

Policy

Title: Community Engagement

Category: Community Services and Events

Date Last Adopted: 7 March 2016

1. Objectives

To provide a framework that facilitates understanding and decision making between the Council and the Hobart community.

2. Background

This Policy was developed as a result of an employee survey and two independently facilitated employee workshops covering the development of:

- a formal community engagement policy framework;
- definitions for the terms consultation, engagement and participation and incorporation of these into the policy framework; and
- a set of principles and indicators.

3. Policy

Policy Purpose and Objectives

Community engagement creates an active and informed dialogue that seeks an understanding of the views and aspirations of the community.

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework that facilitates understanding and decision making between the Council and the Hobart community.

The community engagement policy objectives are to:

- Achieve good governance by facilitating open, fair and constructive dialogue.
- Allow for informed decision making and achieve together an improved quality of life in Hobart.

- Achieve active community participation through involvement and inclusiveness.
- Provide the community with a clear understanding of the Council's consultation processes.

Policy Statement

The Hobart City Council recognises the right of the community members to be informed and have input into decisions which affect their lives.

Hobart City Council values effective engagement in developing a positive relationship with its community and recognises that community participation contributes to better decision-making.

Council seeks to take account of the views, needs, issues and aspirations expressed by the community and to balance these with other influences such as budgetary constraints to make informed decisions.

In applying this policy, the Council will demonstrate the values of we're:

- about people.
- professional.
- enterprising.
- responsive.
- inclusive.
- making a difference.

The Hobart City Council has developed the following nine (9) principles to guide the application of this policy:

Principle 1 – Engagement Culture

Council embraces engagement as a key process in our governance of Hobart. A culture of engagement will continue to be developed at all levels of the organisation.

Principle 2 – Building Relationships

Council is committed to building effective relationships to improve the outcomes of community engagement.

Principle 3 – Inclusiveness and Accessibility

Council acknowledges the diversity of its community and will work to diminish barriers that may exist in order to encourage participation in engagement.

Principle 4 – Participation

Stakeholders are encouraged to participate in the process and to express their views in a respectful and open manner.

Principle 5 – Communication

The Council will clearly communicate the purpose of the engagement process; the steps involved and will allow sufficient time for effective involvement.

Principle 6 – Transparency

Council's engagements will be clear and transparent to allow the community access to information and an understanding by the stakeholders of the processes and resources involved.

Principle 7 – Considering the Results

The results of engagements will be included in the considerations of the Council and in decision making.

Principle 8 – Feedback

The Council will provide a means for stakeholders to obtain feedback on the engagement.

Principle 9 – Evaluation and Review

The Council will evaluate and review its engagement framework to ensure it is responsive to the views and aspirations of the community.

Application of Manual

A Community Engagement Manual provides a step by step guide to assist Council officers in the conduct of community engagements. The manual is available on the Council Business Centre intranet under Business Support Community Engagement.

4. Legislation, Terminology and References

The Community Engagement Manual provides a step by step guide to assist Council officers conduct community consultations.

Responsible Officer:	Director Corporate Services
Policy first adopted by the Council:	11/8/2008
History	
Amended by Council	12/9/2011
Amended by Council	10/12/2012
Amended by Council	7/3/2016
Next Review Date:	March 2017
