

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Policy No. 025

1 Purpose

City of Darwin is committed to open, transparent and responsive community engagement. This policy will guide the delivery of community engagement processes across the organisation to better inform planning, decision making, policy development and service delivery.

2 Scope

The Community Engagement Policy aims to build the organisation’s capacity to:

- Better serve the community by understanding and valuing their needs, aspirations and knowledge
- Deliver efficient and effective outcomes for the community through better, more informed planning, policy development and decision making
- Build trust and positive relationships with the community and stakeholders

3 Policy Statement

A core principle of good governance is involving the community in decision making. Council is committed to engaging with the community to inform effective planning, policy development and decision making processes to best serve the Darwin community.

Why will we engage?	To build positive relationships with our stakeholders and community and seek their input to improve our decision making and deliver better services to the community.
When will we engage?	We will work to embed an organisational culture of Community Engagement. Engagement is important when our decisions or activities impact on the community and when community input can improve our decisions, policy and services.
How will we engage?	Our level and methods of engagement will vary according to the decision, program or activity and the purpose of the engagement.

Council Policy No. 025 - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT				
Version	Decision Number	Adoption Date	Responsible Officer: Chief of Staff	Next Review Date
4	22\1024	14/08/2018		14/08/2022



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Policy No. 025

Principles

The following principles will underpin City of Darwin community engagement:

Open, honest and transparent: be open, honest and transparent about the process, what can be achieved and how decisions will be made.

Listen and be responsive: commitment to listen to the community, take on board feedback and use accordingly.

Clarity: ensure clarity of goals, purpose, and what the community and stakeholders can have influence over.

Timely: engage with people at the appropriate time, take the time that is required, and work within timeframes.

Good communication: provide all the information required for the community to provide feedback that's relevant and informed.

Inclusive, accessible and equitable: provide opportunities for everyone to participate and ensure all views are respected.

Acknowledgement of cultural diversity: the cultural diversity of the community is recognised and taken into consideration in community engagement.

Accountable: provide feedback on the outcomes of the consultation and how the community's input influenced decisions.

Impartial and objective: ensure the engagement process is delivered with an impartial view of the desired outcome or decision.

Professional and reputable: deliver the engagement process professionally supported by appropriately skilled people people.

Levels of Engagement

The level of community engagement undertaken will relate to the nature, complexity and impact of the issue, plan or strategy. Throughout a community engagement process these levels will often complement and overlap each other.

Council Policy No. 025 - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT				
Version	Decision Number	Adoption Date	Responsible Officer: Chief of Staff	Next Review Date
4	22\1024	14/08/2018		14/08/2022



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Policy No. 025

Level	Inform (tell)	Discuss (create understanding)	Consult (ask)	Involve (work together)
What it means	One way – provides information	Two way – creates shared understanding. Work with community and stakeholders to explain and implement a decision to get the best possible outcome for all involved.	Listen to understand and learn from local knowledge. Obtaining feedback on different options, plans or proposals.	Involving people and working together to understand all needs and concerns. Work with the community in the development of options, solutions and plans.
When to use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a routine decision has been made • Opposition is unlikely • There is no opportunity to influence the outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a decision has been made but work with community/stakeholders to explain and ensure the best delivery of the decision • To understand and resolve any impacts of the delivery of a decision or project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before making a decision, to understand and learn • When final decisions are being shaped 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before a complex or important decision is made • When a collaborative approach will get the best outcomes • There is a high level of interest
Timeframe	Recommended minimum 1 week	Minimum 2 weeks	Minimum 3 weeks	Minimum 6 weeks

In circumstances where the level of involvement requires members of the public to make submissions to Council, all submissions received will be regarded as public information and available for general access unless the writer specifically requests that they want their submission to be suppressed.

Council Policy No. 025 - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT				
Version	Decision Number	Adoption Date	Responsible Officer: Chief of Staff	Next Review Date
4	22\1024	14/08/2018		14/08/2022



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Policy No. 025

4 Definitions

Community engagement - a planned process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decisions or actions of the members of the community, stakeholders or organisation in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome (*International Association for Public Participation, 2014*).

5 Legislative References

IAP2 Australasia, 2014, Engagement Essentials, Australia

City of Darwin is a corporate member of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and this policy has been informed by its public participation processes.

6 Procedures / Related Documents

City of Darwin Policy No. 033 - Privacy

7 Responsibility / Application

The Chief of Staff is responsible for managing the implementation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed once during the term of Council or more often as required.

8 Document Control

Council Policy			Responsible Officer: Chief of Staff	
Version	Decision Number	Adoption Date	History	Next Review Date
1	20\2501	23/02/2010	Adopted	
2	20\4281	16/08/2011	Amendment Adopted	
3	21\5530	27/06/2017	Revision Adopted	30/06/2018
4	22\1024	14/08/2018	Revision adopted with new principle added	14/08/2022

Council Policy No. 025 - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT				
Version	Decision Number	Adoption Date	Responsible Officer: Chief of Staff	Next Review Date
4	22\1024	14/08/2018		14/08/2022

