District Council of Yankalilla

Public Consultation Policy

Strategic Reference	Provide leadership, good governance, and efficient, effective and responsive Council services
File Reference	18/067/229
Responsibility	Chief Executive
Revision Number	Version 2.1
Effective Date	June 2001
Last Revised Date	December 2012, April 2014 C20068 April 2020 – COVID Emergency
Minute Book Reference	Date:19/6/14 Page No:14.2 Report No:
Next Review Date	Post COVID Emergency
Relevant Legislation	Local Government Act 1999 s50
Related Policies	Communications Policy
Related Procedures	LGA(SA) Community Engagement Handbook

Public Health Emergency: Public Access and Public Consultation

On 15 March 2020, the Chief Executive of the Department for Health and Wellbeing in the State of South Australia, pursuant to section 87 of the *South Australian Public Health Act 2011*, declared that an emergency which threatens to cause the death of, or injury or other damage to the health of any person is occurring or about to occur in relation to the transmission of COVID-19, and declared the emergency to be a public health emergency.

On 22 March 2020, the State Co-ordinator for the State of South Australia declared, pursuant to section 23 of the *Emergency Management Act 2004*, that a Major Emergency is occurring in respect of the outbreak of the Human Disease named COVID-19 within South Australia.

On 8 April 2020 the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government issued a notice pursuant to section 302B of the *Local Government Act 1999*, the *Public Access and Public Consultation Notice (No 2) 2020* (**Notice No 2**) varying or suspending the operation of the specified provisions of the *Local Government Act 1999* as set out in Schedule 1 to Notice No 2. Notice No 2 commenced operation on 8 April 2020.

For the period Notice No 2 has effect (as provided for in Notice No 2), this Public Consultation Policy is altered as set out below and those alterations have effect notwithstanding any other provision in this Policy to the contrary.

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For the avoidance of doubt, save for the alterations to the Policy as set out below, the Policy otherwise applies to public consultation undertaken by the Council for the purposes of the *Local Government Act 1999*.

Alterations to Public Consultation Policy

A. Definitions

For the purposes of these alterations *the Council* includes an officer or employee of the Council acting within the scope of that person's ordinary functions and duties except in circumstances where these alterations expressly require a matter to be considered at a meeting of the Council.

B. Statutory Requirement to Hold Public Meetings Suspended

The Council will not publish a notice in a newspaper circulating in the area of the Council inviting interested persons to attend a public meeting or meeting of the Council in relation to any matter within the scope of Sections 123, 151 or 156 of the *Local Government Act 1999* for which public consultation is required under the *Local Government Act 1999*. The Council will not hold such a public meeting or invite persons to attend a meeting of the Council to ask questions or make submissions on the matter.

The Council will publish a notice in a newspaper circulating in the area of the Council inviting interested persons to make written submissions within the period stated in the notice (which will not be less than 21 days after the publication of the notice) in relation any matter within the scope of Sections 123, 151 or 156 of the *Local Government Act 1999* for which public consultation is required under the *Local Government Act 1999*. The Council will consider the submissions at a meeting of the Council.

C. Other Requirement to Hold Public Meeting Suspended

The Council will not hold a public meeting in relation to any matter for which the *Local Government Act 1999* requires the Council to follow the steps set out in its public consultation policy.

The Council will not hold a public meeting in relation to any matter for which this Policy would, but for this provision, require the Council to hold a public meeting.

To the extent this Policy would otherwise require the Council to hold a public meeting in relation to a matter, the Council will instead publish a notice on its website or in a newspaper circulating in the area of the Council inviting interested persons to make written submissions in relation to any matter within the period stated in the notice (which will not be less than 21 days after the publication of the notice, unless the matter is considered by the Council to require urgent consideration and it is not otherwise contrary to the *Local Government Act* 1999 to consult for a lesser period). The Council will consider the submissions.

D. Other Requirement to undertake in Person Consultation Activity Suspended

The Council will not undertake any form of face-to-face or in person public consultation activity (including without limitation a door knock, focus group, forum, briefing session, workshop, open house, citizen panel, conversation café, citizen jury, round table or symposium) in relation to any matter for which the *Local Government Act 1999* requires the Council to follow the steps set out in its public consultation policy.

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The Council will not undertake any form of face-to-face or in person public consultation activity (including without limitation a door knock, focus group, forum, briefing session, workshop, open house, citizen panel, conversation café, citizen jury, round table or symposium) in relation to any matter for which this Policy would, but for this provision, require the Council to hold such an activity.

To the extent this Policy would otherwise require the Council to hold a face-to-face or in person public consultation activity in relation to a matter, the Council will instead publish a notice on its website or in a newspaper circulating in the area of the Council inviting interested persons to make written submissions in relation any matter within the period stated in the notice (which will not be less than 21 days after the publication of the notice, unless the matter is considered by the Council to require urgent consideration and it is not otherwise contrary to the *Local Government Act 1999* to consult for a lesser period). The Council will consider the submissions.

E. Suspension of Other Inconsistent Provisions

To the extent that any other provision of this Policy could be read as requiring the Council to undertake public consultation with a person face-to-face or in person, the provision is suspended while these provisions are in effect and the provisions of paragraph D operate in their stead.

1 Introduction

Yankalilla District Council is strongly committed to genuine, effective and timely consultation with its community. In the interest of good governance, the process of consultation must encourage the community to actively engage in policy development, planning and programming, the management and evaluation of services and in identifying areas of concern.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Council decision-making processes

- recognise and take into account the views of affected communities through the appropriate application of community consultation principles and
- meet obligations for public consultation under the Local Government Act 1999 (Part 5 s.50)

2 Definitions

In relation to this policy:

"Communication" – generally refers to the exchange of information from Council to the community, and can also include the exchange of information or views from the community to Council

"Community" – includes all the people who live, work, study, own property, conduct private or government business, visit or use the services, facilities and public spaces and places of the District Council of Yankalilla.

"Community Engagement" is an all encompassing term that incorporates all forms of community participation in decisions that affect them. The International Association for

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Public Participation (IAP2) identifies and defines differing levels of Community Engagement on a spectrum. These are inform, consult, involve and collaborate.

"Public Consultation" is the process Councils undertake to obtain community views on issues as an input to decision making. There is a requirement under Section 50 of the Act for Council to adopt a Public Consultation Policy. There are also other sections of the Act that require the Council to follow the steps in its Public Consultation Policy when consulting on particular matters.

3 Policy statement

The policy articulates The District Council of Yankalilla's commitment to engaging the community as a matter of principle and is guided by a framework that contains guidelines and techniques that ensure fair and equitable processes. The application of the policy is intended to support Council deliberation and decisions around issues affecting the Council now and into the future.

3.1 Principles

- Members of the community have a right and a responsibility to be involved in and informed about decisions affecting their area and to influence decisions which affect their lives.
- Community involvement in Council decision making will result in greater confidence in the Council and responsive decision making.
- Council decision making will be open, transparent and accountable.
- It is the responsibility of the elected Council to balance community views and interests with other considerations such as budget constraints.

3.2 Commitment

- Council is committed to engaging the community in the process of decision making.
 We will inform, consult with and involve the community as the basis for good governance.
- Where circumstances warrant, Council will exceed the minimum requirements laid down in legislation for public consultation and complement these basic requirements with creative approaches to ensure that the community is well informed and supportive of our decisions

This policy applies to any matter where consultation is required by legislation, Council policy, or when Council considers this to be appropriate.

Community engagement is required under the following legislation:

- Local Government Act 1999
- Development Act 1993
- South Australian Public Health Act 2011

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4 Roles and responsibilities

The elected Council is charged with making decisions on the community's behalf. Appropriate levels of engagement will ensure that decisions take into account community views. This policy will apply to Elected Members, staff, contractors, agents and consultants acting on behalf of Council.

The Chief Executive is responsible for the implementation of the Public Consultation Policy, establishing the consultation level, reporting outcomes of the consultations to Council, reviewing the value of the policy, and determining elements within that process where Council has not done so.

5 Monitoring, evaluation and review

Compliance with the policy will be measured through evaluation of individual community engagement plans submitted for approval prior to the commencement of engagement activities. Evaluation processes will be undertaken to monitor, review engagement activities. See Appendix B.

5 Engagement methods

Generally, the strategic objective of a community engagement plan is to ensure that all affected residents:

- receive regular information about Council's achievements, objectives and performance,
- are advised of major issues affecting the community and
- are given the opportunity to comment on and be consulted about these

This process may include:

- A regular newsletter
- Fact Sheets
- Other direct mail publications or letterbox drops, as appropriate
- Advertising in media outlets as deemed appropriate
- Regular media releases to appropriate media outlets and community groups
- Community forums and stakeholder meetings
- Direct consultation with community representative groups
- Council's website
- Community email database
- Customer Surveys
- General fixed displays, e.g. community notice boards
- Specific displays, as appropriate
- Community group representations to Council workshops

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Regardless of the method or level of consultation, staff will consider all responses and report to Council summarising the responses where a Council decision is required.

The results of the public consultation will be publicised to the community.

6 Statutory requirements

In a number of areas Council is required to comply with specific legislative requirements such as minimum periods, publication in the Gazette and the Development Act.

Engagement processes identified in this Policy should be seen as complementing any prescribed statutory requirements which may or not be exceeded.

7 Development approval

This Policy does not cover consultation in respect to planning and building applications. The Development Act establishes specific requirements for Development Approvals.

8 Public submissions

All forms and levels of community engagement will include an invitation for members of the public to provide a submission to Council. This invitation will include any minimum submission requirement (i.e. verbal, written only, website, etc.) and provide a closing date for receipt of submissions by Council.

9 Engagement categories

The Public Consultation Policy specifies three levels of activity designed to suit all consultation requirements, ranging from the most basic public notification to a major project, or issue of council-wide significance.

Each level specifies the minimum statutory requirements relating to community engagement and exceeds them with a mixture of activities that may or may not be required. When considering a subject requiring community consultation Council will establish a level of engagement to meet or exceed the minimum statutory requirements relating to that subject.

Any good engagement strategy requires a certain degree of flexibility to suit the specific situation. While setting out minimum standards, each activity level reflects this need by not being too prescriptive. The following tables indicate which level may apply for certain activities. (These are examples only and should not be regarded as a comprehensive list.)

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Opening Hours (minor) - Office	Development Plan Amendment (DPA) of	Development Plan Report (DPA)
Change of street and road names	a technical or non- strategic nature	Major Projects
Notice of minor works	 Traffic management plans 	Council amalgamationsCommunity Land - Lease,

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Community events Change of parking restrictions	Community Land Management Plans	redevelopment, sale or change in classification
	Change of a service standard which is deemed to have low community impact	 Strategic Plans Policy development and review which may directly impact on the community
		Changes to service standards not otherwise subject to level 3 consultation (e.g. through the Annual Business Plan consultation)
		New By-Laws

10 Choosing an engagement strategy

The actions required to gain community input will vary with each issue. The following table is to be used as a guide on suitable actions for changing conditions and circumstances.

	Level 3
District Issues, Required	
Compliance with statutory requirements (if any)	Compliance with statutory requirements (if any)
Website.	 Council set budget for consultation process
District Issues, Optional	
 Media release Copies of major reports and plans being made available at Council offices Letters to directly affected property owners may be done as well or instead of media advertising. 	 Website feature Media Releases Allow minimum 6 weeks for responses Organising of workshops, forums, displays or focus groups Copies of major reports and plans being made available at Council office and library Specific publication to all affected residents via
	 Compliance with statutory requirements (if any) Website. District Issues, Optional Media release Copies of major reports and plans being made available at Council offices Letters to directly affected property owners may be done as well or instead of media

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		letters to directly affected property owners as decided by Council	
	Local Issues		
Direct engagement with relevant community members & groups as deemed appropriate	 Letters to directly affected property owners as appropriate. Direct engagement with relevant community members & groups as deemed appropriate 	 Letters to directly affected property owners as appropriate. Direct engagement with relevant community members & groups as deemed appropriate Forum/meeting with relevant community members & groups as deemed appropriate 	
	Minimum Timelines		
Legislative Requirement Optional 21 days*	Legislative Requirement Optional 21 days*	Legislative RequirementOptional 42 days*	
*NB: days are not working days and include weekends			

11 The legislative requirements for public consultation

Legislation requires Council to undertake at least a specified minimum level of consultation in relation to the following:

- Determining the manner, places and times of its principal office (Section 45)
- Adoption or variation of a public consultation policy (Section 50)
- Altering the Code of Practice relating to the principles, policies, procedures and policies that Council will apply to Public Access to Council and Committee Meetings and their minutes and release of documents (Section 92)
- Adopting Strategic Management Plans (Section 122)
- Adopting Annual Business Plans (Section 123)
- Changing the basis of rating of any land, the basis on which land is valued for rating purposes or the imposition of rates on land (Section 151)
- Changing differential rates for different land categories (Section 156)
- Excluding land from classification as community land (Section 193)
- Revoking the classification as community land (Section 194)
- Adopting, amending or revoking a management plan for community land (section 197)
- Amending or revoking a management plan for community land (section 198)

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- Alienating of community land where the management plan does not allow it (Section 202)
- Alienating roads (Section 223)
- Planting vegetation where it will have a significant impact on residents, the proprietors or nearby residents (Section 232)
- Proposed removal of trees and road construction projects
- Representation Reviews (section 12 (5))
- Status of Council or Name Change (Section 13)
- Commercial Activities Prudential Arrangements (Section 48)
- Making Bylaws (Section 249)
- Power to make Orders (Section 259)

Further details of public consultation requirements can be found in Appendix A

13 Further information

This policy will be available for inspection at the Council office listed below during ordinary business hours and provided to interested parties as per Council's Fees and Charges Register. Copies are available to be downloaded, free of charge, from Council's internet site: www.yankalilla.sa.gov.au

District Council of Yankalilla 1 Charles Street Yankalilla 5203

Phone: (08) 8558 0200 Fax: (08) 8558 2022

14 Grievances

Any grievances in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing addressed to the Chief Executive of Council.

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Appendix 1

Local Government Act 1999 Public Consultation Policy – Schedule of Requirements

TOPIC	SECTION	LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT
Definition of Public Consultation	Interpretation	Reference to Chapter 4, Part 5 only
Representation Reviews Review and reporting to the Electoral Commissioner	s.12	 Representation Options Paper Public notice: of the preparation of the representation options paper; and inviting written submissions within a minimum period of 6 weeks. Copy of notice to be published in newspaper circulating within its area. Report Public notice: informing public of the preparation and availability of the report; and inviting written submissions within a minimum 3 week period. Copy of notice to be published in newspaper circulating within its area. Provide opportunity for person who makes written submission on report to appear personally or by representative before Council or a Council committee to be heard on submissions Council must then finalise its report and refer to the Electoral Commissioner.
 Status of a Council/ Change of Name Change from a municipal Council to a district Council, or change from a district Council to a municipal Council Alter the name of the Council, the area of the Council, or the name of a ward. 	s.13	 Public notice of the proposal inviting written submissions within a minimum period of 6 weeks, and publication of the notice in a newspaper circulating within its area Provide opportunity for person who makes written submission to appear personally or by representative before Council or a Council committee to be heard on submissions
Principal Office - Opening hours	s.45	Consult in accordance with Council's public consultation policy about the manner, places and times at which its offices will be open to the public for the transaction of business, and about any significant changes to these arrangements.

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Communical Assistance Bound C. I.	- 40(0)(1)	Dan ant a delina asia manusi in 18 a 18 a 18 a 18 a 18 a 18 a
Commercial Activities – Prudential Requirements	s.48(2)(d) s.48(5) and s.48(6)	Report addressing prudential issues to Include: • the level of consultation with the local community, including contact with persons who may be affected by the project and representations made by them • the means by which the community can influence or contribute to the project or its outcomes.
Public Consultation Policies	s.50	Requirements for preparation, adoption and alteration to Council's public consultation policy. Policy must set out steps that Council will follow in cases where the Act requires the Council to follow its public consultation policy Policy may also set out steps to follow in other cases involving Council decision making Steps may vary according to the classes of decisions within the scope of the policy, but must provide persons with a reasonable opportunity to make submissions in relevant circumstances Section 50(4) sets out minimum steps that must be provided for in a public consultation policy as follows: publish notice describing the matter under consideration in a newspaper circulating within the area, and inviting submissions within stated period (at least 21 days) consideration by the Council of submissions made in response. Section 50(6) requires the Council before it adopts, substitutes and/or alters a public consultation policy, to: prepare a document that sets out its proposal; and publish in a newspaper circulating throughout the State and a newspaper circulating within the area of Council a notice of the proposal inviting submissions within a minimum period of 1 month; and consider any submissions received, unless the alteration is of minor significance. Council's public consultation policy is to be made available for inspection without charge at the principal office during ordinary office hours, and for purchase on payment of a fixed fee by Council.

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Code of Practice – Access to meetings and documents	s.92(5)	Before a Council adopts, alters or substitutes a code of practice under s.92 it must follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy.
Strategic Management Plans	s.122(6)	Council must adopt a process or processes to ensure that members of the public are given a reasonable opportunity to be involved in the development and review of its strategic management plans.
Annual Business Plan	s.123(3)	Before Council adopts an annual business plan it must follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy which must provide for as a minimum: • publication of a notice in a newspaper circulating in the area of Council informing the public of the draft annual business plan and inviting persons to; - attend a public meeting on the matter to be held at least 21 days after the publication of the notice; or - attend a meeting of Council to be held on a date stated in the notice at which members of the public may ask questions and make submissions for at least one hour; or - make written submissions within a minimum period of 21 days stated in the notice; and • Council to make arrangements for the public meeting or Council meeting and Council to consider written submissions or submissions made at public meeting or Council meeting; • draft annual business plan must be available at the public meeting or Council meeting above and for inspection (without charge) and purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by Council) at the principal office of the Council at least 7 days before that
Change to Basis of Rating Report	s.151(6)	Before Council changes the basis of rating of any land or changes the basis on which land is valued for the purposes of rating or changes the imposition of rates on land it must prepare a report on the proposed change and follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy which must as a minimum provide for: publication of a notice in a newspaper circulating in the area of Council describing the proposed change and informing the public of the preparation of the report and inviting

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		persons to attend a public meeting in relation to the matter at least 21 days after publication of the notice or to make written submissions within a minimum period of 21 days; and - Council to organise the public meeting and Council to consider submissions made at that meeting or in writing. • Copies of the report must be available at the public meeting and for inspection (without charge) and purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by Council) at the principal office of the Council at least 21 days before the end of the public consultation period.
Rating – Differential Rates	s.156(14a)	 Before Council changes declaring differential rates on the basis of a differentiating factor under sections 156(1)(a), (b)(c) to another factor it must prepare a report on the proposed change and follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy which must as a minimum provide for: publication of a notice in a newspaper circulating in the area describing the proposed change and informing public of the preparation of the report and inviting persons to attend a public meeting in relation to the matter at least 21 days after publication of the notice or to make written submissions within a minimum period of 21 days; and Council to organise the public meeting and Council to consider submissions made at that meeting or in writing. Copies of the report must be available at the public meeting and purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by Council) at the principal office of the Council at least 21 days before the end of the public consultation period.
Community Land Classification All local government land (except a road) acquired by or brought under the care, control and management of Council is taken to have been classified as community land unless Council resolves before it becomes local government land to exclude it from classification.	s.193(4)	Council must give notice in the Gazette of a resolution to exclude land from classification as community land under s.193(4) of the Act
Revocation of classification of Version 2.1 June 2014	s.194(2)	Council must Page 13 of

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land as community land		 follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy before revoking the classification of land as community; land submit a proposal with a report on all submissions made as part of the public consultation process to the Minister.
Management Plans – Public Consultation	s.197(1)	Before Council adopts a management plan for community land it must make copies of the proposed plan available for inspection or purchase at the Council's principle office follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy give public notice of its adoption of a management plan.
Amendment or revocation of management plans NB: A Council cannot dispose of community land until revocation of its classification as community land.	s.198	Public consultation, as Council would be required to do for a new management plan, is to be carried out prior to adopting a proposal for amendment to, or revocation of, a management plan. Public consultation is not required if the amendment has no impact or no significant impact on the interests of the community.
Alienation by lease or licence NB: Specific provisions relate to the Adelaide Park Lands – under the Parklands Act 2005	s.202	Council must follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy, before granting a lease or licence relating to community land. Exceptions apply in circumstances where: • the grant of the lease or licence is authorised in an approved management plan for the land, and the term of the proposed lease or licence is five years or less; or • the regulations provide for an exemption from compliance with a public consultation policy.
Authorisations/Permits Where road would be fenced enclosed or portioned so as to impede passage of traffic to a material degree Use or activity for which public consultation required under regulations	s.223	Council must follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy before granting the authorisation or permit.
Roads - Trees	s.232	Before planting or authorising planting of vegetation that may have a significant impact on residents, the proprietors of nearby businesses or advertisers in the area, Council must follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy.

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Passing by-laws	s.249	At least 21 days before resolving to make a by-law, Council must:
NB: No specific reference to Council's Public Consultation Policy, but minimum standards apply		 make copies of the proposed by-law (and any code, standard or other document proposed to be applied or incorporated by the by-law) available for public inspection without charge during ordinary office hours at the principal office of the Council inform the public of the proposed by-law and set out the terms of the by-law or describe in general terms the nature and effect of the by-law, through a notice in a newspaper circulating in the area give reasonable consideration to a written or other acceptable submission made on a proposed by-law Publish a notice of the making of a by-law in a newspaper circulating in the Council area.
Power to Make Orders Councils must take reasonable steps to prepare and adopt policies relating to power to make orders.	s.259(2)	 Council must Prepare a draft of a policy By notice in a newspaper circulating in the Council area, advise the place(s) where the draft is available for inspection (without charge) or purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by Council), and invite written representations on the draft with a period specified by the Council (at least four weeks) consider any submission made in response to the invitation. The requirements of s.259(2) also apply prior to Council adopting an amendment to a policy, unless Council determines that the amendment is of only minor significance.

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Appendix B

Action Plan template

Public Consultation/Engagement Title:		
Coordinator:		
Start Date:	Finish Date:	
Records Reference:		
Brief Description:		
Start up		check
Confirm the method of engagement and tec	hniques selected	
Confirm and/or adjust the timeline for the en	ngagement	
Complete the task breakdown sheet		
Identify what staff/departments/authorities e	tc you need to work with	
Communications		
Draft communication documents		
Review the documents with the project team	n and key stakeholders if possible	
Proofread documents and gain sign off		
Organise production of documents (word pr	ocessing, printing)	
Review stakeholder contact database and u	ipdate as necessary	
Organise distribution of documents (mailing newsletters)	g, display sites, web site, media outlets,	
Monitor the supply of communication docum	nents to distribution sites	
Provide copies of documents to Customer S	Service and Records staff	
Evaluate the communication tasks and make	e any necessary improvements	
Community engagement		
Organise community interactions depending	g on techniques chosen	
Set up internal contacts to maintain the flow	of information	
Coordinate documentation distribution with	engagement timeframes	
Book meeting spaces as required		
Contact key stakeholders and maintain dialo	ogue	
Workshop selected engagement techniques	s if necessary	
Prepare for collation of feedback from comm	nunities	

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Evaluate the engagement tasks and make any necessary improvements	
Recording	
Collate and analyse feedback	
Respond to enquiries from stakeholders and record any new information	
Evaluate the recording tasks and make any necessary improvements	
Community Feedback and Council Report	
Draft Feedback Report for review and response from the project team	
Draft Council Report for review as per Council protocol	
Gain sign-off on final reports	
Distribute Feedback Report to all interested parties	
Make Feedback Report available to general public	
Submit Council Report to Council for resolution	
Develop Implementation Plan for Council Resolution	
Evaluate the feedback and reporting tasks and make any necessary improvements	
Final Evaluation	
Effectiveness of the community engagement process assessed	
Document key areas of improvement for each set of tasks and feedback any recommendations for improvement of future engagements	

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