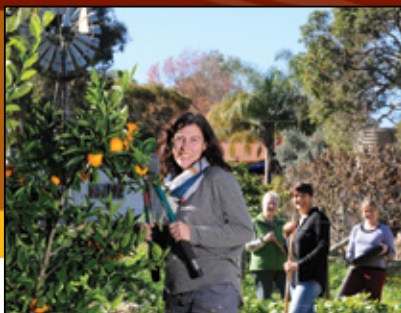# Kalamunda Engages
Community Engagement Strategy 2017

city of
kalamunda

Foreword

"There is no greater wealth than wisdom,
no greater poverty than ignorance;
no greater heritage than culture and no
greater support than consultation."

Ali ibn Abi Talib

In the City of Kalamunda we have a long record of strong community engagement. We recognise the importance and value of engaging with our community and seek to act in a participatory manner in all we do. We have maintained strong ties with our environmental community, cultural community and demographic specific groups and believe being in close contact with the pulse of the community leads to good governance and effective decision making.

Local government is the most effective tier of government for engaging with the community. We have existing networks and relationships which enable us to engage with the people directly affected. The smaller population size within a local government area means a much higher percentage of the population can be consulted than in other tiers of government.

Community engagement can range from surveys seeking the opinions of residents in relation to traffic treatments and park design, to collaborative development of key strategic plans, however, we are always looking to improve our community engagement and consultation processes.

The purpose of this Community Engagement Strategy is to support Council to deliver quality community engagement and provide a process giving transparency to the Community on how the City will engage with them.

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Message from the Mayor

Andrew Waddell JP
Mayor

There is no greater pleasure for a leader of local government than when the community comes together to achieve their goals or solve their problems in a collaborative and constructive manner.

The City of Kalamunda strives to engage with its community at every level and yet people will say to me that we over consult or we don't consult enough. It is a difficult path to navigate but I am hopeful through the development and implementation of this strategy the community, City staff and Council will have an aligned understanding of what community engagement means and how to best apply it.

I commend **Kalamunda Engages - Community Engagement Strategy 2017** and look forward to the processes, interactions and outcomes this Strategy will guide.

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Rhonda Hardy
Chief Executive Officer

This is the second iteration of Kalamunda Engages and I am very pleased this Strategy is now closely aligned with world's best practice through adopting the International Association of Public Participation (iap2) framework. Since 2013 the City has been developing skills and expanding our resource capacity in the area of community engagement. The community will continue to see the very popular pop-up shopfront display where time is allocated to go to local shopping centres to share information about many and varied City services. The biannual newsletter was launched in 2016 and will continue to be produced, the City's website will be updated and the many actions outlined in this Strategy will ensure the City becomes proficient and appreciated for its focus upon community engagement.

The Council and Community, through recent consultations undertaken in reviewing the Strategic Community Plan, gave voice to the need to increase engagement and communications and that message was heard.

The **Kalamunda Engages – Community Engagement Strategy 2017** now provides direction, definition and critical information for staff and the community to use when determining how we will engage on the many and various topics that confront the City of Kalamunda.

The City gives its commitment to providing ongoing, well-planned and credible community engagement in accordance with this Strategy.

Introduction

As the form of government closest to the people, local government has always taken an active approach to engaging with the community. The Local Government Act 1995 contains a legislative requirement to ensure community input is a part of the decision making process and best practice recommends Councils' should formally adopt a Community Engagement Strategy.

The City of Kalamunda takes pride in the strong and collaborative relationships it has developed with community members. Community engagement can occur in many different ways depending on the situation, priorities and outcomes required. This Strategy seeks to ensure a consistent approach to the City's engagement activities, improving understanding both within and outside of the local government and demystifying the concept of community engagement for all.

The Strategy is not prescriptive but rather guiding and facilitative to help staff and community to work collaboratively towards effective community engagement outcomes. The City will ensure staff are trained in the use of the iap2 model and have the support of the Council when they are undertaking engagement processes.

Purpose

The purpose of this Community Engagement Strategy (CES) is to support Council deliver quality community engagement and to present a transparent process to the Community outlining how the City will engage with them.

In particular this Strategy will:

- establish standard processes for community engagement
- ensure those processes are implemented by City staff and where relevant by external consultants employed by the City
- ensure relevant decision making takes account of outcomes acquired from such processes along with relevant legislative requirements and other Council policies
- ensure the community is kept informed of decisions emanating from community engagement.

What is Community Engagement?

The term 'community engagement' for the purposes of this Strategy, refers to the processes through which the community and other interested parties are informed about and/or invited to contribute, through consultation or involvement, to proposals or policy changes relating to City services, events, strategic plans, issues, projects and the like. Community engagement does not necessarily mean consensus; it is about seeking broad understanding and best possible solutions for the City and the community.

Why should we engage?

"People whose lives are effected by a decision have the right to be involved the decision-making process in some way."

(IAP2 Core Value)

We engage with our community because meaningful and effective community engagement will make us a better local government more able to meet community needs and aspirations. Further to this overarching aspiration formalising our community engagement processes will also provide the following benefits:

- Assist in and provide greater legitimacy for governmental decision-making and demonstrate a commitment to accountability, democracy and transparency.
- Foster democratic dialogue among citizens and revitalise civic culture.
- Help the local government plan and improve the level, profile and efficiency of services to meet community needs and aspirations.
- Help the local government prioritise services and make better use of resources.
- Allow a broader range of views to be expressed and more information to be assembled prior to making decisions.
- Offer and/or create new perspectives and solutions on issues.
- Provide an opportunity for community input on issues at times other than elections.
- Raise awareness of issues and facilitate learning.
- Reveal actual or potential problems.
- Reveal the needs and wants of the community.
- Enable the City and the community to work together to achieve balanced decisions.

There are also benefits to individuals and other community members from getting involved in the community engagement process. They include:

- Ensuring their views and opinions are heard.
- Empowering citizens and promoting community involvement.
- Contributing to the creation of a community and urban environment that they desire.

- Having opportunity to make a difference to their local community and "giving something back".
- Becoming more involved and knowledgeable about the communities they live in.
- Make new connections with other local residents and community groups.
- Having opportunity to represent the interest of specialist groups/ organisations with whom they are connected.

When should we engage?

There are many instances where as a Local Government we will seek to engage with the community, in particular engagement will occur for proposals or policy changes relating to the City's services, events, strategic plans, issues, projects and the like.

Before making a decision on who to engage and the methods of engagement to be used, it is critical the following points are considered.

- The purpose of engagement because stakeholders may vary depending upon the type of project
- Characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, age, socio-economic background as well as special needs – each is equally important
- The impact of not including people from different backgrounds
- The desired level of participation and influence of stakeholders in the process
- What will maximise participation in the engagement process
- What will be the most effective ways to reach out to different groups of stakeholders
- What will be the most suitable method of engagement and tools/techniques to use

When it is Not Possible to Engage?

Not all decisions of the Council will provide an opportunity for broad community consultation or active participation. For example a prior decision of the Council, established precedent or a legislative imperative

may exclude engagement. If there is no opportunity for members of the community to have input into the Council's decision making processes, this will be made clear when the community is informed about the proposal through clear notation within Council reports.

Land Use Planning and Development Engagement

The City tends to experience most of its controversial issues when land use planning and development applications are being considered.

Where legislative requirements or other Council policies exist which address specific information/ consultation processes, they will take precedence and set a minimum requirement for community engagement, however the implementation of legislation and those policies should be cognisant of the Community Engagement Strategy.

The City is committed to doing more than the minimum when it comes to community engagement and public participation. The tools, processes and options outlined in this Strategy can still be used to expand upon statutory requirements in circumstances where it is necessary or useful to do so, particularly when a development has the potential to draw concern within the community.

In some instances local governments are able to make decisions under delegated authority. This is particularly common for planning decisions and under this arrangement consultation is not always required. The City will ensure it examines the risks associated with all planning and development applications before approving under delegation.

If there is any indication there may be risk arising that will have an impact on another person the City will undertake engagement.

Who should we engage?

The engagement issue or topic will influence who needs to be engaged. Sometimes this will mean engaging with a section of the community and sometimes it will require engagement with the community in its entirety. Community generally refers to those who live, work, visit or invest in the City of Kalamunda. This includes councillors, staff, residents, customers, State and Federal Government Agencies, non-government agencies, the private sector, community organisations and groups, churches, schools and local government partners such as Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council and Western Australian Local Government Association.

How should we engage?

There are many approaches, methodologies and techniques that can be used when engaging with the community. How we engage with the Community will be dependent on the engagement topic, its potential to impact on the community, the desired outcomes, and resources available. It may range from informing strategies to ongoing high level engagements. To assist staff in determining the level of engagement appropriate for the many and varied engagement interactions occurring within the local government context and the iap2 framework will be applied. This will provide guidance to staff and also transparency and understanding to the community on the level of engagement that can be expected in particular situations.

Building Partnerships through Consultation

Genuine and quality consultation can contribute significantly to deliberative democracy, building trust and confidence in people and unleashing their potential as citizens. There are many methods of consultation. These range from surveys, public meetings, forums and workshops, to more extensive processes such as summits, and advisory committees. These varying methods of consultation are suited to different issues and objectives.

Consultation is not simply about collecting the views and opinions of citizens. Rather it should be thought of as a two-way information exchange process enabling Council and stakeholders to inform, respond, give feedback, express concerns and identify issues, so these can be considered before making a decision. They also serve as an opportunity to: engage citizens in the activities of government; and educate communities about government and decision-making processes.

Consultation is a complex and dynamic process, and like any important process it benefits from best practice and diligence. It should be considered an essential tool for policy makers, project developers and service providers, implementers and evaluators.

Consensus - Outcomes or Process?

There are two perspectives on consultation which are not necessarily alternatives.

1. "Right result", or substantive consensus - concerned with the **outcome** of the consultation, and

2. "Right practice", or procedural consensus - concerned with reaching agreement about the **process.**

It is important for those planning the consultation to determine what the focus is: getting the 'right result' or ensuring the processes and procedures are likely to result in an outcome that every participant can live with. A decision is more likely to be deemed legitimate if all participants concur on the process for making that decision.

Core Values and Principles

Community engagement is likely to be successful when:

• there is clarity about the decision to be made,

• appropriate choices have been made regarding the role of the public, and

• core values are expressed throughout the process.

Core Values are one of the foundations of the iap2 framework for decision-focused, values-based public participation.

The City will apply the iap2 Core Values for its community engagement practice as follows

iap2 Core Values

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision making process.

2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.

3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.

4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.

5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.

6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

Guiding Principles

In addition the following set of Guiding Principles will underpin how we engage with the community.

Good Faith – all engagements will be undertaken in good faith. Community opinions, ideas, and perspectives will be sought with sincerity and considered a valuable and positive part of the City's planning processes and service delivery.

Timely – All engagement will be undertaken in a timely manner to reduce the risk of frustration and concerns arise from lengthy delays in processes.

Diversity – the City will seek to obtain a range of opinions and perspectives from the diversity of individuals, groups, businesses and organisations which comprise the Kalamunda community including those who have not typically engaged with the City in the past.

Relationship Building - Recognise the value and importance of developing and maintaining relationships between the local government and the community.

Effective Communication – Provide consistent and timely communication, information sharing and feedback to the community to improve community understanding and engagement and maintain positive relationships.

Accessibility and Participation – ensure accessibility is a fundamental aspect of an engagements design, providing community members with an opportunity to participate in a manner that is both convenient and meaningful to them.

Transparency and Accountability – Provide community members with a clear understanding of the level of engagement to be undertaken, how the outcomes of engagement will be used and provide feedback on how it contributed to the decision making process.

Evaluation and Review – The City's engagement processes and outcomes will be evaluated and reviewed to ensure they are achieving the desired outcomes and meeting community expectations.

The City aims to measure its effectiveness against these principles.

Risk Profile

When assessing a proposal to undertake community engagement to determine if a decision may cause detriment to another person a risk profile must be undertaken using the City's Risk Matrix.

Risk Matrix

Consequence Likelihood	May occur, only in exceptional circumstances **Rare E**	Could occur at some time **Unlikely D**	Should occur at some time **Possible C**	Will probably occur in most circumstances **Likely B**	Expected to occur in most circumstances **Almost Certain A**
Critical	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
Major	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
Significant	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Extreme
Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High
Insignificant	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	High

Source – City of Kalamunda Risk Management Policy

Determining Consequences

The following table will assist to identify the severity and consequences that each risk identified and should be applied to the risk profile developed.

	Finance Impact	Health & Safety	Reputation	Operations	Environment	Compliance	Project
CRITICAL	>$1M	Fatality or permanent disabling injuries or illness	Substantiated, public embarrassment, very high multiple impacts, high widespread multiple news profile, third party actions	Non-achievement of major deliverables	Major breach of legislation or extensive contamination and environmental damage requiring third party intervention	Breach resulting in external investigation or third party actions resulting in significant tangible loss and damage to reputation	>50% increase in cost or timeline, or inability to meet project objectives requiring the project to be abandoned or redeveloped
MAJOR	$500,000 - $1M	Serious irreversible injuries or illness	Substantiated, organisational embarrassment, high impact news profile, third party actions	Non-achievement of major deliverables	Minor Breach of legislation / significant contamination or damage requiring third party assistance	Breach resulting in external investigation or third party actions resulting in tangible loss and some damage to reputation	20-50% increase in time or cost or significant variation to scope or objective requiring restructure of project and Senior Management or Council approval
SIGNIFICANT	$100,000 - $500,000	Injuries or illness that could lead to a Lost Time Injury	Substantiated, public embarrassment, moderate impact, moderate news profile	Significant delays to major deliverables	Environmental damage requiring restitution or internal cleanup	Breach requiring internal investigation, treatment or moderate damage control	10-20% increase in time or cost or variation to scope or objective requiring Senior Management approval
MODERATE	$10,000 - $100,000	Medical treatment injury or illness	Substantiated, low impact, low news item	Inconvenient delays	Minor damage or contamination	Breach of policy, process or legislative requirement requiring attention of minimal damage control	5-10% increase in time or cost or variation to scope or objective requiring managers approval
INSIGNIFICANT	< $10,000	First aid treatment injury or illness	Unsubstantiated, low impact, low profile or "no news" item	Little impact	Little impact	Minor breach of policy, or process requiring approval or variance	Small variation to cost, timelines, scope or quality of objectives and required outcomes

Getting People Involved

Getting people involved is possibly the most important and most challenging part of community engagement. Community engagement without adequate participants is ineffective, a waste of resources, a lost opportunity and disheartening for the staff involved and those community members who did participate.

Putting the effort into designing good community engagement, which attracts a significant number and diversity of participants, will not only create better outcomes but will create positive relationships between the local government and the Community. It will increase acceptance of decisions, reinforce to Council and Staff the value of community engagement and encourage the Community to participate in future community engagement activities.

There are three key aspects to be considered to maximise the number of participants, the diversity of participants involved and the outcomes achieved.

- Understanding the communities involved.
- Identifying the barriers to participation (perceived and real).
- Good design of the community engagement activities.

To assist with gaining a good understanding about the community and stakeholders and designing effective events for any given community engagement proposal the following detailed information can be found in - "Tools for Engagement."

Appendix 1 - Understanding the Communities Involved

Appendix 2 – Identifying Barriers to Engagement

Appendix 3 – Good design of the Community Engagement Activities

Appendix 4 – Analysis and Evaluation Worksheet

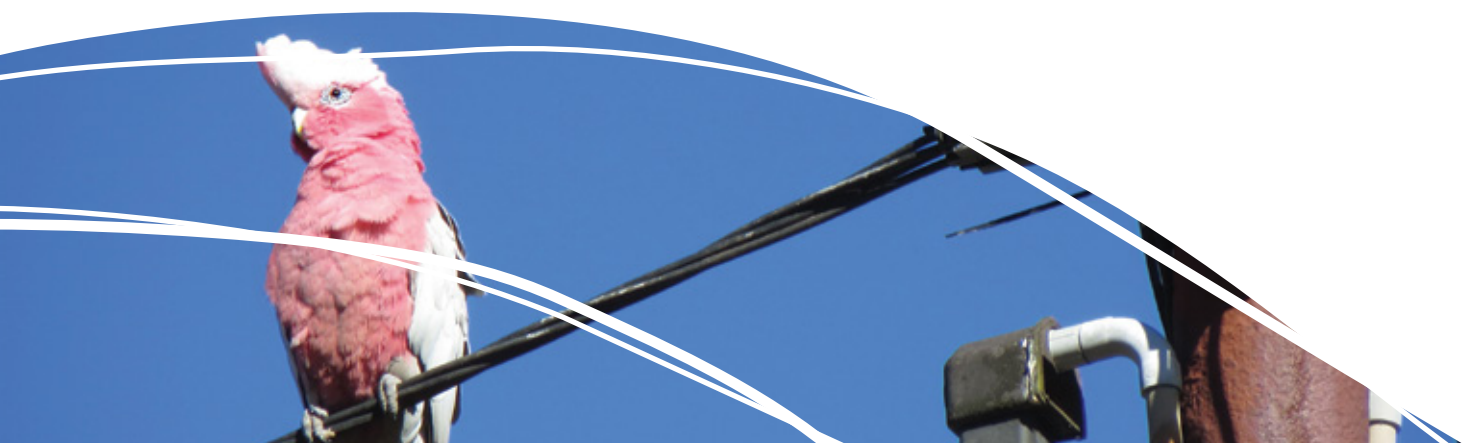**Appendix 5 – Best Practice Approach**

Engagement Levels

The International Association for Public Participation is recognised as an international leader in this field and its Spectrum of Public Participation is commonly used as a basis for local government community engagement models. The Spectrum is outlined in the table below.

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Objective				
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solution.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/.or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Obligations to the Public				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Source – IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

The Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum shows that differing levels of participation are legitimate and depend on the goals, time frames, resources, and levels of concern in the decision to be made. The IAP2 Spectrum of Participation is a resource that is used on an international level and can be found in many public participation plans.

A definition for each of these engagement levels is provided in the Table below.

Inform **(one-way communication)**	Providing information to keep the community informed on what the local government is doing and how it will affect them.	**Example Tools** Fact Sheets Web Sites Open Houses
Consult **(two-way communication)**	Usually occurs after a draft of the plan, project or service has been completed or preliminary decision has been made and the community are asked to express their interests, concerns and support for the plan, service and facilities, or other City related decision.	**Example Tools** Public Comment Focus Groups Surveys Public Meetings
Involve **(two-way communication)**	Usually occurs before a draft of the plan, project or service has been completed. Involves engaging the community to participate in generating options and potential solutions that are then used to generate/ draft the plan, project, facility or service.	**Example Tools** Workshops Deliberative Polling
Collaborate **(multi-way communication)**	The community directly participates in selecting the best-fit solution that will become the plan, project, facility or service. Generally in the form of working groups or advisory committees and involves communication not just between the community and Council but also amongst stakeholders and community members.	**Example Tools** Advisory Committees Consensus-building Participatory Decision Making
Empower **(multi-way communication)**	The Community decided through a process and the decision will be implemented. This approach will be used when initiating a community group to become independent and self-managing.	**Example Tools** Citizens' Juries Ballots Delegated Decisions

Informing strategies represent the lowest level of engagement and usually include one-way communication methods to provide information only. The depth of information, quality of engagement and the potential influence participants have on the outcomes, increases through the five levels. It should be noted as the level of influence increases, the resources required tends to increase and the number of participants tends to decrease.

Also note: community and stakeholders should be given the choice to engage in their preferred way. Some people choose to simply stay informed on a particular topic and issue, but will be more likely to engage at a higher level on other things if it impacts them more closely. Quality engagement plans should provide several options across various levels.

	Increasing		Decreasing	
Inform		Quality of engagement		Number of participants
Consult		Influence on outcomes		
Involve		Time commitment		
Collaborate		Resources required		
Empower				

Planning the process

The key to good engagement lies in how well the process is planned and managed. The first steps in any engagement process is to understand the aspect.

1. Context:

The need to understand the context of the engagement, the background and history leading to this point. How critical is the current situation? What else might be happening? What other factors or influences need to be considered?

2. Scope:

Confirm why you need to consult. What needs to happen or be resolved? The need to ensure clarity of the project scope or decision including what is negotiable and what is not, what resources are available and how much time is needed to attend to the matter.

3. People:

Who is affected and passionate about the matter? Which people need to be considered and who has strength and influence in the situation?

4. Purpose:

Has the purpose of the project been established, and is there agreement with all stakeholders about the purpose and goals for the engagement?

For example is the decision to:
- Contribute to the development of policies or strategies?
- Establish service priorities? Or Evaluate service delivery or performance?
- Explore community needs or wants? Or foster a partnership with the community?

Or Gain or gauge public support?
- Gather data in the form of statistics or opinions to guide future decisions?
- Reach a consensual agreement? Or Resolve disputes?

The **purpose statement** sets out how the involvement of the community and stakeholders will contribute to the scope of the work or decision. For example a purpose statement should contain three components:

1. A verb best describing what you want the audience to do;
2. Identify and state the goal or issue being pursued;
3. What outcome is being sought?

"To investigate/explore/ decide/consider options for improving cycling in the City to reduce conflict between cyclists and residents."

5. Influence:

A statement about influence will identify roles for the community and the organisation, and shape what influence they will have on the outcome. These five elements are interdependent and must align and connect for effective engagement design. Changes in the profile of the stakeholders and people may change the engagement purpose; changes in the purpose will change the profile of the stakeholders and people; and changes in the purpose or profile of the people will change the level of influence or the role in decision making or action.

Model Planning Process

Context		
Scope, purpose and Preparation	1. Identify the issue	
	2. Identify the Stakeholders to be involved	
	3. Clarify the intent	
	4. Develop a Statement about influence	
	5. State the purpose, aims, goals and objectives	
	6. Determine Resources	
	7. Coordinate the process	
	8. Choose the methods	

Implementation	Consult the community on Issues
Conducting the consultation event	1. Provide information
	2. Provide leadership
	3. Ensure procedural Integrity
	4. Develop documentation
	5. Make ethical considerations
	6. Be objective
	7. Provide interpretations
	8. Provide lots of publicity
	9. Create Ownership
	10. Manage Expectations

Results	Community Preferences and Priorities
Outputs and outcomes	1. Analyse data gathered
	2. Identify Policy, strategy choices and options recommended by the community
	3. Report back to the community
	4. Implement
	5. Monitor
	6. Evaluate
	7. Improve

Engagement Levels

The engagement levels can either be used in isolation or in combination depending on the engagement topic, its complexity and likely impact on the community, the outcomes required, and the resources available, but is is preferred to give people a choice of engagement options across the spectrum. Each engagement level has a specific focus, an accompanying commitment or promise to the community and a set of clear methodologies, which are transparent and understandable in order to ensure all community members are able to participate.

Engagement Level One: Inform

Informing strategies may seem the simplest level of engagement but they are also the most critical. Keeping the community informed about what the Council is doing, the decisions it makes (and why) and how the community can get involved is the utmost priority for the local government. Informing strategies should underpin all of the City's community engagement activities and need to reach out to the entire community.

In particular, informing strategies provide the foundation for higher levels of engagement (Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower) giving people basic information so they can decide if they wish to participate in further engagement processes.

It is also important to let the community know what is happening in situations where the community will not be engaged as part of the decision making. Keeping the community informed on Council's decision making processes is a key for effective governance and building high levels of trust with the community. Generally most community members are accepting of decisions when they are familiar with all the details surrounding the decision.

Informing strategies should be guided by the City's Communication and Engagement Policy which has the following core objectives:

- to align communication and engagement activity with the use of stakeholder analysis tools and communication plans to meet stakeholder needs and expectations,
- ensure communication plans are proactively developed around each major project and issue that arises
- improve communication value and consistency across the organisation
- increase the timeliness and effectiveness of communication and engagement internally and externally

The Communications and Engagement Policy provides guidance on stakeholder identification, communication planning and engagement practices, and refers to the iap2 model, the City Media Policy, Customer Service Strategy and the City's Brand Style Guide.

Remember Accessibility is Important

It is important all informing strategies and communications are accessible to all members of the community, including those with disabilities. This is identified in the City's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan which has the objective to establish a code of conduct to ensure the community is accessible for and inclusive of persons with disabilities, their families and carers. Two of the Plan's six outcomes relate to the City's communication and engagement activities:

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from the City of Kalamunda in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it	
Strategy	
3.1	Ensure information from the City can be easily accessed in a range of formats by all sectors of the community.
3.2	Apply contemporary good practice guidelines to the City's website to improve its accessibility for people with disability.
3.3	Ensure marketing and promotional materials reflect branding and accessibility standards.

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in public consultation by the City of Kalamunda	
Strategy	
6.1	Ensure public consultations are accessible by community members.
6.2	Provide a range of opportunities in a variety of formats to enable the community to comment on the DAIP and disability access issues.
6.3	Raise awareness of opportunities for people with disability and the wider community to participate in consultation.
6.4	Raise awareness of the Disability and Carers Advisory Committee and their role in providing advice and recommendations to Council in respect to disability, disability services and improvement of access.

Source: City of Kalamunda Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2017 – 2022

Inform - Objective

To provide the community with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions being considered by Council, in regards to its services, events, projects and many associated issues, including governance and decision making mechanisms.

Inform - Commitment to the Community

The City will keep the community informed.

Informing Strategies

Informing Strategy 1.0 – Utilise a variety of communication methods and formats

Description
Provide information using a broad range of communication methods and formats to ensure effective and widespread delivery of information.

Approaches	
Media	Continue to provide information through the local community newspapers. Continue with a range of media releases distributed to local media and if needed, metropolitan media. All media releases are posted on the City's website
Print materials	Continue to publish and distribute newsletters, posters, leaflets, brochures and fact sheets that inform the community about City events, services, projects and proposals.
Website	Maintain the City's website http://www.kalamunda.wa.gov.au as an authoritative, complete and timely source of information on Council's activities, services and facilities. Continue to publish the City's printed materials on-line, supplemented by additional information, images, audio and video. Make information resources, wherever possible, available under an open content licence, specifically a Creative Commons Australia licence, to promote the use and dissemination of City's materials while retaining the City's rights of authorship.
Social Media	Continue to use social media, Facebook and Twitter etc. Participate in and build social media networks to allow the City to target its communications better and improve its information provision and promotion.
Email	Improve and promote email newsletter service and allow residents to select topics of interest to them so they are regularly notified.

Informing Strategy 1.1 – Provide information in accessible formats

Description	
Ensure all information provided to the community is in a form accessible to all groups in the community including people with disabilities, people with computer literacy difficulties, young people, the aged; and, people from diverse cultural backgrounds.	
Approaches	
Written Materials	Consider the ease in which written materials can be read by those with disabilities including font size, font weight, spacing, contrast and binding. Alternative formats of written materials may be required.
Audio formats	Audio formats provide an alternative format for people with a vision, intellectual or developmental, or learning disability who are unable to read print.
Translation services	Maintain the City's website http://www.kalamunda.wa.gov.au as an authoritative, complete and timely source of information on Council's activities, services and facilities. Continue to publish the City's printed materials on-line, supplemented by additional information, images, audio and video. Make information resources, wherever possible, available under an open content licence, specifically a Creative Commons Australia licence, to promote the use and dissemination of City's materials while retaining the City's rights of authorship.
Social Media	Information may need to be provided in different languages for those who are unable or find it difficult to read materials written in English.
Expert Advice	Utilise expert agencies such as WADE to assist in advising and auditing the suitability and application of information formats used across the City to provide assurance to the level of accessibility.

Engagement Level Two: Consult

The consult strategy is the second level of community engagement and the first in which the community may choose to provide an input. The most common form of consultation is an advertised comment period this can also be supplemented by online comment and/ or public displays. It generally takes place after a draft of a plan, project or service has been completed or preliminary decision has been made and the community are then asked to express their interests, concerns and ideas for the plan, service and facilities, or other City related decision.

Consulting strategies can either be used in isolation or can build upon other engagement strategies. For example, if the City in developing a new Plan has a good understanding of the topic and the concerns of the community it may decide to proceed with developing a draft of the Plan and then seek community input and comment on the draft Plan. For more complex topics, or where there is likely to be significant community impact; involving strategies may be used to develop the draft Plan and then consulting strategies are subsequently used to obtain comment on this draft Plan.

Consult - Objective

To obtain community feedback on proposals and /or decisions about strategic plans, directions, issues, priorities, services and community projects and improvement plans.

Consult - Commitment to the Community

Council will ensure the community is consulted on issues which impact them directly or are of concern to the community or to any group within the community in a timely manner.

Consulting Strategies

Consulting Strategy 2.0 – Advertised Comment Period

Description
When a project, plan or proposal has been drafted the City will make a report to Council recommending the draft be released for public comment. Council will then approve the draft being released for public comment for a defined period of time. This provides opportunity for stakeholders, community members, community organisations etc. to provide written submission detailing their support (or lack of support) suggestions for improvements, ideas and concerns.
Approaches
All items for which the City is seeking public comment are made available in a number of ways. These include from the Administration office, libraries and City website. When an item is marked for Public Comment it is published in the local papers and also in the news section of the website for a period of not less than 28 working days. This allows people time to view the item and submit their comments. Written comments can either be posted or emailed to the City. A workshop or focus groups can also be a consulting strategy, if viable and a better outcome will be reached. Submissions and feedback are then reviewed and collated and changes may be made to the draft. A final report is then made to Council, summarising the submissions received and detailing any changes. A Feedback Summary and the final draft, along with details of the changes, is made public.

Consulting Strategy 2.1 – Public Displays

Description
Draft projects, plans and proposals that are quite complex in nature or include detailed maps, drawings or models can benefit by going on public display. This provides an opportunity for the community to better view materials such as maps, drawings or models. Public displays are usually used within a public comment period.

Approaches	
Shopfronts	Shopfronts (staffed displays) improve participation by accessing people in busy areas such as the shopping centres and other venues such as the market, festival and other fair days. The community can drop in at their convenience and display materials are provided along with staff to answer questions. Shopfronts have a relaxed atmosphere and can enable kitchen table style discussions.
Open Days	Open days are location specific information displays where staff are available to answer questions.
Unstaffed Displays	Unstaffed displays with supporting background materials may be set up in the Administration Office, libraries, community centres etc...

Consulting Strategy 2.2 – On-line comment

Description
Utilise the City's website and other online forums to obtain comment on draft projects, plans and proposals.

Approaches	
City's website	Make consultations listed on the City's website more convenient to users by incorporating comment forms directly in the web page.
Consultation Specific website	Build consultation-specific websites when appropriate. These are most commonly used when involving strategies are in place.
Social networking	Participate in and build social networks to allow the local government to receive community input from those communities.

Consulting Strategy 2.3 – Surveys

Description
Surveys are conducted to determine community opinions and views on a range of topics. Surveys should be well designed so that they are easily understood and to answer specific questions that can contribute to the development of the strategy.

Approaches	
Major Community Surveys	The City has used consultants to conduct major community surveys by telephone approximately every three years. A range of subjects is covered and results benchmarked against other Councils.
Topic specific surveys	Several sections of the City conduct user and non-user surveys or questionnaires from time to time, e.g. the Library, Meals on Wheels and Youth Services. Surveys are also conducted regarding particular projects, e.g. the development of the Local Environment Plan and Plans of Management for Open Space.
Online Surveys	Online surveys allow us to have quick access to community opinion and views. It allows the City to improve services and gauge resident feedback on how we are doing. These can be done directly on the City's website for short surveys or by using online survey tools for longer surveys.

Engagement Level Three: Involve

The third level of engagement, Involve, seeks to engage those with a higher level of influence or offers many more opportunities to engage. It is more commonly used in instances where there is likely to be significant impact on and ownership or buy in of the community (or groups within the community), where there is a wealth of local knowledge that could be tapped into, and/ or the issue is complex in nature. Involving strategies generally occur before a draft of the plan, project or service has been completed or even before it starts, and involves engaging the community to participate in testing assumptions, generating options and potential solutions then used to develop/ draft the plan, project, facility or service.

Involving strategies can target specific groups, and individuals, likely to be impacted or have an interest in the issue i.e. bushland groups when developing an environmental project or strategy, or user groups of a community facility to be ungraded. Involving strategies can also reach out to the broader community to capture a spectrum of ideas and concerns.

Involving strategies include interactive sessions, surveys, focus groups, interviews and online involvement.

Involving strategies are intensive and will have targeted community involvement which may not necessarily always be representative of the broader community. Usually once targeted community engagement has occurred, and the output has been drafted, it will then be published to canvass broader opinion (Consult).

. . . .

Involve - Objective

To work directly with the community to ensure community ideas, concerns and aspirations are listened to and understood and community knowledge is harnessed in developing the plan, project, facility or service.

. . . .

Involve - Commitment to the Community

To ensure concerns and aspirations of the community are directly reflected in the alternatives and proposals developed and provide feedback on how community input influenced the decision.

Involving Strategies

Involving Strategy 3.0 – Interactive sessions

Description
Interactive sessions such as Community Conversations or Consultative Workshops provide an environment for community and stakeholders to get together and discuss issues and generate ideas and solutions which will form the basis of the City's project, plan or proposal. Local government has conducted interactive sessions on a range of subjects over many years. This method of engagement is very popular and should continue. Attendances have ranged from 50 to over 200 depending on the topic.

Approaches	
Community Conversations	Residents come together at round tables in a relaxed environment over refreshments and discuss the issue/s at hand. They agree on the agenda at the beginning and each person's ideas are recorded. The ideas from each table are fed back to all at the end. The ideas are collated and analysed and the outcomes are distributed to attendees and to Councillors. Local Government has the benefit of listening to and learning about what people think and then can make decisions taking all ideas into account. All participants are kept informed.
Consultative Workshops	Consultative Workshops are open to the community with the aim of briefing interested residents on specific projects and to get their feedback prior to the preparation of plans such as the Local Environment Plan.

Involving Strategy 3.1 – Focus Groups

Description
A focus group is an interview, conducted by a facilitator with a small group of community members. The interview is conducted in an unstructured and natural way where participants are free to give views from any aspect

Approaches
Attendance at focus groups are usually by invitation targeting specific groups with relevant experience of the subject matter, e.g. to test new equipment being considered in a facility or designing a small local neighbourhood park. Randomly selected focus groups may also be convened from time to time to allow a wider perspective on specific issues.

Involving Strategy 3.2 – Interviews

Description
An interview is a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked by the interviewer to elicit facts, opinions or ideas from the interviewee. Interviews are a far more personal form of research than questionnaires and allow the interviewer to ask follow up questions. But can be time consuming and resource intensive.

Approaches
From time to time, for example in the development of the plan or a specific service, interviews are conducted particularly with those that may find it difficult to participate in other forms of engagement. This could include in the homes of some residents, such as the frail aged, the house bound, carers etc; and occasionally at schools or at the Youth Development Centre with students with special issues or needs. Interviews may also be used to gain information from 'experts' state government representatives.

Involving Strategy 3.3 – On-line involvement

Description	
Engagement can now also occur in online spaces – such as blogs and forums – where two-way communication between the local government and the community is encouraged and nurtured.	
Approaches	
City's website	Provide opportunity for community members to get involved through the Citys website by incorporating survey or comment forms directly in the web page.
Consultation Specific website	Build consultation-specific websites when appropriate that provide some or all of: • background materials; • online surveys; and • forums were users can post ideas, suggestions or have discussions with other users.
Social networking	Participate in and build social networks to allow the local government to receive community input from those communities. These include Facebook and Twitter.
Other Forums	Maintain a program of 'active listening' or 'continuous consultation' by monitoring mentions on the internet and feeding these conversations to the relevant Council officers. Continue collaborative projects on-line to allow the community to document and share its local knowledge while also participating in other collaborative spaces, such as Wikipedia and OpenStreetMap (an open data map repository).

Engagement Level Four: Collaborate

Collaborate involves the City collaborating with community members in selecting the best-fit solution that will become the plan, project, facility or service.

Collaboration:

- generally occurs in the form of working groups or advisory committees
- is either for the duration of the project (working groups) or on-going if issue related (advisory committees)
- can be used in conjunction with inform, consult and involve strategies
- involves communication not just between the community and the local government but also amongst stakeholders and community members.

This level of engagement provides participants with a high degree of influence over the outcomes, although the final decision remains with the Council. Generally with a limited number of individuals who are able to collaborate , these participants may be interested members of the community or may represent specific stakeholder groups. In this case the City may determine to appoint a Community Reference Group (CRG) under a specific Terms of Reference.

Participants of a CRG have a responsibility to:

- Commit sufficient time to the process.
- Represent the interests of other people including those who might be less vocal or harder to reach.
- Choose the best-fit solution that meets the needs of all people with an interest or likely to be affected including those from minority groups.
- Keep people informed on the progress of the process.

It is essential to the balanced operation of any collaborative group that membership is reflective of all views and is regularly refreshed and does not become dominated by strongly held thoughts of a small group.

It is also important collaborative groups remain relevant and provide a strategic contribution to the planning and development of the City's services, projects, plans and proposals. The City should review the relevance and contribution of collaborative groups periodically and work with the members of collaborative groups to ensure their participation is providing maximum benefit (both to the City and participants).

Collaborate - Objective

To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

Collaborate - Commitment to the Community

To look to the community for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and to incorporate their advice and recommendations into the decision to the maximum extent possible.

Collaborating Strategies

Collaborating Strategy 4.0 – Advisory/Management Committees

Description

Management and Advisory Committees are established by Council to provide ongoing input into particular issues.

Membership of Advisory Committees is by invitation of the Council and expressions of interest are generally advertised in the media and on the web.

Advisory Committees have terms of reference which include:
- Role of the group
- Membership
- Meeting times – usually up to three times per annum at time of day to suit members
- Review periods – usually annually in September
- Meeting procedures including Chair and Deputy Chair, Disclosure of any Non Pecuniary or Pecuniary Interests, adherence to Code of Conduct for such groups.
- Minutes and any associated proposals or suggestions to be submitted to Council.

Approaches

There are currently two Management Committees and five Advisory Committees that focus upon facilities management:
- Ray Owen Sports Centre Management Committee
- Lesmurdie School Community Library Management Committee
- Scott Reserve Advisory Committee
- Hartfield Park Advisory Committee
- Kostera Oval Advisory Committee

There are also four Advisory Committees that are issue related:

Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee - comprises of community members with a disability, people working in the disability field, elected members and relevant staff who work together to promote the wellbeing and sense of belonging of people with disabilities residing, working in or visiting Kalamunda.

Kalamunda Environment Advisory Committee - provides advice to the Council on environmental and sustainable matters and assists in promoting environmental awareness and improving policies through a diverse range of projects and initiatives aimed at promoting social, economic and environmental benefits.

Kalamunda Aged Care Advisory Committee – provides advice to the Council on issues relating to the provision of aged care services and accommodation.

Bush Fire Advisory Committee - formulates for Council's consideration, recommendations on policy and matters relating to bush fire prevention, control and extinguishment in the City of Kalamunda.

Local Emergency Management Committee – to share information between all key emergency management agencies responding to localise emergencies within the City.

Collaborating Strategy 4.1 – Community Reference and Working Groups

Description

Council may establish Community Reference or Working Groups from time to time to study and report on a specific problem or project and make recommendations based on its findings. Community Reference or Working groups are generally only established for major projects or significant ongoing community issues.

Approaches

The composition of each reference or Working Group can be determined by Council or the administration together with specific terms of reference and reporting mechanisms. These Groups are "sunset" groups which cease to function once Council is satisfied their work is complete.

An example is a Bicycle Working Group which was responsible for the development of the Bicycle Strategy. It may comprised a Councillor, two staff and three community representatives and reported through to a council Committee.

Engagement Level Five: Empower

Empowered communities share responsibility for making decisions and accountability for the outcomes of those decisions. Therefore the goal of this method of engagement is to place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Communities need sufficient resources (human and social capital) to enable an empowerment approach as well as legislative, council resolution or policy to give power to communities to make decisions. The community may have the power to make a limited range of decisions (e.g. on a specified issue or for a limited time), or it may have extensive decision-making powers – *for example participative budgeting.*

Empowerment is about people taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, developing skills, solving problems and increasing their self-confidence.

Consultation is an ideal tool to empower individual citizens and communities. Institutions can facilitate this by providing an environment that encourages and appreciates public participation. Public participation is both a means and an end. As a means, it is a process through which citizens and communities cooperate to provide input into programs and projects. As an end, it empowers citizens and communities through the acquisition of skills, knowledge and experience. In itself, involvement in public life is a positive outcome as it contributes to a strong civil society. It also means decision and policy makers can utilise the contributions of citizens.

General Guidelines

- There must be clarity as to the scope of the shared power and/or decision-making capabilities.
- There must be clarity about roles and responsibilities.
- Issues involving accountability need to be carefully considered.

Empowering communities is also the most challenging approach to community engagement, but offers the greatest rewards in building capacity. There is a commitment by the initiators of the engagement to participate as a stakeholder and to share power in decision-making to achieve collaborative action.

The promise by users of this process is to maintain a high level of active engagement during the development, design and implementation of the approach. Those who do not participate to this extent risk breaking the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and trust.

The rewards of an empowerment approach are often more innovative results incorporating the knowledge of all participants as well as reduced conflict, greater ownership of outcomes and commitment to ongoing action.

Note: In the local government context, with members elected to represent the people, a very limited number of projects will ever meet the ideal scenario to include Empower – with almost all final decisions sitting with Council.

Empower - Objective

To place decision-making through a process underpinned with the principles of mutual trust, transparency and inclusiveness so the final decision making in placed the hands of the public.

Empower - Commitment to the Community

We will implement what you decide.

Empowering Strategies

Empowering Strategy 5.1 – Citizen Juries

Description

A Citizens' Jury is an innovative means of involving everyday people in the process of government decision-making. These projects are genuinely pioneering and each one expands the critical mass of knowledge and understanding around how citizens can best influence the decisions their governments make.

Citizens' Juries are often a 40-hour in-person, deliberative process. As the name suggests, in essence, a Citizens' Jury is a group of randomly selected members of a community convened to consider a given topic and provide a response or recommendation to the governing body. In Australia and around the world, these juries have increasing become recognised for their capacity to deliver outcomes that are trusted by the broader community.

The success of the jury model is based on the premise that if the public know that 40-60, or more, of their fellow citizens have reached consensus around a decision, they immediately have more trust in the decision than if it were made solely by someone in elected office or the public service.

Citizens' Juries work because they can convey to the wider community that citizens like them are being given complete access to information, are studying detailed evidence and hearing from subject-matter experts of their own choosing.

Approaches

A Citizens' Jury requires a dedicated process which includes;

Random Selection: - Entrusting a set number of unbiased randomly selected citizens is seen by others are legitimate.

Time: Most policy problems which warrant the investment in a jury will be complex topics and require the ability to allow people the time to educate and immerse themselves in the topic. It would generally take around six months to deliver the process from beginning to end – as a guide, citizens need at least 40 hours in person, meeting five to six times to meaningfully deliberate and find common ground without feeling (or being!) pushed toward a pre-ordained outcome.

Information: Neutrality of information is a core principle, and therefore writers for juries may have their own bias and perspective and this needs to critically analysed. To counter the view that "you can find an expert to say anything" we focus the start of a process on asking "what do you need to know… and who would you trust to inform you" – and use this as a way of selecting the speakers and input for subsequent jury meetings.

Clear remit: A plain English question, phrased neutrally is essential. This is the most time consuming aspect in finding agreement with a sponsoring government body. Everyday people (not impassioned activists) need to instantly understand the problem to care enough to get involved.

Upfront authority: To get everyday people in the room making a considerable time commitment, they need to know that the recommendations they reach mean something and won't be consumed within the bureaucracy.

Operation: By their nature Citizens' Juries, will tend to reach consensus (or group consent) positions on the questions they are asked to address. However it is recommended an 80% supermajority be required for a final decision from the jury. It is necessary to work with skilled facilitators, experienced with deliberative methods and generally these facilitators are members of the International Association of Public Participation

Empowering Strategy 5.2 – Community Poll

Description
A community poll is similar to a ballot, referendum or election whereby every elector in a district will receive voting papers and will be able to voluntary cast their vote in relation to the issue.

Approaches
The City has two options in relation to holding a community poll. 1. Statutory Related Poll - The Local Government Act Schedule 2.1 enables the Local Government Minister to call for a poll when making a decision in regard to the creation, changing or abolition of a district. A poll of this nature will require at least 50% of the electors of the district to vote, and of those a majority must vote for or against a recommendation. If the Poll votes against a recommendation then the Minister must reject the recommendation. 2. Non Statutory Poll – A Local Government may choose to hold a community poll, however it will not carry any statutory authority. The City in using a community poll would need to resolve to implement the decision based on the results of the community poll. An example of a community poll occurred when the City was asked if it wanted to be amalgamated with another local government.

Empowering Strategy 5.3 – Delegated Decisions

Description
The Council through resolution may choose to delegate it decision making powers to a community group and agree to implement any decision the group formulates.

Approaches
This approach is useful when setting up a new community group or community initiative. The Council may resolve to provide seed funding, a venue or resources and then delegate the formulation of the operations, governance structures and functions of the community group's proposal, project or initiative would up to the community group to self-determine. In essence the Council will set broad parameters and the community are empowered to implement their own decisions in relation to matters outlined in the Council's resolution. Examples of where the Council has delegated decision to community groups include the establishment of the Men's sheds, Women's Powder Room and also the Kalamunda Community Garden.

Community Engagement Action Plan

Actions		Responsibility
A 1.1	Engagement can now also occur in online spaces – such as blogs and forums – where two-way communication between the local government and the community is encouraged and nurtured.	Community Development and Public Relations
A 1.2	Review the City's Style Guide to ensure it includes alternative formats and is cognisant of the City's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.	Community Development and Public Relations
A 1.3	Increase the use of shopfronts for complex project, plans and proposals that include maps, drawings, models etc.	All Service Areas
A 1.4	Increase the use of the City's website and other online forums to obtain comment on draft projects, plans and proposals.	All Service Areas
A 1.5	Increase the use and exposure of interactive sessions, where sufficient resources are available.	All Service Areas
A 1.6	Increase the use and distribution of surveys, where sufficient resources are available.	All Service Areas
A 1.7	Focus Groups should continue to be used where suitable.	All Service Areas
A 1.8	Facilitation skills training should be provided to staff who are likely to be required to facilitate focus groups.	Human Resources
A 1.9	Ensure council report clearly note where there is no opportunity for members of the community to have input into the Council's decision making processes.	Governance
A 1.10	Where necessary expand upon statutory requirements in circumstances when a matter (including planning and development) has the potential to draw controversy within the community.	All Services
A 1.11	Annually identify all projects in the Corporate Business Plan that will require community engagement and prepare a cost estimate for inclusion into annual budget allocations.	All Service areas
A 1.12	Develop organisational capacity through the provision of training on community engagement.	People Services
A 1.13	Develop training programs that focus on design, process, analysis and interpretation	People Services
A 1.14	Develop standard and accessible approaches for providing feedback and building communications plans.	Public Relations
A 1.15	Develop standard processes for evaluation including defining how to identify and collects outputs and participation rates.	Public Relations
A 1.16	Develop a simple consultation charter that summarises the City's approach and can be used by staff and the community as a quick guide.	Public Relations
A 1.17	Investigate and implement a community engagement software System that will best meet the needs of the City.	Public Relation & Information Technology

Actions		Responsibility
A 1.18	Develop Process maps that guide the staff in delivering best practice community engagement processes.	Public Relations
A 1.19	Conduct community surveys to analyse, among other things, the community's preferred methods of receiving information.	Public Relations
A 1.20	Ensure digital communications are part of the corporate culture and are considered a core business function.	Public Relations
A 1.21	Ensure all communications are compliant with the City's Communications and Engagement Policy and Style Guide.	Public Relations
A 1.22	Continue to encourage and expand the use of websites and social media to enhance community consultation and dissemination of information to the community.	Public Relations
A 1.23	Continue to establish working groups when required	All Service Areas
A 1.24	Ensure that a set of terms of reference are developed to ensure the working group has a defined scope and can be appropriately governed.	Governance
A 1.25	Review all existing management and advisory committees every two year before the election to determine their effectiveness and identify whether there is a need for an improved structure and purpose.	Community Development
A 1.26	Hold social media workshops at the Library to promote Council's on-line engagement and give practical support for community participation.	Community Development
A 1.27	Hold workshops for Councillors to encourage their use of blogs and other social media to communicate and converse with the community.	Public Relations
A 1.28	Interviewing skills training should be provided to key officers that are likely to be required to undertake interviews.	Human Resources
A 1.29	Organise a community engagement mobile kit that contains all the materials and stationery needed for an engagement process.	Public Relations

Implementation

Community engagement techniques will vary depending on who is being consulted and the nature and complexity of the issue. Engagement strategies can take into account the primary stakeholders as well as the broad community. Where appropriate, reports to Council will state the methods of engagement to be used with subsequent reports to Council including an evaluation of the efficacy of the consultation processes. The purpose of each engagement process will be conveyed clearly. This will include:

- what the consultation is to achieve;
- background information as appropriate; and
- the role of local government and the community.

Available resources will also determine the type of consultation techniques to be utilised i.e. the timeframe available for consultation, the funds available, the staffing resource capacity etc. It should be noted that budget for community engagement will be allocated within each projects budgets. Budget for skills development will be allocated through the training budget.

An implementation work sheet has been developed to assist in developing community engagement projects and is included in Tools for Community Engagement.

Analysis and Interpretation

Once the engagement is complete the next important step is to analyse and interpret the data and information collected. Analysing and interpreting the data is critical to ensuring community engagement processes are effective and meaningful. In particular, large scale engagements can generate a lot of information which can be wasted if it is not transferred into a practical format. How the information is analysed will depend on the type of data obtained, quantitative or qualitative.

- *Quantitative data* - Quantitative data results from close-ended questions where respondents can only answer in a particular way i.e. yes/no, always/usually/sometimes/never. Quantitative data is easy to analyse and present and can help provide a definitive answer to a question i.e. do you support this proposal, yes or no? However it doesn't offer any additional insight into 'why' people do or don't support the proposal or provide any alternatives.

- *Qualitative data* - Qualitative data results from open-ended questions where respondents are free to write/speak the answers in their own words i.e. How would you like to see this proposal improved? Qualitative data is more time-consuming and difficult to analyse and often has a lower response rate. It can, however, generate new ideas or alternatives and can provide a greater understanding of community sentiment.

Often a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data is sought to achieve the best outcomes. Quantitative and data are analysed in different ways.

- *Quantitative analysis* - As a first step all data (including any demographic data) should be coded and entered. The percentage responses to each question can then be calculated and presented in formats such as graphs and charts. Further analysis can be conducted by segmenting the responses into groups based on demographic data (or other identifying responses) i.e. you can analyse the data based on age, gender, users or non-users of a facility etc.

- *Qualitative Analysis* – Responses to open-ended questions are often grouped into similar responses to determine what the most common responses are i.e. for the

question *'how can this service be improved?'* responses may be grouped like this *longer opening hours (21 responses), increased staff (18 responses), more information (12 responses), lower cost (11 responses)* etc.

- **Weighting comments** – Generally all respondents are weighted equally. Special consideration may be given to people or groups having specific experience or expertise with the matter being engaged on. For example when consulting on the upgrade of a recreational facility, disabled users of the facility may be given extra consideration even though they may only represent a small percentage of the respondents.

Feedback and Evaluation

Feedback and evaluation are integral to the implementation of community engagement activities. There are two types of feedback; community level and participant level feedback. Community level feedback is the most common and involves informing the broader community about the progress and outcomes of engagement. When higher level engagement strategies are used (Involve, Collaborate) it may be appropriate to provide feedback to individual participants. In order to do this, participants will need to be given opportunity to provide their contact details (on a volunteer basis) during the engagement process.

Participant level feedback is likely to increase participant satisfaction, demonstrate that their opinions have been listened to and encourage them to participate in future engagements.

Evaluation of community engagement processes will ensure the engagement has been effective and identify ways future engagement processes can be improved. The type and extent of evaluation conducted will be dependent on the available resources and the nature of the engagement. To be effective the method of evaluation should be determined in the early stages as part of the engagements design. Five different evaluation types have been identified.

- **Outputs** – The most basic form of evaluation and simply records the number of outputs delivered as part of the engagement including number of workshops, media releases, brochures distributed etc.

- **Participation rates** – Determines the level of participation in the engagement such as number of downloads, workshop attendees, and surveys returned etc.

- **Participant information** – Assesses the diversity of participants through the collection of demographic information.

- **Participant feedback** – Obtains feedback from participants to evaluate and improve the engagement process including participant satisfaction and suggestions for improvement.

- **Staff feedback** - Obtains feedback from staff to evaluate and improve the engagement process including suggestions for improvement.

- **Outcomes** – Determines the 'impact' the engagement had on the service, project, plan or proposal i.e. number of suggestions implemented or changes made.

Tools for Community Engagement
Community Engagement Strategy 2017

city of
kalamunda

Appendix 1

Understanding the Communities Involved

It is important to not only have a sound understanding of the issues surrounding the policy, project or service you wish to engage on but to:

- Know what sectors of the community are likely to have an interest in the topic;

- Identify how it might affect or impact on the community as a whole;

- Identify how it might affect or impact on different sectors of the community; and to

- Identify any existing local networks or natural community hubs that are relevant to the topic.

It is much easier and more effective to undertake community engagement by segmenting different target groups and tailoring specific ways to engage with each group. The preferred engagement methods of seniors are likely to be different to those preferred by youth. Yet engagement relating to changes at a local community centre may need to capture both those different target groups (as well as others).

Utilising existing local and social networks and the natural community "hubs" around which relevant stakeholders gather, will not only minimise resources, but can garner trust and credibility and capture participants who may not have otherwise participated.

In addition, understanding which stage of participation a potential participant is in may help to tailor an engagement approach.

The Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour Change is composed of six stages which assess an individual's readiness to act on a new behaviour, and provides strategies to guide the individual through the stages of change (see Figure across page).

While the model was originally developed to better understand the process of behaviour change it can also represent community participation and engagement motivations.

The Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour Change

Stage of Change	Description of processes/coping strategies	
Pre-contemplation	Unaware or not considering issues No intent to change behaviour/attitude	It is most difficult to attract this group – Creating awareness is needed in overcoming the apathy and lack of intent this segment of the community carry.
Contemplation	Awareness of issue Feeling or thinking proactively about the issue Self-education on the issue	This is a good target group for nurturing and growing as they are more likely to become interested in wanting to make a difference. The issue for this group will be barriers and the promotion campaign will likely need to provide reassurance that common barriers will be addressed.
Preparation	Planning to take action within a month of associated preparatory activity	This is the best target group as they are interested and have made the decision to make a difference and drive change but they are not sure how to engage. Promotional material should clearly state participation will enable individual to make a difference to their community – appealing to their sense of greater good is key.
Action	Behaviour/attitude change being operationalised but not necessarily embedded in the individual	This target group needs ongoing stimulation and recognition to keep going. Keep the processes interesting and feedback of results will make them feel important and they will happily keep coming back to the engagement table.
Maintenance	Behaviour/attitude change has been operationalised for 6 months	This target group is now relatively self-sufficient and self-perpetuating – they may need prompting and recognition.
Termination	Behaviour/attitude change embedded	This target group will see it as their duty to participate when ever asked.

Source – James O Prochaska et.al. University of Rhode Island

Appendix 2

Identifying barriers to participation (perceived and real)

A barrier is a circumstance or obstacle that prevents a person from participating or engaging. Barriers can either be perceived or real and are likely to be different for each individual. Identifying what the likely barriers are for different target groups is the first step to designing engagement activities and promotional strategies that will overcome barriers, and thereby increasing participation and giving everyone an equal opportunity to participate.

The following table outlines the most common barriers.

Barriers	Underlying Issue	What Can be Done to Overcome Barriers
Getting involved worries me – not the right skills	Self Esteem & self-capability	Ensure the process is simple and promote the benefits of having a diverse range of opinions and it doesn't require any specialist skills to give opinions.
What's the point?	Apathy	Motivating individuals who will then in turn motivate others is key. Having a clear goal that others want to achieve will help and so will the use of technology to spread information quickly.
I don't know where to go or who to talk to	Lack of Information	Provide clear I directional information in the promotional campaign stage – and make people available to take enquiries – utilise the Customer Service Officers but ensure they are fully informed so they can be effective conduits for communications.
I think we should leave things to the experts as I don't know enough about the issues	Confidence in self-capability	Expert power should be dispelled and community advised they are the experts in knowing what needs exist in the local community. Technical solutions can be developed but they need to be based around community needs in the first instance.
I don't want to associate with vocal minorities	Vested interests	People with a vested interest will often try to dominate a consultative process and this is extremely off putting for those people genuinely interested in the issue at hand.
My time is limited	Too busy	Appeal to the busy person sense of greater good and give reason why it is important for them to participate – Logic and reason will win them over.
I do not speak English very well	Language barrier	Arrange for a buddy or translator who can speak both languages well.
I have some difficulties with gaining access to some venues	Access & Inclusion	Select venues which are accessible for people with disabilities or transport needs.
I need caring support	Affordability & support issue	Engage HACC services for the elderly and have child care available if required.
I have hearing and sight impairments	Special needs	People with special needs should be identified at the enrolment stage and their needs addressed prior to the event.

Model of barriers Adapted from Barriers identified by Piasecka M (2006) Where are the active citizens of tomorrow? Thesis.

Appendix 3

Good design of the community engagement activities

Good design should be based on an understanding of the communities involved and the barriers that need to be overcome. It should also take into account the elements of design.

Design Element	
Logistics	Engagement activities need to be easy for people to be involved in. This includes neutral venues, good facilitation, events held at an appropriate time of day, venues are easy to travel to, and food and drink is available.
Skilled communicators	Considerable skills are required to engage with communities. This includes interpersonal skills in discussing issues with people, facilitation of gatherings, conflict management and capacity to gather, assess and feedback information.
Language	Commit to the use of clear, jargon-free language.
Maintaining focus on the majority of stakeholders	It is easy to spend a lot of energy and time on vocal groups or individuals. Managing these situations requires methods to allow all participants to be involved, facilitation that minimises dominance and good conflict management.
Accountability	The measurement and evaluation of community engagement needs to be part of planning, not just a "report card" at the end of an engagement exercise. The evaluation of engagement needs to be rigorous enough to be defendable but workable and simple.
Influence	If participants perceive they do not have any influence over the outcome they will rarely engage. It is important stakeholders have significant influence on the outcome and they perceive they do. If people genuinely have little or no influence over a particular issue or action, engagement may only involve providing information. Creating expectations of influence over a particular issue when realistically there is little will be counter-productive.
Managing expectations	The amount of influence the community will have on a proposal's outcomes will vary from project to project. It is important that expectations are managed right from the beginning and it is made clear to the community if their feedback is being sought, what specifically it is being sought on and how this feedback will be utilised etc. If there are existing regulations, legislation or policy that apply that will limit the community's influence this should be clearly stated.
Engagement Choice	Utilising a variety of engagement methods will ensure a diversity of participants and maximise participation rates i.e. some people prefer to face to face engagement through a workshop while others prefer online engagement or written submissions.
Appropriate timelines	Often the development of a community plan has timeframes set by the local government processes and funding arrangements. However, engagement needs to consider the meetings of community groups the scheduling of community events or the availability of key people. This means there needs to be flexibility in timeframes and some engagement activities need to happen before others.
Continuity and follow up	An often overlooked aspect of engagement is follow up and feedback to stakeholders. It is important to provide feedback about community input to the engagement topic and to keep people informed about the engagement topic.

Stakeholder Analysis

Determining level of involvement:
The following classifications draw from the International Association for Public Participation (iap2) spectrum. They articulate the different levels of interaction with each stakeholder group and are a useful mechanism to help avoid ambiguity or mismatched expectations around stakeholder power in decision-making. The level of participation should increase with the level of stakeholder priority.

The aim is to determine appropriate communication tools and regularity of contact with each stakeholder group.

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Stakeholders who require a broad level of awareness of the project. These stakeholders may also be influential/ important conduits of information to other stakeholders.	Stakeholders who need to have a good understanding of the corporation and will be invited to provide input at critical points.	Stakeholders who need to have a good understanding of the corporation and will be invited to provide input at critical points.	Stakeholders who partner with us to drive the project.	Stakeholders responsible for making decisions and driving services.

Stakeholder category	Stakeholders	Channels and tools	Regularity
Empower *Those stakeholders who decide & drive services.*	Council Executive	• One on one briefings • Memos on progress/updates • Presentations	Quarterly
Collaborate *Those who partner with us to deliver a service.*	State Government Other LGAs Business Community groups	• Consortiums • Regional subsidiaries • Working groups	Monthly
Involve *Stakeholders who have a high level of engagement with the corporation and have influence over others.*	Local Members	• Direct communications e.g. phone, email • Meetings Project updates	Fortnightly
Consult *Stakeholders who need to have a good understanding of the corporation and will be invited to provide input at critical points.*	Impacted community Customer base	• Direct communications e.g. phone, email • Surveys • Workshops • Case studies • Concept plans	Once or twice during project at key milestones
Inform *Stakeholders who require a broad awareness of services & just want to be kept up to date or can be a conduit to others.*	General public Media	• Brochures • Advertising • FAQs • Website updates • Media releases	As needed

Appendix 4

Community Engagement Implementation Worksheet

Project Management	
Name of Project	
Aim of Project	
What are the likely impacts of the project?	
Who do you need to engage with?	*(Community groups, target groups, stakeholders, individuals)?*
Objectives of the community engagement	*(What do we need to find out?)*
Reports to Council	*(When, purpose?)*

Please answer the below questions to determine what level of engagement is required.		
Do you need to let the community know about the project?	**No**	**No engagement is required**
	Yes	**Inform**
Do you need community input to help develop the draft project, proposal or plan?	**No**	**Consider other strategies**
	Yes	**Involve**
Do you need to get community comment after the draft project, plan or proposal has been developed?	**No**	**Consider other strategies**
	Yes	**Consult**
Do you need consistent community input at all stages of the project or for an on-going issue?	**No**	**Consider other strategies**
	Yes	**Collaborate**
Do you need to allow the community to make decisions that are implemented?	**No**	**Consider other strategies**
	Yes	**Empower**

Fill in the below details outlining your community engagement strategies.			
Inform			**Details**
Communication methods	**Media**	Yes / No	*Media releases, local papers etc*
	Print materials	Yes / No	*Posters, brochures, letters etc. Content, distribution etc.*
	Website	Yes / No	*News article, dedicated web page, etc*
	Social Media	Yes / No	*Facebook, twitter, Google+1*
	Email	Yes / No	*Email newsletter, content, timing etc...*
Accessibility	**Written Materials**	Yes / No	*Formatting, Font, Contrast, Binding etc*
	Audio formats	Yes / No	
	Translation services	Yes / No	*Languages*
Consult		**Details**	
Advertised Comment	Yes / No	*Approval from Council, length of comment period etc...*	
Public Displays	Yes / No	*When, where, materials required, staffing required etc..*	
Online Comment	Yes / No	*When, where?*	
Surveys	Yes / No	*Knowledge required, distribution, analysis etc..*	

Involve		Details
Interactive sessions	**Yes / No**	*Venue, scheduling, promotion, attendance, refreshments, facilitation, accessibility etc...*
Surveys	**Yes / No**	*When, where, materials required, staffing required etc..*
Focus Groups	**Yes / No**	*When, where?*
Interviews	**Yes / No**	*Knowledge required, distribution, analysis etc..*
Online Interaction	**Yes / No**	*Use existing websites/ forums etc. establish new website?*
Collaborate		**Details**
Advisory Committee	**Yes / No**	*Utilise existing committee? Establish new Committee?*
Working Group	**Yes / No**	*Objectives, membership, Council approval, duration?*
Empower		**Details**
Citizens Jury	**Yes / No**	*Engage an experienced facilitator*
Community Poll	**Yes / No**	*Prepare written impartial information* *Ensure funding is available*
Delegated Decisions	**Yes / No**	*Broad parameters are agreed* *Council has approved*

Appendix 5

Analysis and Evaluation Worksheet

Analysis		
Quantitative Analysis	**Yes / No**	*Details*
Qualitative Analysis	**Yes / No**	*Details*
Weighting Comments	*Any respondents or groups that should be given special consideration?*	

Complete below to outline what sort of feedback will be provided to participants		
Community level feedback		
Report to Council	**Yes / No**	*Detail the information to be provided*
Media	**Yes / No**	*Detail the information to be provided*
Website	**Yes / No**	*Detail the information to be provided*
Community level feedback **(Will need to have collected participant contact information)**		
Email	**Yes / No**	*Detail the information to be provided*
Posted	**Yes / No**	*Detail the information to be provided*

Evaluation Type		Details
Outputs	**Yes / No**	*No of brochures distributed, No of news articles, No of workshops held etc*
Participation rates	**Yes / No**	*No of surveys returned, No of attendees, No of downloads etc*
Participant info	**Yes / No**	*Demographic info, participant satisfaction, suggestions for improvement etc*
Outcome based	**Yes / No**	*No of ideas generated, no of changes as result of engagement etc*

Appendix 6

Best Practice Approach

Designing and Doing

Please note

What will be required during this step is largely dependent on what level of engagement you have selected for your project. If you are engaging at the inform level, it may be appropriate to seek guidance or support from the Public Relations team

Stop

Make sure you have discussed any thoughts and ideas with your supervisor or manager before you begin this stage.

Finalise your community engagement action plan

It is now time to develop your community engagement action plan, which is the practical methodology for your engagement process. A template can be found at Appendix 4.

Community engagement action plan

The community engagement action plan will become an invaluable resource when it comes to delivering your engagement program. Its purpose it to have all important information about your actual engagement process in the one place.

Each step below corresponds with a question on the community engagement action plan.

Project and engagement details

- Level of impact expected.
- Level of engagement selected.
- Promise to the community (from the community engagement spectrum).

Stakeholders

- Who are your internal stakeholders (i.e. within the organisation) and how will they be involved?
- Who are your external stakeholders (i.e. the community) and how will they be involved?

Engagement activities

- What events are you holding (i.e. workshop, community information session, etc.)?
- When and where will they be held (i.e. date, time and venue)?
- What tools or techniques will be used?

Choosing a venue

Choosing an appropriate venue is very important for the success of your engagement activity.

There are a number of factors to consider when choosing a venue, such as size/capacity, location and cost. Other important factors include accessibility, parking availability, lighting and acoustics. You may also require specific features, such as a stage, kitchen facilities or multiple spaces to use.

The City has a number of venues available which can be hired at no cost. For further information on venues, contact the City's Community Bookings Officer.

Communications

- What communication methods will you use (i.e. invitations, letters, advertising, posters, etc.)?
- What tasks need to be completed?
- Who is your target audience?

Think about

- How are you letting people know that they have an opportunity to contribute/participate?
- Are you advertising through print media, notice boards, etc.?
- Are you sending out letters or invitations?

Tips for writing invitations

- Remember that you are asking people to give up their personal time to attend, so make it worth their while.
- Make sure you include what kind of event it is and the purpose.
- Let people know how their contributions will be used. Why should they attend?
- Include the date, start and finish time, venue, how to RSVP, and final RSVP date.
- If you are collecting RSVPs, make sure you have set up an RSVP list or database.
- Most importantly, give people adequate notice of your event

Resources

- What resources will you need (i.e. catering, printed materials, equipment, transport, etc.)?
- Have you booked these resources or made arrangements to have them collected or delivered? The community engagement team has a range of equipment and resources you can borrow.

Facilitators/presenters	**Think about**
• Have you engaged a facilitator(s) or presenter(s) for your event? • Have they been briefed on the project, the purpose of the event and what services are required?	• Who is skilled? • Do you need to do a Request for quote and prepare a brief? • Can it be facilitated by staff?
Additional support • Do you require any additional support to deliver your engagement program (i.e. other staff, technical support, etc.)? **Remember** • Be clear about who is responsible for completing each task and make sure it is documented. • That way tasks won't be forgotten.	**Think about** • Do you require additional staff to work at your event? Ensure you organise these resources with the relevant supervisors and managers, and consider budget for time off in lieu or overtime pay, etc. • Will you require technical support on the day (with computers, audio and/or visual equipment)? • Will you require any other kind of support to organise and deliver your engagement program?

Now it's time to engage with the community!

After all of your planning, it's time to deliver the engagement program. Below is a list, although not exhaustive, of things to consider before you begin.

RSVPs	**Think About**
Once you have sent out invitations you will need to be ready to take RSVPs. Ensure you have informed the records team and the service and information team so they can forward responses (emails, letters or phone calls) to the relevant staff from your project team.	• Have you created an RSVP document and saved it somewhere your project team can access it, such as the RSVP drive? • Who is responsible for taking RSVPs?
Tips for taking RSVPs • Make sure you ask for contact details, including name, phone number and/or email address. If there are any changes to your event, you can easily get in contact with those who are attending. • Put individual people on separate lines in your RSVP document, even couples or groups, then you can easily put together a registration sheet and see at a glance the number of people to expect. • If someone indicates they are bringing others with them, ask for the names of the additional people. • If your event will be catered, it is recommended that you ask if people have any special dietary requirements.	**But remember** Participants often do not RSVP, so be prepared for extra people to show up at your event. Make sure you can accommodate additional attendees in terms of catering, seating, staff, and the format of your event.
Welcome table and registration sheet When holding an event you should always have a welcome table set up near the main entrance to greet guests, with registration sheets ready to record names and contact details. Allocate staff to the welcome table to ensure guests are greeted on arrival and all registrations are captured. Print several copies of the registration sheet and have lots of pens available to allow multiple people to sign in at once and reduce the likelihood of a traffic jam. This can be a very frustrating start to your session, for both you and the attendees.	**Tips for creating registration sheets** The information requested on the registration sheet depends entirely on what you need to know about your participants. If you would like to keep them informed on the progress of the project, or would like to invite them back to a later engagement event, you will need to ask for contact details. A phone number and email address is usually sufficient. You may also want to know other details, like residential address or suburb

Name badges If you are having an event where you (or the facilitator) will be interacting with participants, or if participants will be expected to interact with each other, it is a good idea to provide name badges, including for city staff. If councillors are invited, or expected, they will also require name badges.	**Think about** Will you prepare name badges beforehand (from the RSVPs you have received), or will they be written as guests arrive?
Listening post A listening post is a staff member who is available to listen to people who may be concerned with a particular issue that is not specifically related to the project. If you know of such an issue that is expected to dominate discussion, it is advisable to have one or more listening posts on hand. If it is likely that some participants will be outraged, you may wish to have a member of the community engagement team there to assist.	

Catering

If your engagement event is going to be catered, it is important to order the right kind of food.

Think about • Does your engagement event coincide with a main meal time? • How long does the event run for? • When do you expect people to eat – before, during or after the event? • Do you need to provide vegetarian or gluten free options?	**Tips for catering** • Food items should be small and easy to eat by hand (e.g. should not require knife and fork). • There is a general move towards healthy options for catering. • Be aware of special dietary requirements, such as gluten free, vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant, etc. You may wish to ask for this information as part of collecting RSVPs. • Make sure you provide napkins and/or small plates. • A standard drink selection could consist of coffee, tea, and water.

Agendas

Depending on the type of engagement activity you are running, it may be necessary or appropriate to have agendas prepared.

Think about Will agendas be available to participants beforehand, or only at the event? Does each attendee need to have an agenda printed or can they be displayed and/or shared?	**Event running sheet** You may wish to create an event running sheet, which is essentially a detailed breakdown of your event, including everything from your arrival at the venue to the pack up at the end. Your event running sheet is organised by duration and time and should include everything from your arrival at the venue, set up, arrival of participants, presenters, activities, breaks, finish time, pack up, etc. It is also useful to include a page with the contact details of all key personnel for your event, including staff, caterers, presenters, equipment providers, etc. The community engagement team can provide you with example event running sheets.

Venue set up

You will need to think about how to set up the venue according to the activities you are planning on running.

Think about	Tips for venue set up
Can all participants see the projector screen, facilitator and/or visual displays? • Is the room the right size for the number of people expected? • Is there enough room for resources on each table? • If there are visual aids to display, where will these go?	Although quite common, arranging seating in theatre style (i.e. seats in rows with all participants facing forward and the facilitator or presenter on a stage or platform at the front) may not always be the most appropriate set up. This format can sometimes create an 'us versus them' atmosphere. For information sessions or panel discussions try arranging chairs in a semi-circle so participants can see each other. If holding a workshop, set the room up with round tables so participants face each other and can interact more readily. If possible try having the facilitator or presenter at the same level as the participants.
Equipment It is often necessary to hire equipment for engagement activities, including tables, chairs, crockery, microphones, projector screens and audio/visual equipment	**Think about** • Do you need to book any equipment from an internal branch, such as a projector, laptop or projector screen? • Have you confirmed delivery times? • Have you arranged to have someone on site to provide access to the venue for deliveries? • Have you organised a pick up time and place for any equipment after the event?
Printed materials It may be necessary or useful to provide printed information or handouts to participants at the engagement event. This could be summaries of information, presentation slides, diagrams, concept drawings or any other relevant information. For example, if the presenter is regularly referring to a particular diagram it might be worth providing a copy to each participant	**Event running sheet** Can the information be understood by general community members? Ensure it is clear and concise, and not too technical. Are there enough copies?

Evaluating is Important for Learning and Improving

Establish an evaluation strategy

After you have delivered your engagement program you will need to evaluate the whole process. This means you need to establish an evaluation strategy (i.e. how you're going to evaluate) before you begin the engagement, so you can refer back to it later. Evaluation can be simple or complex depending on the nature of the project or engagement. Evaluation is also an ongoing tool used to assess and improve the process as it moves forward. In this respect, evaluation can be done informally and continuously. Be flexible – if a certain approach or method isn't working, change it!

Why evaluate?

- To learn from each experience and improve.
- To support continuous and ongoing improvement of the project.
- To assess how well you have achieved your objectives.
- To provide insight and input for future projects.
- To support the overall improvement of community engagement at the city.
- To understand the connection between the community engagement process and the value of its results and outcomes.

What should you evaluate?

Evaluate the process

An evaluation template can be found at Appendix 5: This can be used to establish what it is you need to evaluate.

1. Evaluate each technique you used. (Do you think it worked well? Would you use it again?)
2. Assess the engagement objectives determined in stage one. (What did you want to find out or tell the community?)
3. Assess participation rates. (How many people were made aware of your engagement process? How many people did you expect to participate? How many people actually participated?)
4. Assess the overall engagement process. (What was the engagement promise determined in stage two? Was the engagement promise fulfilled? What worked well? What challenges were encountered? How were these addressed? What were the lessons learned?)
5. How did the engagement process contribute to the project's overall decision-making process?

Evaluate how the process was for the community

There are a number of ways you can gain community feedback on how the engagement process went. Examples include:

- distribute a short evaluation survey to participants
- contact a sample of stakeholders or participants afterwards
- make your own observations during the event or process
- talk to participants during the event

Remember

The best assessment always comes directly from participants. Throughout the process be sure to ask them how it is going and if their needs are being met.

Reporting and evaluating

The reporting and evaluation stage is just as important as any other in an engagement process, but it is often neglected. 'Closing the loop' is where you get the most results and rewards for your efforts and is also a great time to reflect and learn from your experiences.

Collate and analyse the information

During the engagement program you may have gathered quite a lot of information from participants, which could be in multiple formats (such as handwritten notes, surveys, butchers paper, etc.). It is important to collate and analyse this data so you can draw out the resulting themes and conclusions and feed them into your decision-making process.

Think about

Will you or the project team analyse the data, or will you contract a professional to assist?

Communicate the outcomes

Give feedback to participants

Providing timely and appropriate feedback to those who have participated in engagement processes can enhance the legitimacy of the final outcome and help with the management of participant expectations. Providing feedback to participants also allows them to see how their contribution has been presented, and how it has influenced any further decisions. For this reason it is important to collect participants' contact details.

In the first instance, it is good practice to contact your participants and thank them for their participation and contribution, and let them know what will happen next. Depending on the kind of engagement activity, this should be done within a few days.

More detailed feedback, which may include minutes, summary of responses, or outcomes, should be distributed within two to three weeks of the end of the community engagement process.

If the project is ongoing, it is advisable to maintain contact by providing updates to participants as required.

Report results to decision-makers

It is likely that you will need to prepare some kind of report, brief or presentation to be delivered to the relevant decision-makers and/or council, so make sure you include your engagement plan and evaluation strategy.

How did it go?
Evaluate the process

Now that you have delivered your engagement, it is time to evaluate the process. To do this you will need to refer back to the evaluation strategy that was determined during stage three. method isn't working, change it!

Think about

Did you collect any information along the way that could assist with your evaluation? For example, participant numbers, participant surveys, team debriefs, observation notes, etc. You can use the evaluation template to conduct a simple evaluation of your engagement process.

Remember

Constructive criticism actually gives you the greatest opportunity to improve your practice, so it is really important that you take notice of any negative feedback you receive.

There are a number of other evaluation methods and templates available, which may benefit your project or the decision-making process. The community engagement team can assist you in finding the most appropriate method.

Evaluation debrief

Once you have completed your own evaluation it is valuable to organise a meeting with the community engagement team, to gain their feedback on your process and also provide feedback on how it was to work with the team. This is particularly important so they can continue to improve the service they provide to the organisation.

Celebrate!

Don't forget to stop and congratulate yourself and your team. Always take the time to acknowledge the hard work and successes you have had.

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