

SHIRE OF DANDARAGAN



2015

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The Shire of Dandaragan Community Engagement Plan was adopted by Council at the ordinary meeting held 25 June 2015.

Introduction

The Shire of Dandaragan community is made up of:

- Residents, electors, members of the business community and community groups;
- Future generations, residents and electors who will be affected by decisions made today;
- Government departments and non-government agencies;
- Shire of Dandaragan staff and management;
- Visitors to the Shire.

Community engagement is a two-way communication process between the Shire of Dandaragan and the community. The process allows all relevant parties to develop strong relationships, communicate effectively and obtain the best possible results for the Shire and the community.

Purpose

A Community Engagement Plan will:

- Establish standard procedures for community engagement;
- Ensure that the procedures are implemented by Shire staff and external consultants or contractors employed by the Shire;
- Promote inclusive and efficient consultation being undertaken at all times;
- Ensure that community members are provided with opportunities to be involved in development processes;
- Ensure that the community is kept informed of decisions relevant to their involvement;
- Provide Council the opportunity to consider input from a broad spectrum of community members.

Following the principles of the *International Association for Public Participation Australasia (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum* the Plan contains three key strategies:

1. Inform
2. Consult
3. Involve

Each strategy has a specific goal, a commitment to the community and a set of methodologies.

Scope

This Community Engagement Plan relates to many activities undertaken by the Shire with the exception of notifications in relation to statutory notifications. Where legislative requirements exist which address specific information / consultation processes the legislative requirements take precedence.

Benefits

There are a number of benefits from having a Community Engagement Plan, including that it:

- Commits the Shire and Council to be open and accountable;
- Assists the Shire and Council to plan services that address community needs;
- Enables the Shire and Council to prioritise services in line with an appropriate use of resources;
- Encourages the broadest range of views being expressed to allow the maximum amount of information being gathered prior to decisions being made;
- Sees the Shire, Council and community working together to achieve balanced decisions;
- Offers opportunities for the community to contribute to decisions that directly affect their lives;
- Ensures an open and familiar process which becomes easier for community members to participate in.

Please note: *The community is consulted about a wide variety of issues by a range of people in many ways. The Shire recognises this and so as not to over consult (whereby members of the community feel like they have already told what they want and are being asked again) existing timely research and findings of other consultations that the Shire or other agencies have recently conducted, may be utilised.*

Community Engagement Strategy 1: INFORM

Information dissemination is the primary form of community engagement. In order to be able to actively engage in the Shire's decision making processes the community requires information in a variety of ways.

Goal

To provide the community with appropriate information regarding Shire events, plans, projects, issues and services in order to provide feedback on the potential problems, alternatives, opportunities and solutions.

Commitment to the Community

The Shire of Dandaragan will keep the community informed with information that is accessible, relevant to the topic and easy to understand.

How

Up-to-date information on the Shire's processes, meeting agendas / minutes, services, projects and outlining how the community can provide feedback on issues, concerns and suggestions for service improvements will be easily accessible to all groups including, but not limited to, people with disabilities, people with computer literacy difficulties, young people, the aged and people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Methods can include one or more of the following:

- Shire website (www.dandaragan.wa.gov.au);
- Social media (www.facebook.com/ShireofDandaragan);
- Copies of posters / flyers / reports at Shire facilities available either in person or mail by request;
- Email notification to Shire mailing lists;
- Fact sheets / media releases;
- Shire newsletter (*Shire Matters*);
- SMS (subscribed list);
- Advertising – local and State newspapers as relevant to the target audience and statutory advertising requirements (if applicable);
- Public Meetings / Forums.

When

Ongoing, as Shire services, events, strategic plans, issues and projects arise or are scheduled.

Who

Entire community, noting that community members need to be aware of the methods used.

Evaluation

Through the Shire of Dandaragan Community Engagement Checklist (page 12).

Community Engagement Strategy 2: CONSULT

Consultation takes place when feedback is required in relation to:

- The development of new policies, strategies and plans;
- The review and evaluation of existing policies, strategies and plans;
- The planning and development of new services and infrastructure;
- The review and evaluation of existing services and infrastructure;
- Issues which impact on or are of concern to the community, including:
 - Broad community issues (such as community safety);
 - Specific community issues (such as seniors, youth);
 - Area issued (such as traffic management and land use changes).

Goal

To capture community input on strategic plans, directions, issues, priorities and projects.

Commitment to the Community

The Shire of Dandaragan will listen to the community, consider ideas and keep the community informed about the input received, the consideration of this input and the final decision(s) made.

How

Community consultation techniques will vary depending on who is being consulted and the nature and complexity of the issue. Available resources will also determine the type of techniques that can be utilised (such as timeframes, funds, staff availability).

A range of consultation techniques will be utilised including:

- *Workshops*. Open to the community with the aim of briefing interested residents on specific projects and getting their feedback;
- *Focus Groups*. Open by invitation to specific groups with relevant experience or potential impact from the issue at hand;
- *Information Stalls*. Pop-up information stands taken to the community at shopping precincts, markets / festivals / events, community hubs. Community members can take information away with them and / or submit feedback to or have questions answered by Shire representatives;
- *Surveys / Questionnaires*. A series of relevant questions with the collated replies available for consideration and distribution. These may be conducted via mail, email, website download or in person. Distribution of the survey through homes, schools, businesses, community meetings or a combination of those avenues help ensure inclusion for a broad range of community members who may otherwise not usually be able to participate in community engagement.

When

The Shire of Dandaragan will ensure that the community is consulted on issues which impact on or are of concern to the community in a timely manner to allow adequate community comment to occur and be analysed in order to inform decision making processes.

Who

All community members who are identified as being directly impacted will be consulted, with the whole community being informed. Stakeholders will vary according to the issue but could include residents, ratepayers, businesses, volunteers, those who visit or work within the Shire, other service providers / agencies, community groups, other levels of government, peak bodies etc. It could also include particular groups within the community, such as older people, families, children, youth, different ethnic groups, business people, people with disabilities etc.

Evaluation

Through the Shire of Dandaragan Community Engagement Checklist (page 12).

Community Engagement Strategy 3: INVOLVE

Involvement enables the community to provide ongoing and in-depth input into community planning and into the development of solutions and resources that are best able to meet the community's needs, as well as having substantial input into the development of services. Community engagement has the potential to empower communities and develop mutually beneficial relationships with the Shire, enabling community members to gain skills in community participation and the Shire to acquire higher quality and specialist input into planning and decision making processes.

Goal

To work on an ongoing basis to ensure that community ideas, concerns and aspirations are listened to and understood and that community knowledge is harnessed for the benefit of all.

Commitment to the Community

The Shire of Dandaragan will work with the community on an ongoing basis to ensure that community ideas, concerns and aspirations are considered. Feedback on Shire decisions will be provided.

How

Community consultation techniques will vary depending on who is being consulted and the nature and complexity of the issue. Available resources will also determine the type of techniques that can be utilised (such as timeframes, funds, staff availability).

A range of consultation techniques will be utilised including:

- *Workshops*. Open to the community with the aim of briefing interested residents on specific projects and getting their feedback;
- *Focus Groups*. Open by invitation to specific groups with relevant experience or potential impact from the issue at hand;
- *Working Groups*. Established by the Shire to focus on particular issues. The composition of a working group should be determined by the Shire together with specific terms of reference and reporting mechanisms. The Group ceases to function once their work is completed;
- *Community Groups*. These may be facilitated by the Shire or are self-forming and are supported by volunteers.
- *Volunteer Groups*. Self-forming groups that focus on the service for which they volunteer. Attendance is open to all relevant volunteers and interested residents.

When

The Shire of Dandaragan will ensure that the community is consulted on issues which impact on or are of concern to the community or to any group within the community in a timely manner to allow adequate community involvement to occur and be analysed in order to inform decision making processes.

Who

Community members who are impacted will be invited to be involved. Stakeholders will vary according to the issue, but could include residents, ratepayers, businesses, volunteers, those who visit or work in the Shire, other service providers / agencies, community groups, other levels of government, peak bodies etc. It could also include particular groups within the community such as older people, families, children, youth, different ethnic groups, business people, people with disabilities etc.

Evaluation

Through the Shire of Dandaragan Community Engagement Checklist (page 12).

Levels of Engagement

The level of engagement undertaken should relate to the extent of community impact or interest associated with the proposed Shire events, plans, issues, projects and services.

Level 0 – No Engagement

No specific action is required when:

- No impact on the community is likely; or
- Consultation is precluded under relevant legislation; or
- Consultation has previously occurred.

Level 1 – Inform

This level of engagement will be utilised where:

- Community members are not likely to be detrimentally impacted by the proposed event, issue, plan, project or service; or
- Statutory requirements for notification exist; or
- Consultation has previously occurred and minor modifications to address previous concerns raised are proposed.

This level of engagement will raise awareness about proposed Shire events, plans, issues, projects and services, establish communication links within the community, encourage active participation and build trust and confidence between the Shire and the community.

Level 2 – Consult

This level of engagement will be utilised where:

- Community members are likely to be impacted by the proposed event, plan, issue, project or service; or
- Statutory requirements for consultation exist.

In addition to Level 1, this level of engagement will collect views, opinions and ideas and foster community support.

Level 3 – Involve

This level of engagement will be utilised where:

- Community members are likely to be majorly / detrimentally impacted by the proposed event, plan, issue, project or service; or
- Statutory requirements for involvement exist.

In addition to Levels 1 and 2, this level of engagement will encourage active participation and foster community support.

Acknowledgement of Feedback

General feedback will be summarised as part of the evaluation process.

Shire of Dandaragan Community Engagement Plan

Where written submissions are called for the submitter will receive acknowledgement of their submission and advice as to when all submissions will be considered. All submissions received will be summarised and when a decision has been made the submission summary will be made available directly to all submitters and via the previously detailed communication channels to the community.

GUIDE TO LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Burning restrictions & harvest bans	1	*~
Council Meetings – Ordinary	1	*
Council Meetings – Special Meetings	1	*
Events – to participate in / with or to attend	1	*
Firebreak notification	1	
Grant opportunities	1	
Shire newsletter	1	
Shire service provision changes (ie. Opening hours at Christmas)	1	
CORPORATE SERVICES		
Annual Electors Meeting	2	
Asset Management Planning	2	
Community Strategic Plan	3	
Budget consultation	3	
Corporate Business Plan	1	
Local law development	1	*
Long term financial planning	1	
Policy development – administration procedures	0	
Policy development – Shire procedures	1	
Policy development – involves specific user groups	2	^
Policy development – major Shire / regional / State impact	3	
Rates – new structure or format	2	
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES		
Building applications (engagement is during planning process)	1	*
Development plans and structure plans		*
Food business education and training		*^
Local Planning Scheme review		*
Planning Application (including demolition of a building)		*^
Planning Application (including demolition) <i>building is on the Municipal Inventory</i>		*#
Planning Application (including demolition) <i>building is on the State Heritage List</i>		*#
Planning Application for a Building Envelope Variation		*
Planning Application for a Setback Variation		*
Planning Application for Development – A uses, not in zoning table		*
Planning Application for Development – D uses		*
Planning Application for Development – P or X uses		*
Scheme Amendment		*
Subdivision of Referrals		*
Swimming Pool Inspections – 4 year, statutory		*^
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES		
Footpath – Construction	1	*^
Forward Infrastructure Management Programs		*
Roads – Maintenance / Upgrading		*^
Road Closure – Festivals and Events		*^
Road Closure – Permanent		*
Road Closure – Temporary		*
Street Tree – Removal / Planting		*^

- * Consultation procedures are already set out by Local Law, existing legislation (Local Government Act 1995, Land Administration Act, Town Planning Scheme, Residential Planning Codes, Road Traffic Code etc).
- # Includes consultation with a Heritage Advisor or the State Heritage Council
- ^ Mailed letter to affected resident(s), ratepayer(s), business(es) and / or group(s)
- ~ Subscribed list

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN CHECKLIST

Project Name: _____

Purpose:			
Timeline:	Start Date:		Outcomes By:
Stakeholders to be considered: <i>Please note those to be targeted during engagement</i>	Aged	Ratepayers (all / targeted)	
	Businesses	Residents (all / targeted)	
	Children	Service Providers	
	Community Groups	Unemployed	
	Disabled People	Visitors	
	Families	Volunteers	
	Government Bodies	Workers	
	Indigenous	Youth	
	Neighbouring Shires	Other	
Staff to be notified:	CEO	Councillors	
	Corporate Services	Consultant(s)	
	Development Services	Other	
	Infrastructure Services		
Community Engagement Plan			
Methods	Responsible	Date Due	Completed
Shire website			
Social Media			
Poster / Flyer / Report			
Email			
Media Release			
Shire Newsletter			
Advertising – newspaper			
Public Meeting / Forum			
Workshop			
Focus Group			
Information Stall			
Survey / Questionnaire			
Working Group			
Evaluation			
Summary of...		Date Due	Completed
Feedback / Results / Outcomes / Recommendations			
Outcomes Shared			
Methods	Responsible	Date Due	Completed
Shire website			
Social Media			
Email			
Media Release			
Shire Newsletter			
Advertising			
Other			