



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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Introduction

Community Engagement is the process through which the community and stakeholders are informed about and/or invited to contribute, through consultation or involvement, to proposals or policy changes relating to BHRC services, strategic plans, issues and projects.

Purpose

The Bunbury-Harvey Regional Council (BHRC) Community Engagement Policy will ensure that:

- BHRC has the opportunity to consider the input of a wide range of community members and stakeholders before making decisions;
- Community members and stakeholders are given the opportunity to contribute to the planning and development process.

The Policy will:

- Establish a standard process for community consultation;
- Ensure that the process is implemented by BHRC staff and external consultants employed by the BHRC;
- Ensure that inclusive and efficient consultation is undertaken at all times;
- Ensure that the community members and stakeholders are kept informed of decisions emanating from community consultation.

Scope

This Community Engagement Policy relates to activities undertaken by the BHRC 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 Policy, including:

- Commits the BHRC to being open and accountable;
- Assists BHRC to plan services that better meet community members and stakeholders needs;
- Enables the BHRC to prioritise services and make better use of resources;
- Allows a broader range of views to be expressed and more information to be assembled prior to making decisions;
- Sees the BHRC and the community members and stakeholders working together to achieve balanced decisions;
- Offers opportunities for the community members and stakeholders to contribute to and influence outcomes which directly affect their lives;
- Ensures an open and familiar process which becomes easier for community members to participate in.

Community Engagement Strategy

Community involvement enables the community members and stakeholders to provide ongoing and in-depth input into planning and into the development of solutions and resources that are best able to meet the community members and stakeholders needs. It also enables the community member, stakeholders and service users to have substantial input into the development of services.

Community consultation has the potential to empower community members and stakeholders and to provide for ongoing dialogue with BHRC and the potential for higher quality and specialist input into BHRC's planning and decision making processes.

Goal

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

Methodology: How

Community involvement techniques will vary depending on who is being involved and the nature and complexity of the issue. Available resources will also determine the type of techniques that can be utilised (i.e. Timeframe available, the funds available, the staffing resource capacity etc.).

A range of involvement techniques will be utilised to ensure inclusive participation levels. These may include;

- **Newspapers** - both local and state. Other publications can be considered dependent on the target group.
- **Newsletters**
- **Radio** - both local and regional.
- **Email Notification** - to identified Stakeholders.
- **Flyers (Brochures / Reports)** - available in person from BHRC facilities or via mail upon request.
- **Posters**
- **Public Meetings / Forums** - at various locations / localities, as appropriate.
- **Website** – www.bhrc.wa.gov.au, an up-to-date source of information on services, strategic plans, issues and projects.
- **Social Media**

When

BHRC will ensure that the community members and stakeholder are involved on issues which impact on and/or are of concern to the community members and stakeholders 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, businesses, volunteers, those who visit site, other service providers/agencies, community groups, other levels of government, peak bodies, etc. This also includes any party associated to residents, businesses, volunteers, those who visit site, other service providers/agencies, community groups, other levels of government, peak bodies, etc. that provide services to the BHRC or member councils.

Evaluation

Through the BHRC Involvement Checklist

Levels of Engagement

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

Level 0 – No Engagement

No specific action is required when:

- No impact on the community members and stakeholders or locality is likely;
- Engagement is precluded under relevant legislation;
- Engagement has previously occurred.

Level 1 – Inform

The BHRC will inform stakeholders where:

- Statutory requirements for notification exist;
- Engagement has previously occurred and minor modifications to address previous concerns raised are proposed.

This level of Engagement will:

- Raise awareness about proposed services, strategic plans, issues and projects;
- Build trust and confidence between the BHRC and the community;

Level 2 – Consult

The BHRC will consult where:

- Stakeholders are likely to be impacted by the proposed services, strategic plans, issues and projects;
- Statutory requirements for consultation exist.

In addition to Level 1 this level of Engagement will:

- Collect views, opinions and ideas;
- Foster Stakeholders support.

Level 3 – Involve

The BHRC will involve stakeholders where:

- Stakeholders are likely to be majorly/detrimentally impacted by the proposed services, strategic plans, issues and projects;
- Statutory requirements for involvement exist.

In addition to Levels 1 and 2 this level of consultation will:

- Encourage active participation;
- Foster stakeholder ownership.

Acknowledgement of Feedback

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

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.

References

- *Local Government Act 1995*
- *Local Government Act (Functions and General) Regulations 1996*
- *DWER Identification, Reporting and Classification Of Contaminated Sites WA Guidelines*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INVOLVEMENT CHECKLIST

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|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| Project Name | | | |
| Purpose | | | |
| Timeline | Start Date: | Outcomes By: | |
| Stakeholders to be considered | Businesses | Service Providers | |
| | Residents | Visitors | |
| | Government Bodies | Workers | |
| | Community Groups | Others | |

| Community Engagement Policy | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Responsible Officer | Due By: | Completed |
| Poster | | | |
| Website | | | |
| Email | | | |
| Media Release | | | |
| Advertising | | | |
| Public Meeting | | | |
| Questionnaire | | | |
| Evaluation | | | |
| Feedback Summary | | | |
| Questionnaire Results | | | |
| Meeting Feedback | | | |
| Outcomes | | | |
| | Responsible Officer | Due By: | Completed |
| Web | | | |
| Email | | | |
| Media Release | | | |
| Advertising | | | |