

Introduction

To determine community needs and plan for the provision of an adequate level of facilities and services, Council seeks to engage in open and honest two-way communication that is inclusive for all residents.

Community engagement is a planned process to ensure the community participates in the decision-making process that affects their wellbeing.

This policy seeks to align with the Local Government Act 1995 [s1.3(2)], ensuring greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of local governments.

Consultation and communication with the community and other stakeholders does not replace the decision-making capacity of Council, it aims to enhance and inform it.

This policy does not cover planning and development applications or proposals.

Purpose

To ensure residents and stakeholders in the Shire of Capel have opportunity to participate in the decision-making process that affects their wellbeing.

Policy statement

The Shire of Capel will commit to undertaking community engagement as per the Shire of Capel Community Engagement Framework 2022 – 2026.

The Shire's Community Engagement Framework 2022 – 2026 follows the methods outlined within the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum. This enables Council to inform, consult, involve, collaborate, or empower stakeholders depending on the assessment of level of community impact and influence.

It is important to develop a balanced approach of providing community consultation between resources available, significance of an issue for the community and level of influence the community has on a decision.

The five steps of community participation can be broken down into the following goals:

- **Inform:** To provide balanced and objective information to assist understanding of topic, alternatives, opportunities, and solutions.
- **Consult:** To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
- **Involve:** To work with the public throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- **Collaborate:** To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including development of alternatives and identification of a preferred solution.
- **Empower:** To place final decision making in the hands of the public.

Department:	Community Services	Next review:	November 2024
Reviewer:	Director Community and Corporate	Legislation:	
Adopted:	Minute OC0234, 28.02.07	Delegation:	
Amended:	Minute OC1120, 20.11.13 Minute OC011, 26.02.20 Minute OC/2022/203, 26.10.22	Risk:	
Policy ref #:		Version:	2