

## COUNCIL POLICY

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### Community Consultation

- Policy No:** 4.7
- Policy Subject:** Community Consultation
- Objective:** A community consultation policy seeks to build a two-way communication process between the Shire and our community. It also ensures that effective public participation is offered to appropriate stakeholders on Shire of Katanning projects and programs. Community consultation will enable the Shire to establish a strong relationship with our community.
- This policy outlines a number of methods Council will use to gain community input into our service delivery decision making process.
- Policy Statement:** The Katanning Shire Council believes that community consultation is of fundamental importance in ensuring that we involve our community early in the assessment and implementation of delivery options for specific services and facilities provided by the Shire.
- Community consultation is also a requirement of formulating the community strategic plan as per section 5.56 of the Local Government Act.
- The Council will work with our community to deliver services and facilities that are needed, affordable and accessible.
- Guidelines:**
- 1) Consultation and participation shall be an integral part of all Shire of Katanning programs and projects and include, at the earliest time, input from Councillors who are considered important stakeholders and a valuable conduit between our Community and Council. Community participation shall be specifically planned within the development and implementation schedule of the given program or project.
  - 2) Emphasis will be on advising stakeholders of projects that are to be undertaken, as well as inviting participation and/or comment, when appropriate. CEO will use discretion on when public participation and/or comment is sought, unless directed by Council.

### **Key Principles of Consultation**

- All relevant stakeholders must be identified
- Non-resident landowners should be included where appropriate
- Staff will decide on the best method of consultation e.g. participation, comment or advice
- Consultation process will allow stakeholders adequate time to respond to issues
- Consultation process will occur as early as possible
- Where a decision is made by Council that is contrary to formally and directly expressed views of the community, the minutes should contain the reasons for the contradictory decision

### **Types of Communication**

The Shire of Katanning adopts three types/levels of community consultation, being:

- 1) Participation
- 2) Comment
- 3) Advice

#### 1) Participation:

May be appropriate for large projects affecting a wide range of people from the community, e.g. construction of new facilities, major traffic treatments, major building projects, Town Planning Scheme amendments.

Participation is relevant before Council has made any decision and Council seeks community input before considering the matter.

#### **Participation can take the form of;**

- Surveys & Questionnaires – sent to sample population to gain feedback on specific issues
- Community Exhibition – provision of information displays to inform residents of a specific event/project
- Advisory Committee/Working Group – a group of representative stakeholders assembled to provide public input
- Public Meeting – formal meeting with scheduled agenda

#### 2) Comment:

May be appropriate for medium scale projects such as upgrading of facilities, new facilities in parks, new local laws, Plan for the Future, road closures.

Comment is relevant when Council has a preferred position or draft document and seeks community input before finalising their position.

#### **Comment can take the form of;**

- Submissions invited through public notice or direct contact with stakeholders
- Surveys/Questionnaires sent to sample population to gain feedback on specific issues
- Interviews with affected stakeholders

### 3) Advising Stakeholders and the Community generally:

May be appropriate for issues relating to compliance issues for planning and building service, administrative issues such as local laws, property, electoral enrolments, nomination of candidates for Council, footpath construction, Council decisions on major projects.

Advice is relevant when Council has made a decision and wishes to communicate that decision to affected stakeholders and the community.

#### **Advising stakeholders and the community generally can take the form of;**

- Media – Shire President and/or CEO informing public through radio, television and newspaper interviews
- Local newspaper – public notices/media releases in Great Southern Herald
- Council publications – Annual Report, Budget, Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan.
- Newsletter/Direct Mail

Staff will decide the most appropriate method of participation and submit to the Chief Executive Officer for approval. Sufficient time should be allocated to allow stakeholders adequate time to respond to the issues.

#### **Public Consultation Framework**

Each financial year Council is required to hold an Annual Electors meeting within 56 days of accepting the Annual Report. Council prepares a Plan for the Future and is also required to prepare a Community Strategic Plan which needs to be formally reviewed every four years. This public consultation framework meets our statutory obligations and also provides the opportunity for Council to obtain community input into the Shire's strategic direction.

#### **Accessing Council Information**

Copies of draft documents, where comments have been invited will be displayed at Council Administration, Library and also on Council's web site. Due to technology difficulties it may not be possible to put diagrams or maps on the website. Documents that are less than 20 pages will be provided to customers free of charge. Where a draft document exceeds 20 pages in length, Council will make available four copies of the document that may be borrowed by a community member for up to five days.

Copies of Agendas and Council Minutes can be obtained free of charge and will be displayed on Council's website.

#### **Statutory Requirements**

In a number of areas the Council is required to comply with specific legislative requirements such as minimum periods, publication in Government Gazette and public notice. Consultation processes identified in this policy should be seen as complementing any prescribed statutory requirements.

**Other consultation commitments**

For some projects or strategies being developed by Council, a separate communication plan will be prepared that will encourage community and other stakeholder engagement.

Council will acknowledge all submissions received under this community consultation policy prior to consideration and subsequently submitters will be advised of Council's decision.

<b>Resolution No:</b>	Ordinary Council	OC31/04
<b>Resolution Date:</b>	27 August 2003	
<b>Amended:</b>	23 August 2006	OC21/07
	23 September 2009	OC43/10
	26 October 2011	OC29/12
	28 November 2012	OC278/12
	22 October 2014	OC106/14
	24 July 2018	OC92/18
<b>Source:</b>	Council and Elected Members	
<b>Date of Review:</b>	October annually	
<b>Review Responsibility:</b>	Executive Manager Projects & Community Building	