charter Requirement	Mandatory Minimum Action	Significant (ABP&B / Rates)	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	Types of Council Engagement Activities
Website	Publish information on a Council website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Connect 2 Campbelltown project page; Council website "Have Your Say" section
News publication	Publish in external print or digital news media	✓	✓				Local newspaper (Advertiser); and local online news platforms
Consult with whole Council area	Notify and promote engagement across Council	✓	✓	✓			Council website; social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn); eNews; Library, Civic Centre and community facility displays; posters and flyers
Invite submissions	Provide clear submission process and timeframe	✓	✓				Online submissions via Connect 2 Campbelltown; written submissions (email/post); surveys
Explain decision-making process	Explain what, why and how feedback will inform decision	✓	✓				Information sheets; website content; FAQs on Connect 2 Campbelltown
Seek and consider feedback (significant matters)	Minimum 21-day period; summary provided to Council	✓	✓				Surveys; written submissions; public meeting submissions; workshops; engagement platform contributions
Public meeting	Hold a public meeting for submissions (written or verbal)	✓					Public meeting; Council meeting session; drop-in information session where appropriate
Council meeting invitation	Invite submitters to speak at Council meeting		✓				Direct invitation to submitters to present at Council meeting
Seek and consider feedback	Provide opportunity and appropriate timeframe			✓	✓		Surveys; online tools; written submissions; drop-in sessions; workshops
Consult with local community	Target notifications to affected area				✓		Letter drops; targeted mail/email; on-site signage; stakeholder notifications
Information to whole Council area	Provide information broadly where impacted					✓	Website updates; social media; eNews; customer service counters
Information to local community	Provide information to directly affected local area					✓	Letterbox drops; local signage; direct emails; targeted notices